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European Language Portfolio in Learning English in Lower Secondary Classes

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Zásady pro vypracování

Diplomantka se ve své práci bude zabývat problematikou sebehodnocení žáků v hodinách anglického jazyka na druhém stupni základní školy. V teoretické části nejprve zasadí zkoumanou problematiku do širšího kontextu výuky anglického jazyka na základním stupni vzdělávání. Dále diplomantka představí historii a současnost Evropského jazykového portfolia, tj. specifického sebehodnotícího nástroje pro podporu učení se cizím jazykům včetně anglického. Následně bude diskutovat konkrétní strategie a techniky zavádějící Evropské jazykové portfolio do výuky anglického jazyka na 2. stupni základní školy. V rámci empirické části diplomantka realizuje akční výzkum v jedné třídě vybrané základní školy, jejímž cílem bude zavést Evropské jazykové portfolio do výuky angličtiny. Diplomantka připraví a implementuje akční plán, jehož efektivitu následně vyhodnotí.

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Annotation

This diploma thesis explores the portfolio, a tool for developing learner self-assessment, in English language classes. The theoretical part focuses on the introduction of necessary terms such as assessment and evaluation, self-assessment, portfolio in the context of both general education and English language teaching. Furthermore, the thesis proposes a critical insight on these terms. The practical part presents an action research with the aim to incorporate the European Language Portfolio into a lower-secondary English classroom and to describe the whole process in detail from a teacher's perspective.

Key words

European Language Portfolio, portfolio, self-assessment, self-assessment awareness, short-term aims, action research

Anotace

Tato diplomová práce se zabývá portfoliem, nástrojem pro rozvoj sebehodnocení žáků, v hodinách anglického jazyka. Teoretická část se zaměřuje na představení potřebných pojmů, jako je hodnocení a evaluace, sebehodnocení, portfolio v kontextu všeobecného vzdělávání i výuky anglického jazyka. Dále práce předkládá kritický vhled do těchto pojmů. Praktická část představuje akční výzkum, jehož cílem je začlenit Evropské jazykové portfolio do výuky anglického jazyka na druhém stupni základní školy a celý tento proces detailně popsat z pohledu učitele.

Klíčová slova

Evropské jazykové portfolio, portfolio, sebehodnocení, zvědomování sebehodnocení, krátkodobé cíle, akční výzkum

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INTRODUCTION

The learner portfolio is regarded as a functional tool for the development and demonstration of a wide range of key competences in specialized literature. In particular, it enables the development of competences for self-reflection and self-assessment. The emphasis on self-assessment and, more specifically, the maintenance of a learner portfolio is recommended in the contemporary literature by a variety of authors. On the other hand, these terms seem to be rather fashionable concepts that are often overused without their effectiveness being grounded in empirical evidence or other studies. Therefore, the author of this thesis decided to explore this topic and form her own stance on this issue with regard to her future teaching practice.

The theoretical part of this thesis attempts to provide a comprehensive insight into the issue of self-assessment and portfolios in English language teaching. Thus, to understand the topic, the reader must first be introduced to the basic concepts, both in the context of general education and from the perspective of English language teaching. Hence, the selected topics are arranged in such a way that the reader's attention is gradually drawn to specific notions. Thus, the emphasis is first on explaining the concepts of evaluation and assessment, their functions and types. This is followed by a chapter devoted to self-assessment, where again both general and specific principles related to English language teaching are introduced. Following this, the reader is presented with a portfolio, a specific tool for developing self-assessment in the learner. Attention then turns to the introduction of an ambitious project called the European Language Portfolio, which is a document used for recording and reflecting on the process of foreign language learning and intercultural experiences. This is followed by a chapter that critically explores self-assessment and portfolios through the lens of research because, as already mentioned, these terms are often overused with no empirical evidence being provided. Lastly, the reader is introduced to the seventh grade basic school pupil, as this group plays an important role in this thesis.

The practical part of this thesis presents an action research which was conducted by the author of this paper. The aim of the research is to incorporate the European English Portfolio into the lower-secondary English classroom. Furthermore, this research aims to investigate the whole process of integration of the ELP from the point of view of the interested teacher and to describe the challenges and questions that might arise throughout this process.

Theoretical part

1 Assessment and evaluation

Assessment in schools has the potential to both benefit and harm a pupil. The successful conduct and outcome of assessment in schools involves a wide range of intellectual and emotional abilities as well as full commitment not only from the teacher, but also from the pupils. Assessment both determines the quality of teaching and also forms one of the most important components of communication between the teacher, pupils and the parents of pupils (Slavík 1999, 9).

Many authors use the terms evaluation, assessment and even testing interchangeably. However, they do not possess the same meaning. Testing is only one specific part of assessment. Evaluation and assessment are two slightly different terms concerning more general and global processes (Ioannou-Gergiou and Pavlou 2003, 4). Before explaining the terms in detail, it is necessary to briefly look at their origin and history.

The word "assessment", in the context of learning, has existed for centuries. Its roots could be traced back to the 3rd century in China where people had to pass "entrance exams" in order to entry craft guilds or high public office (Earl 2013, 11). However, assessment as we know it today emerged in the times of industrialization and universal schooling at the end of the 19th century. Thanks to the industrial revolution, people were moving from rural communities to urban ones which led to accumulation of newcomers and emigrants from various countries or different cultures.

In order to educate many young people differing in their social structures and economic bases, the universal education was born to develop the basic skills of writing, reading, and arithmetic. After this change, "evaluation of students achievement" became a significant dimension of schooling (ibid, p. 12). Nonetheless, assessment and evaluation came to be the underlying terms of the development and history of education due to the discussion brought up by The Assessment Reform Group (ARG) in the 1990s. The ARG was formed by the British Educational Research Association as a voluntary group of researchers with the goal of ensuring that relevant research evidence is considered in assessment policy and practice at all levels.

The advocates of this group questioned the current form of accountability, grading and standards and suggested that "assessment that is explicitly designed to promote learning is the single most powerful tool we have for raising standards and empowering life-long learning" (The Reform Group in Earl 2013, 15). Other researchers also joined the exploration of

assessment and its innovations which could not remain unnoticed by the policy makers and practitioners (ibid, p. 16).

As it was previously mentioned, the terms "evaluation and assessment" are rather broad and general and therefore, opinions about the most suitable approach towards them vary across researches, practitioners or even countries. However, the trend of making the assessment authentic which was proposed by The Reform Group in the 1990s, and then stressed by other authors continues to the present day.

1.1 Definitions of evaluation and assessment

As mentioned above, the terms evaluation and assessment are often used interchangeably. Thus, it is important to define the terms in detail and put them into the context of this paper.

Starting with the term evaluation, the Educational dictionary views it from two perspectives. The first one concerns the scientific field in which "to evaluate" is a synonym for "to assess". However, the second one relates to the educational field and is defined as "identification, comparison and explanation of data that characterize the condition, quality, functioning and effectiveness of schools or the educational system as a whole." (Průcha, Walterová and Mareš 2013, 190). Furthermore, the educational evaluation is crucial when identifying and planning innovations which are needed for the development of the educational system. In other words, it is an independent scientific discipline which is supported by the theoretical and methodological base (ibid, p. 190).

The above mentioned claim could be transformed into the context of foreign language teaching as well. According to Ioannou-Georgiou and Pavlou (2003, 4), evaluation is "the process of gathering information in order to determine the extent to which a language programme meets its goals". These sources of information might be the teachers' and parents' opinions, textbook quality, exam results or children's attitudes. The tools for gathering such data might be questionnaires, observations, tests or various analyses. (ibid, p. 4). Harris and McCann (1994, 90) define the term almost identically by stating "evaluation [is] consideration of all the factors that influence the learning process such as syllabus objectives, course design, materials, methodology, teachers and assessment".

Pursuing this further, evaluation is the added value of assessment because what we also take into consideration are the consequences. In other words, in order to evaluate we need to

have a piece of information which was gathered by some form of assessment procedures. If such information is gathered e.g. results of a test, we can start interpretating the collected data. In many cases we can refer to the consequences depending on the (good or bad) quality of such performance (Brown, Abeywickrama 2018, 3).

Moving on to the examination of the term "assessment", it is also necessary to start by exploring it in the context of general education. Broadly speaking, assessment might be defined as a process of comparing various information, during which we distinguish "good" from "bad", choosing "the good" or at least we are trying to find the way towards correction or improvement of "the bad". Each of these partial steps – comparing, distinguishing, improvement or correction could be considered as the subject of the pedagogical interest (Slavík 1999, 15).

Skalková (2007, 176) provides more specific, yet brief definition of assessment by stating "assessment [is] taking and expressing a positive or negative opinion on various activities and performances of pupils in the classroom". Vališová and Kovaříková (2021, 144) share the same viewpoint, however, they emphasize that assessment primarily focuses on recognizing the degree of pupil's development in terms of the set aims.

Pursuing the claim of the paragraph above even further, it is important to stress the systematicity of such process. Majority of the assessment people experience outside the school is either too general or occasional. What makes the assessment in schools systematic is the fact, that the teacher prepares and organizes such activities on a regular basis and then compares them with the chosen norms (Kolář and Šikulová 2009, 18). In the Czech educational system, the teachers of lower secondary schools work with *Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education* and *School Education Programme*. These curricular documents will be later discussed in this paper.

To shift the focus on the role of assessment in the foreign language classroom, Mousavi (2009, 35) defines it as "appraising or estimating the level of magnitude of some attribute of a person". Brown and Abeywickrama (2018, 3) share the same view by stating "whenever a student responds to a question, offers a comment, or tries a new word or structure, the teacher subconsciously appraises the performance". In other words, the teacher automatically assesses every performance of the student.

Ioannou-Georgiou and Pavlou (2003, 4) offer slightly different angle at assessment by stating "it includes all methods used to gather information about children's knowledge, ability

and understanding, attitudes, and motivation". In comparison with the above-mentioned-authors, they stress the process of gathering rather than appraising or comparing.

Cheng and Fox (2017, 1-2) select the definition of assessment in language teaching provided by Black and William (1998): "[it concerns] all those activities undertaken by teachers, and by their students in assessing themselves, which provide information to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged" and they emphasize its two important aspects. The first one are the participants of assessment – the teacher and the students. Assessment might involve teacher and a student only, or it could concern the teacher and a group of students. Moreover, assessment might take place between a student and another student or between students themselves. The second one concerns the multiple dimensions of assessment in language teaching since it contains daily reactions to students' performance, classroom tests, entrance tests or, for instance, large-scale tests. Furthermore, these assessment dimensions are best described by the following two terms:

- **Assessment *for* learning** refers to the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by students and their teachers to decide where students are in their learning process, where they need to go and how best to get there.
- **Assessment *of* learning refers** to assessments that happen after learning has occurred, to determine whether learning has happened. They are used to make statements about a student's learning status at a particular point in time.

(Cheng and Fox 2017, 4)

As it was already mentioned in this chapter, when discussing the systematicity of assessment in schools with the support of Kolář and Šikulová (2009), Cheng and Fox (2017) also stress out the importance of having precise criteria and norms which serve for the comparison with students' performance.

Concerning the "criteria and norms" which are available to a basic school English teacher when assessing students' performance, there are three essential documents in the Czech Republic. The first one is the briefly mentioned *Framework Education Programme for Basic Education* (FEP BE), which was established on the national level. The most relevant parts of the FEP BE concern the objectives of basic education and the chapter dedicated to foreign language acquisition. The chapter concerning the objectives of basic education proposes that it should help pupils to "form and gradually develop their key competencies and provide them with the firm foundations of general education" (FEP BE 2021, 8). The key competencies are defined and further described in the following chapter as: "a set of knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes and values which are important for the personal development of an individual and for

the individual's participation in society" (FEP BE 2021, 10). To further explain, the reason for mentioning this in the paper is that these competencies are interconnected which means that the entire educational content, as well as all school activities, must be focused towards the formation and development of the competencies (ibid). The other relevant chapter is explicitly dedicated to the expected outcomes of foreign language. These outcomes are separated into categories for either the first or second stage of basic education. Moreover, these stages are divided into two cycles, each of which is discussed in further depth.

The second important document, which represents the school level of the Czech educational system is the *School Educational Programme* (further only SEP). SEP is produced by each school's administration and must be based on the FEP BE. What makes each SEP unique is the fact that each thematic area could be further defined in a greater detail in comparison with the FEP BE (ibid, p. 5).

The third document is the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (further only CEFR). This document "defines levels of proficiency which allow learners' progress to be measured at each stage of learning and on a life-long basis" (CEFR 2003, 1). The reason for mentioning this document is the fact that FEP BE refers to these levels (A1 and A2) as they should be attained either in the first (A1) or second cycle (A2) of basic education (ibid, p. 17).

Distinguishing the two terms was important since many authors use "assessment" and "evaluation" while discussing the same topic. For the purposes of this paper, the preferred term is "assessment" since the focus is on gathering data of students' progress, abilities, attitudes etc. and not on examining the consequences and judging, whether a language programme meets its goals.

Also, mentioning the curricular documents which are available for a basic school English teacher when assessing the learners' performance is considered important by the author of this theses as the criteria and norms are emphasized by the studied authors.

1.2 Functions of assessment

The term "assessment" might come across as threatening and evoke panic in some people. However, it is an integral part of teaching and learning and therefore, it is important to examine the purposes and functions it can serve. On that note, it would be appropriate to ask the question: *Why do we assess the students in the first place?* William (2011, 3) responds by

stating: "It is only through assessment that we can find out whether a particular activity has resulted in the intended learning outcomes".

As it was already mentioned, assessment in the educational environment should be systematic and organized and thus, it is crucial for the teacher to be aware of its functions so that they can be applied accordingly. The classification of the assessment functions and its terminology varies depending on the author. In many cases, the function is named differently but its content differs only in details. For the purposes of this this paper, the starting point of classifying the functions of assessment is the division provided by Slavík (1999, 16-18).

The first function concerns motivation. Motivation is based on the human needs, particularly social needs such as recognition, self-realization or success (Čáp and Mareš 2007, 174). Therefore, this function is directly related to the emotional side of assessment and thus, it interferes with the intimate and personal sphere. Not only the feelings of a person who is being assessed are involved but also the feelings of a person who is in the position of the assessor. Thus, this part of assessment must be carried out delicately (Slavík 1999, 16-17). Kratochvílová (2011, 24) suggests that assessment should at first involve the positive aspects of students' performance and then focus on the areas which need little more work or correction because focusing only on the negatives might be demotivating for the learners. Kolář and Šikulová (2009, 47) point out that since the motivational function is connected to emotions and feelings, it makes the function the most effective one in terms of influencing the learner. If the learner is motivated, he/she desires to learn new things. Such desires need to be grounded by emotional impulses. This idea is also supported by Hvozdík (in Kolář and Šikulová 2009, 47), who claims that assessment affects the learners only if they experience the success or failure of their learning outcomes. Ioannou-Georgiou and Pavlou (2003, 5) share the same viewpoint and also add that assessment is especially important for young learner because they need tangible evidence of their progress in order to stay motivated to learn. A specific example might be achieving short-term goals.

The second function of assessment deals with cognition. Cognition allows us to grasp the meaning or purpose of everything which surrounds us. It concerns the intellectual side of assessment and questions the subject of assessment. For example, we can ask "What *this* has to do with *this*?". Such question makes us think about the "bigger picture". To put it differently, it makes us think about the connections. If we can think of the connections, it means we understand, or start to understand, the particular area (Slavík 1999, 17).

The third function of assessment is conative. It mainly concerns volition. Assessment appeals to the active participation of the learner in the educational process. Furthermore, it is about finding the way of improvement. Such reflection can be done retrospectively. When an activity is over, the learner might think about possible improvements, suggestions or the ways needed for maintaining at this level. The aforementioned issue applies to the teacher as well. (Slavík 1999, 18).

Kratochvílová (2011, 25) based her functions of assessment on Slavík's division and added the developing function. This function is particularly relevant to this paper because assessment might help in developing student's self-concept and self-image.

Since this paper is concerned with the use of portfolios, there are two other functions of assessment, which should not stay overlooked, the first one is the informative function. Assessment gives concrete information about student's knowledge, abilities or attitudes. The informative value is based on the comparison of a norm which should be acquired and the actual state of learner's abilities. This function is not only valuable for the learner and teacher, but also for learner's family members (Kolář and Šikulová 2009, 48).

The second one is the regulative function. The teacher is able to regulate each learning activity by assessment. In other words, it is too late to assess only the final product/performance of the learner. It is important that the teacher focuses on the processes and pays attention to the preceding steps e.g. intensity of student activity, usage of methods and learning styles or learner's volition (ibid, p.50).

To conclude, each of the above-mentioned functions can be applied to every type of assessment in the educational environment. However, the differences are between the proportions which are dedicated to the particular function. Every function is important and should be included. Therefore, it is necessary, for the teacher, to reflect upon the representation of each function and making sure that the ratio is not staying the same (Slavík 1999, 18).

1.3 Types of assessment

Similarly to the functions of assessment, the authors define different types of assessment as well. However, for the purposes of this paper, the basic classification of the types is sufficient.

Majority of the authors define two basic types of assessment. The first one is the summative assessment. According to Brown and Abeywickrama (2018, 8), its aim is to

"measure, or summarize, what a student has grasped". This type of assessment typically takes place at the end of a particular unit or at the end of a term or a school year. In other words, it "measures the *product* of a student's learning" (Harmer, 2015). Slavík (1999, 37) supports this view and adds that it serves as a final overview of students' abilities. Therefore, its purpose is to inform the learner and the teacher about the success rate. Usually, the term summative assessment is only associated with written tests, however it can also be done orally e.g. *"Peter seems to be distracted lately at school"* (ibid, p. 37).

According to Brown and Abeywickrama (2018, 8), the type of assessment which is more present in the classroom is the formative assessment. As noted by Kratochvílová (2011, 27), formative assessment helps with self-development of the individual. It happens in the *process* of learning and thus, is classified as ongoing, corrective and a source of feedback. Also, the learner is not being compared to other classmates and their abilities but the focus is on the progress of each learner.

Slavík (1999, 182) defines formative assessment as a support for the learner. As it takes place in the process of learning, the learner is provided with feedback when there is still space for improving the given performance. In other words, the aim of formative assessment is to navigate the learner and the teacher towards a particular goal. In addition, Harmer (2015, 408) states "formative assessment looks to the future, rather than focusing exclusively on what has been achieved up to a given point in time. For this reason, it is sometimes called *assessment for learning*."

According to Kratochvílová (2011, 21), formative assessment should predominate in the classroom. Although, it is mainly provided by the teacher, it is also important to lead the learners towards assessing their classmates and also themselves. Kasíková (2010, 94) also agrees with this statement and further explains that if the learners are able to assess themselves and provide their classmates with feedback, they remain motivated to learn because they understand their strengths and weaknesses and also, know what should be done in order to improve their performance.

In the previous paragraph, the importance of learners' ability to assess themselves was briefly mentioned. In the modern concept of education, the terms "self-assessment" or "self-evaluation" are used and stressed frequently. These terms are directly connected to the use of portfolios and therefore, it is crucial for this thesis to define the terms in detail. Also, this chapter

has focused on a bigger notion, the assessment and now, there will be a shift towards more specific area of assessment which derives from the formative assessment.

2 Self-assessment

Merriam-Webster dictionary (n.d.) defines the term self-assessment as "the act or process of analyzing and evaluating oneself or one's actions". Such definition implies that self-assessment is ubiquitous in our lives because each aspect of our everyday life might be the subject of further assessment. The personality of an individual is confronted with given social environment due to self-assessment. Such confrontation contributes to a more realistic self-concept. Self-concept plays a very important role in connection with self-assessment. If we define self-concept as an idea of one's own Self, then self-assessment is a tool for shaping that Self (Průcha, Walterová and Mareš 2013, 258-259).

The above-mentioned claim can be transformed into the educational context as well. To accomplish so, curriculum documents that constitute the foundation of the Czech Republic's entire educational system must be analyzed. The already mentioned FEP BE (2021, 10) states that at the end of basic education, the pupil: "recognizes the meaning and purpose of learning, has a positive attitude towards learning, assess his own progress and identifies obstacles or problems that impede learning, plans ways in which he can improve his learning, critically evaluates and discusses the results of his learning".

In addition, incorporating pupil's self-assessment into the educational process is also legally bound by law, as an amendment, to Decree No. 48/2005 Sb., on basic education and certain requisites of school attendance, specifically in §14. Therefore, each school should implement principles and guidelines for pupil's self-assessment into their school curriculum.

It is clear from the aforementioned that nowadays society has made it desirable for the students to be able to self-assess their own performance, which is reflected in both curriculum documents and the laws of the country. Therefore, providing the learners with opportunities to assess themselves should not be viewed as some extra burden the teachers have decided to place on their learners.

Based on the key competencies mentioned in the FEP BE (2021), it is apparent that one of the main goals of upbringing and education is helping the learner become an autonomous person, who is able to function in the society by responding adequately to the stimuli of the outside world. Therefore, it is crucial that this intention is further supported by various didactic

strategies. Putting emphasis on developing self-assessment in learners is one of the ways of shaping their personality (Kargerová, 2004) and (Rakoušová, 2008). In addition, Starý and Laufková (2016, 35) state that good-quality self-assessment, in fact, saves time in the classroom since it supports the learning process of the student.

2. 1 Self-assessment in the context of education

As noted by Ioannou-Georgiou and Pavlou (2003, 10), self-assessment in the educational context is highly important because it "promotes invaluable learning skills such as monitoring one's own progress, reflecting on one's abilities and learning styles and setting personal goals." Learners are also able to grasp the assessment criteria which are used by teachers more clearly since they are able to assess their performance as well. Moreover, the learners feel empowered since they feel like they are able to intervene into the process of assessment or they can at least express their opinions about it. (ibid, p. 10).

Furthermore, (Starý and Laufková 2016, 34) define self-assessment the same as the authors in the paragraph above but they further develop the ability to reflect one's process of learning. To be more specific, self-assessment not only helps the learners to realize, whether the aim was achieved but also helps them to identify, what exactly contributes into achieving the goal in terms of their own specific and unique learning needs.

Pursing this further, according to Brown and Abbeywickrama (2018, 313-314), the notion of autonomy derives from the ability to assess oneself and it is one of the ways towards successful learning. Such ability includes:

1. setting one's own goals both within and beyond the structure of a classroom curriculum
2. pursuing those goals without the presence of an external stimulus
3. monitoring that pursuit independently

(Brown and Abbeywickrama 2018, 314)

Similarly to Brown and Abbeywickrama, Slavík (1999, 139) stresses the term autonomy as well. Moreover, Slavík states that since assessment is not only the means of teaching but also its aim, it is absolutely essential to provide the learners with opportunities to assess their own performance and to let them find the ways of improving themselves. Such assessment is also called autonomous assessment and derives from the autonomous learning.

In addition, Kolář and Šikulová (2009, 151) state that since self-assessment supports autonomous learning, the learner feels responsible for his own learning and therefore becomes less dependent on the teacher.

Having defined the term self-assessment in the educational environment, there are other perspectives of how to approach this notion. For instance, Oxford (1990, 20) describes self-assessment as one of the indirect learning strategies. In general, learning strategies are: "specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective and more transferable to new situations" (ibid, p. 8). These strategies could be further divided into two categories: direct and indirect. However, they are both connected and equally essential (ibid, p. 12). The indirect ones include metacognitive, affective and social strategies. The metacognitive strategies could also be divided into several categories, however, for the purpose of this paper, only *evaluating your learning* is relevant. This set has two parts. The first one is *self-monitoring* which focuses on "student's conscious decision to monitor". Moreover, Oxford proposes, that learners should be asked to write down their main struggles in language learning and try to come up with ideas what is the reason behind them. By doing this, the learners are not only able to identify their difficulties but they might also be able to track the cause of them (ibid, p. 161). The second one is *self-evaluating*, which might concern the language progress as a whole or it could be focused on progress in one of the skills. For this purposes, Oxford recommends using journals, checklists or diaries (ibid, p. 162). It is also important to note that, both of these strategies are beneficial for learner's development in all the skills areas (ibid, p. 160).

Another view on self-assessment is provided by Dörnyei (2001), who classifies it as one of the motivational strategies. Motivational strategies are: "techniques that promote the individual's goal-related behavior" (ibid, p. 28). The author mentions the benefits of implementing self-assessment into the classroom several times in the book. For instance, the author discusses the anxiety that is connected to testing and assessment and proposes that combining these methods with learners' self-assessment might prevent such anxiety and discomfort (ibid, p. 94). Also, Dörnyei, as other authors mentioned in this chapter, connects self-assessment with the learner autonomy by stating: "[it] gives them a concrete sense of participation in the learning process" (ibid, p. 105). To continue, Dörnyei proposes an interesting idea, implying that self-assessment techniques should be incorporated because the teacher therefore not only believes that learners' are able to assess their work by themselves but also their opinion is valid and taken seriously (ibid, p. 133).

As it was already mentioned, self-assessment is ubiquitous in our lives. However, it is important to note that people are not born with the ability to assess themselves with reference to some specific criteria. Such ability is gradually shaped by the influence of external and

internal factors in the process of cognitive development (Kolář and Šikulová 2009, 142). For this reason, we as teachers, should perceive the ability to assess oneself as a competence which should be further developed at schools (ibid, p. 151).

2. 2 Implementation of self-assessment into a classroom

As noted in the previous subchapter, people do not born with the ability to assess themselves with the connection to criteria. Therefore, assigning the learners with "tasks for self-assessment" as home-work or just asking them what mark they would assess themselves after an oral examination is not sufficient nor it motivates them towards self-assessment (Kolář and Šikulová 2009, 151).

The pursuit of incorporating self-assessment into the lessons must come from the teacher himself. New methods bring success only when the teacher is convinced of their benefits and believes in using them on a regular basis and is willing to do so even though it requires more pedagogical work and effort (Slavík 1999, 134).

Furthermore, Slavík (1999, 136) states that introduction of self-assessment cannot be done without preparation, which he divides into two dimensions. The first one is called the cognitive dimension which deals with the preparation of the learners for the analytical self-assessment. If the teacher implements formative assessment into the classes, the learners are gradually able to critically evaluate their learning processes and performances. In other words, the learners are trained to be the assessors themselves in the most objective way possible. The second one is called the psychosocial dimension and it concerns the preparation of social climate in the classroom. The learners are being trained to be able to manage the emotional part of evaluation, to be tolerant of other people opinions and to take such opinions into consideration. In essence, it is a form of training in social behavior which aims to create an atmosphere of cooperation, mutual trust and mutual respect not only between the pupils themselves, but also between them and the teacher.

Elaborating on the use of formative assessment, Kolář and Šikulová (2009, 151) suggest that suitable starting point could be done by asking questions (starting with "what" or "why") which support learner reflection. Pupils need a helping hand to find out what they are good at and where and how they can improve in the future. The following questions, for example, will help them to do this:

- What did I learn?
- What am I doing well in school?

- What can I improve?
- What do I want to focus on this year and what do I want to improve?
- What is still giving me a bit of trouble?
- What can I do to get better results in …?
- Why have I improved in …?
- Why did the teacher give me this grade?

(Kolář and Šikulová 2009, 152)

The above-mentioned questions might enable the learner to assess the current level of their performance, while also encouraging them to set further goals for the future. Simultaneously, these questions can help the learners to talk openly about their learning experiences (ibid). Starý and Laufková (2016, 35) suggest that from the very beginning, the teacher should introduce the question "*Why do I evaluate my work the way I do*?" into the students' thinking. This increases pupils' interest in their own learning and enables them to take responsibility for their learning and the outcomes of their work.

Another aspect of formative assessment which helps the learners towards self-assessment awareness is working with the aim. It is necessary to set not only the overall aims in teaching, but also to formulate the sub-aims as precisely as possible. The detailed formulation of the sub-aims will then make the assessment criteria much easier, as this will give us a comprehensive picture of what exactly is required of the learners and what we should focus on. Subsequently, we will then be able to give feedback to pupils as they learn, when they can still improve (Slavík 1999, 112-113). Additionally, Kolář and Šikulová (2009, 142) hold the same opinion and further say that if the pupils are used to working with aims, they will not only be able to understand why they have been given, for example, a failing grade, but will also be able to objectively assess their own performances and the results of the learning process.

As already indicated, the pupil's journey from teacher assessment to self-assessment of his or her own performance is difficult. For this reason, there should be a gradual transition from teacher-directed assessment towards pupil-directed assessment. This might be realized by giving the pupil more and more responsibility of the assessment, so that the pupil gradually becomes an advocate who is able to judge not only his own performance but also that of his classmates (Kolář and Šikulová 2009, 143). Kasíková (2001, 132) believes that "if students take responsibility for their own learning, they should also take some responsibility for its reflection, that is, to shift the assessment from the teacher more towards the group and its members".

Peer assessment contributes not only to students' personal but also to their social development. If pupils discuss together what went well in group work, for example, where there

were problems and what the causes might have been, they also learn the ability to communicate effectively and to give constructive feedback. By repeating such reflection, pupils soon realize that if they themselves want to receive feedback that is both objective and valuable, they must also be perceptive about performance of others in the classroom.

Peer assessment should have been grounded by rules. It is essential that the pupil first appreciates what his classmate has done well, what is right and what his work fulfils. Only then can he focus on the shortcomings. Moreover, if the pupil discovers any shortcomings or inconsistencies, he or she should try to suggest procedures that would help to improve the performance or work in the future. When peer assessment is regularly incorporated into the teaching, pupils will appreciate the quality of each other's work and will find it natural to recognize such work (Kolář and Šikulová 2009, 148-149).

Furthermore, if the student has learned to judge the work of others objectively and critically, he is able to focus on his own performance in the same way. Thus, the motivation for self-assessment can be an opportunity to take responsibility for one's own actions, because the essence of self-assessment is in working with error. Error is not perceived as something to be feared, but rather as a challenge that students can face. If the learners are able to identify the mistakes they have made, they are then able to assess the current state of their knowledge and skills. Based on this, they can set intermediate goals and plan the next steps that will help them to eliminate the errors discovered. At the same time, they could reflect on what caused the error and how it could be avoided next time. This is, of course, also feedback for the teacher, who is better able to understand the situation in the classroom and is able to respond to students' suggestions in order to make his teaching as effective as possible (Rakoušová, 2008).

To conclude this chapter, it should be mentioned that the procedure described above should not be regarded as the only correct one. Undoubtedly, there are many other variations on how to proceed when introducing self-assessment into teaching. In the forthcoming chapter, the reader's attention should again be drawn to a more concrete phenomenon that is linked to self-assessment.

3 Portfolio

In this chapter, the focus shifts towards a specific technique which supports learner's self-assessment: portfolio. This notion is at first defined in general and then put into the educational context.

Defining the term "portfolio" is crucial for this thesis because as Václavík (2013, 11) aptly states in his dissertation "portfolio is usually treated as a folder that is stored somewhere in the classroom without teachers and students paying any further attention to it or working with it in a systematic way".

The aforementioned claim could be rooted in the ambiguous perception of this notion which is apparent in the literature. For instance, Arter, Spandel and Culham (2001, 288) say that there is no correct, reliable and guaranteed way to work with a portfolio. On the contrary, Panitz (1996, 25) is of the opinion that there are countless such effective ways and new ones are being constantly developed.

The ambiguity in the understanding of the term is thus certainly not only among authors, but also among teachers themselves. For this reason, Píšová (2007, 50) notes that the term "portfolio" is often associated with something that is popular, desirable and highly promoted in the educational context. Although, when something is perceived as popular, there is always a risk of overusing such term due to incorrect definition and understanding.

This chapter therefore focuses on the definition of the term "portfolio" in general and then proceeds to putting the term into the context of English language classroom.

3.1 General definitions

The term "portfolio" has various interpretations and could be encountered in a wide range of different fields. According to The New Oxford Dictionary of English, the term *portafogli* is of an Italian origin and could be traced in the 18th century. Furthermore, the Latin compound *portafoglio* could be divided into *portare*, which could be translated as "carry", and *foglio*, which means "a leaf or sheet" (1998, 1445).

When defining any term in order to understand its meaning properly, using various sources might be viewed as reasonable. For this reason, this paper examines three definitions provided by English dictionaries, which are considered to be trusted and frequently used among learners and researchers.

Starting with *The Cambridge Learner's Dictionary* (n.d.), portfolio is defined as "a large, thin case used for carrying drawings, documents, etc." or as "a collection of drawings, documents, etc. that represent a person's, especially an artist's, work", or in the British English, it could be "a particular job or area of responsibility of a member of a government".

To continue, *The Oxford Learner's Dictionary* (n.d.), provides almost identical definitions, there are, however, minor variances. The word portfolio could either mean "a thin flat case used for carrying documents, drawings, etc." or it might be "a collection of photographs, drawings, etc. that you use as an example of your work, especially when applying for a job" and finally, the use in the British context is also mentioned, by stating that portfolio is "the particular area of responsibility of a government minister".

The final dictionary, which is represented in this thesis is *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* (n.d.) and it defines the portfolio as "a hinged cover or flexible case for carrying loose papers, pictures, or pamphlets". Then it could also concern "the securities held by an investor: the commercial paper held by a financial house (such as a bank)" or as mentioned in the previous two dictionaries, it could mean "a set of pictures (such as drawings or photographs) usually bound in book form or loose in a folder". The last definition provided by this dictionary is what makes it unique in comparison with the previous two dictionaries, as it states that portfolio is "a selection of a student's work (such as papers and tests) compiled over a period of time and used for assessing performance or progress". This is the first definition which takes into account the use of portfolios in the educational context.

Having analyzed three prominent and popular dictionaries, it is save to conclude that the most complex definition of the term "portfolio" is provided by Merriam-Webster Dictionary because it covers various areas, including the educational one.

3.2 Portfolio in the educational context

Since the term was explained in general, it is now time to put the notion of portfolio into the context of this thesis. In this subchapter, the attention is paid to portfolios which are used in the educational environment.

Examination of various editions of the Educational Dictionary *(Pedagogický slovník)* which were published throughout the years yielded some interesting results that only illustrate the fact that the term "portfolio" is, indeed, a relatively new concept in the Czech Republic. Starting with the first published version in 1995, the term "portfolio" does not appear in the dictionary. This suggests that at that time this concept was not only unexplored but also not

used in the context of education in the Czech Republic. However, in the next edition, which was published in 1998, portfolio is defined as a term which originally comes from the field concerning economics. It is further defined as "a collection of various pupil products (written work, artwork, laboratory reports) that documents the pupil's work and development over a period of time" (Průcha, Walterová and Mareš, 179). The authors of the dictionary also add that some teachers share the opinion that portfolio makes the system of assessment of the pupils only by grades more complex (ibid). The next version of this dictionary, which was available for the author of this thesis, was published in 2003 and remains unchanged. A significant change in interpretation of this term occurs in the latest version of the dictionary published in the 2013. Portfolio is defined as:

> a set of different products of a pupil, student or teacher that document their development and work over a certain period of time. The portfolio becomes an important means of reflection on education or career, documenting the story of the creation of personal or professional identity, key points and impulses in the process of identity development.

> (Průcha, Walterová and Mareš 2013, 209)

What makes the above-mentioned definition interesting, is the fact that portfolio is not only viewed as a collection but as a tool which is used for conscious reflection of the educational process and might also be used by the teacher. However, this thesis only focuses on the portfolio produced by the pupils themselves, therefore the other possible forms are excluded.

Kolář and Šikulová (2009, 149) do not examine portfolio in a great detail as they refer to the definition provided by other Czech author Slavík (1999, 106), who states that it is "an organized collection of pupil's work that provides information about the pupil's experience and performance". The frequently occurring designation of a portfolio as collection of pupil's work prevails among other authors as well (Kratochvílová 2014, Krejčová and Kargerová 2003).

Košťálová, Miková and Stang (2008, 112) share the same viewpoints on portfolio as the mentioned authors, but they stress two important concepts that are related to the use of portfolios. The first one concerns the fact that they view the portfolio as an synonym for "evidence". Moreover, the portfolio serves as an evidence, that illustrates the progress the pupils have done in some particular area. The second one relates to the connection between portfolios and time. In order for any progress to be noticeable, a certain amount of time needs to pass. This claim is therefore connected to the fact that keeping portfolio is an activity that has to be done regularly over a longer period of time.

Furthermore, Tomková (2007) distinguishes herself from other authors by stating that portfolio is "an organized and commented collection of pupil's materials". What makes this understanding of the use of portfolio by the learners different, is the fact that Tomková stresses that it should be accompanied by a commentary from the student, the teacher or the parent.

3.3 Purpose and aims of using portfolio

As it was implied in the previous subchapter, although portfolio represents a collection of pupil's work, it should be treated as a tool from which the learners and teachers can benefit. This claim is supported by Klenowski, Askev and Carnell (2006, 276) who say "the portfolio itself is nothing, just a lot of documents that are a stepping stone for further work".

Tomková (2007) further develops the idea above, as she points out that producing portfolio is not the goal of pupil's learning processes, but rather a means to it. Pupils do not produce their materials in order to include them into some folder. The aim of this organized collection is to work with it further by reflecting on the included materials. Such reflection might result in means of learning for the pupils.

The question of the meaningfulness of introducing portfolios into teaching is answered by Koštálová, Miková and Stang (2008, 112) by listing the following reasons:

- The portfolio links teaching and learning with assessment;
- It becomes the basis for teachers' lesson planning which is supported by information on the progress and outcomes of pupils' learning;
- It gives pupils a sense of responsibility for their own work;
- It opens up a discussion between teacher and pupil that can cover both the progress that the pupil has made as well as the mistakes which occurred;
- It can serve as a basis for the teacher's assessment, as it is unquestionable evidence of the pupil's work;
- Portfolio makes it easier for the student to work with self-assessment;

The above-mentioned list implies that portfolio is a tool which intervenes into several different areas in the educational context. Mareš and Gavora (1999, 128) support this claim by stating that portfolio presents a holistic view of the learner.

According to Kratochvílová (2014, 25), the portfolio has a great potential in the context of education and it is up to the teacher to critically decide which way will be the most suitable for the given class. In comparison with the already mentioned authors, she defines other functions of the portfolio implementation:

- the pupil creates something of value to which he or she has a positive relationship;

- the portfolio helps to assess the results of pupils' work in a comprehensive, long-term way;
- the teacher might better differentiate and individualize the education of pupils;
- it combines summative and formative assessment;

Moreover, Slavík (1999, 107) implies that learners with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia and dyscalculia, might benefit from the use of portfolios since only their learning achievements are compared with each other throughout some period of time.

Similarly to Kratochovílová (2014), Rolheiser, Bower and Stevahn, (2000, 1) further elaborate on the diversity which is connected to the use of portfolios, as they note that its purpose is based on the teachers' predetermined goals. The teachers must have a clear vision of what they want to achieve by the use of the portfolio in their classroom in advance. The goals should be determined in a way that the pupils "develop a love of learning, become self-directed learners and have a positive sense of self" (ibid).

3.4 Portfolio in the English language classroom

The purpose of this chapter is to link the previously mentioned references to portfolios and to place them into the context of them portfolios in the English language classroom.

Ioannou-Georgiou and Pavlou (2003, 23) view the portfolio as "a compilation of an individual pupil's work, showing his/her language abilities, effort, and language development over time". This definition is almost identical to the general definitions of portfolio in the educational context, as the key concepts remain the same: compilation, learner's development and some period of time.

As already discussed, portfolio is viewed as "an organized collection" by the authors. To be more specific about this collection, it may include:

- Essays and compositions in draft and final forms;
- Reports, project outlines;
- Poetry and creative prose;
- Artwork, photos, newspaper or magazine clippings;
- Audio and/or video recordings of presentations, demonstrations, etc.;
- Journals, diaries, and other personal reflections;
- Tests, test scores, and written homework exercises;
- Notes on lectures;
- Self and peer-assessments – comments, evaluations, and checklists;

(Brown and Abeywickrama 2018, 321)

When discussing the aims of incorporating the portfolio into the language classroom, Ioannou-Georgiou and Pavlou (2003, 23-24) examine this notion from two points of view. The first one concerns the teachers and they state that it provides them with "a global view of the

individual child's progress, including attitudes, learning strategies, interests, and talents" (ibid). Moreover, the provided information not only involves the global view on the progress, but also the small steps towards improvement and development which could be recorded through the continuous work on portfolio. The authors also add, that portfolio might serve as a base for discussion. This discussion might involve the teacher and the pupil individually, as they further talk about the issues recorded in the portfolio. By setting up these "conferences" the teachers can "genuinely get to know and give particular attention to all the children and establish a strong relationship with them" (ibid). Alternatively, these meetings might involve the parents as well, in order for them to be also part of the learning and assessing processes (ibid).

The second point of view, is oriented on the pupils and their benefits of using the portfolio. All of these aspects are based on the fact that the pupils are actively involved in the learning and assessing processes. By being active participants, the learners might reflect on their own learning experience and progress they made, or they might be asked to set their personal goals which should be supported by individual learning strategies. Moreover, keeping a portfolio might increase motivation and promote excitement for learning as it becomes a tangible evidence of pupil's efforts and progress (ibid). The authors also add the pupils "observe progress as it takes place, and have access to the products of their efforts to show (off) to friends and family" (ibid). Such claim implies that the pupils might have emotional connection to their portfolio as it a result of their ongoing work.

Brown and Abbeywickrama (2018, 322) introduce probably the most complex view on the attributes of using portfolios in language classrooms. They refer to Margo Gottlieb's developmental scheme which illustrates the purposes and nature of portfolio. This scheme is based on the acronym CRADLE, which stands for **C**ollecting, **R**eflecting, **A**ssessing, **D**ocumenting, **L**inking and **E**valuating.

"Collecting" refers to the fact that the pupils need to be informed what materials are expected from them to be included in the portfolio, however, the final selection should reflect their own free will and control over the selection. "Reflecting" involves the integral part of each portfolio, which is conscious practice in self-assessment techniques. This is also connected with "Assessment" which implies that the pupils should be able to recognize the quality of their work with the comparison to some criteria. "Documenting" is connected to the evidence of learner achievement. "Linking" might be interpreted in various ways, however, it means that portfolio links not only the pupil with the teacher, but also the pupil with parents and other members of

given community. And finally, "Evaluating" represents a time-consuming process which needs to be supported by learner's responsibility.

3.5 Portfolio in legislative and curriculum documents in the Czech Republic

Having defined the term "portfolio" and its use in the educational context, it is also important to examine, how this term is viewed by the documents that form the basis of the educational system in the Czech Republic.

Starting with the Education Act, specifically with Act No.561/2004 SB., on pre-school, basic, secondary, tertiary professional and other education, as amended, it does not directly mention the pupil portfolio. To continue, the already mentioned Decree No. 48/2005 Sb., on basic education and certain requirements for compulsory school attendance, is more specific, as § 14 is dedicated to the assessment of pupils, and section (2) states that the guidelines for pupils assessment are individually defined by the rules of each school, however, pupils' self-assessment as well as its related documents should be included. Although the portfolio is not directly mentioned, it is a tool used for self-assessment and includes documents which illustrate the learning process.

Furthermore, several versions of the Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education (FEP BE), which were published in the previous years, were examined for the purposes of this thesis. The version published in 2013 refers to the use of portfolios with the connection to gifted learners (FEB BE, 126). However, in the edited version of this document, this mention is no longer included, which is still the case of the version published in 2021.

To conclude, the implementation of pupil portfolio is strictly in hands of management of each school, however, it is recommended that self-assessment and its means should be included in the school rules.

4 The European Language Portfolio

This chapter aims to provide a comprehensive view into the phenomenon of The European Language Portfolio (ELP). Firstly, the background and history of this tool is briefly mentioned and then the ELP and its parts and functions are introduced to the reader.

4.1 Introducing the ELP

Based on the website of Council of Europe[1] (n.d.), The European Language Portfolio is defined as "a document in which those who are learning or have learned one or more languages can record and reflect on their language learning and intercultural experiences". As this definition suggests, the ELP is a tool, which is used for learner's self-assessment.

4.1.1 The background of the ELP

Although the first impulses for developing a tool, which would be used by the learners of a second language in order to report and reflect their learning experiences, already appeared in the 1970s, the final decision to develop the ELP was proposed in 1991. In this year, the Rüschlikon Symposium took place in Switzerland. There were two main results of this symposium: the Council of Europe should design and promote the Common European Framework of reference for language learning and also to get a working party together which would focus on the possible functions and forms of the ELP (Little, Goullier and Hughes 2011, 7). Over the next year, the aims of both documents were defined. The first one, being *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) would have the purpose to:

> promote and facilitate cooperation among educational institutions in different countries; provide a sound basis for the mutual recognition of language qualifications; [and] assist learners, teachers, course designers, examining bodies and educational administrators to situate and coordinate their efforts

> (Council for Cultural Cooperation 1992, 37)

Moreover, the *European Language Portfolio* should:

> contain a section in which formal qualifications are related to a common European scale, another in which the learner him/herself keeps a personal record of language learning experiences and possibly a third which contains examples of work done. Where appropriate entries should be situated within the Common Framework.

> (ibid, p. 40)

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[1] The Council of Europe is the continent's human right organization which facilitates and promotes understanding between its member states

These definitions clearly indicate that the ELP and CEFR are connected to each other. As previously mentioned, the ELP should be used as a tool for self-assessment and the criteria to which each owner of this portfolio should compare his/her skills and abilities in the given language is provided by the common reference levels described in the CEFR. These levels are used when defining the proficiency in the second language in regard to the five communicative activities; reading, listening, writing, spoken interaction and spoken production. The levels could also be divided into six categories: A1 and A2 (Basic User), B1 and B2 (Independent User), C1 and C2 (Proficient User). Each of the common reference levels is defined by the "can do" statements which were formulated with the support of empirical research which was funded by the National Science Foundation (North 2000, Schneider & North 2000). For greater clarity, the self-assessment grid, which illustrates each of the levels of proficiency, was designed (Little, Goullier and Hughes 2011, 8).

There were two drafts of CEFR produced by the project called *Language learning for European citizenship* in 1996 and also recommendations for the design of the ELP with variations for the given levels of proficiency. In 1997, it was finally decided that CEFR is ready to be piloted and the ELP needs to be finalized and proposed "at first on an experimental basis, to be followed by its evaluation and finalization in time for large-scale launching in the European Year of Languages to be planned for 2001" (Council for Cultural Cooperation 1997, 73).

4.1.2 The pilot projects

Between the years 1998 and 2000, 15 fifteen member states of the Council of Europe participated in the development and piloting of their versions of the ELP, the Czech Republic was one of the involved countries. These pilot projects covered all of the sectors of education: primary, lower secondary, upper secondary, vocational, university and adult. Some of them addressed issues which needed to be reflected in the portfolio e.g. the necessity of integrating a high number of immigrant students into mainstream education (Little, Goullier and Hughes 2011, 8).

As stated in the official report (Schärer 2000) the ELP "led teachers and learners to reflect on the reasons for learning languages, the language learning process, and the criteria by which learning might be evaluated". Based on this report, is was save to conclude that both teachers and learners viewed the ELP as a beneficial tool which should continue to be used in schools. Moreover, the final layout of the ELP was introduced in this report, by stating that

there should always be three parts in the portfolio: the Language Passport, the Language Biography and the Dossier (ibid).

4.1.3 The ELP in the Czech Republic

As it was mentioned in the previous subchapter, the Czech Republic was one of the countries which participated in the pilot projects. If we examine only the feedback provided by the Czech teachers and pupils, the results were also promising and positive. However, as Perclová (2006, 102) notes, these opinions were provided by the teachers who, based on their own initiative, participated in the pilot projects. Also, mainly grammar schools were involved which implies that the learners could have been on a higher level of language proficiency in comparison with other learners of the same age. These learners could therefore have a higher motivation and will for completing the ELP and having positive attitudes towards the tool.

Currently, there are five versions of the ELP available for the Czech learners: up to the age of 11, between 11 and 15, between the 15 and 19, for adults and finally, for university students. It is important to mention that there is also an on-line version of the ELP, which is, however only developed for the first four mentioned groups and the university students are not included.

The implementation of the ELP was highly supported by the Ministry of Education as many seminars aimed at the introduction of the ELP and its integration took place across the country (Brychová 2009, 61). Nevertheless, interest in the ELP implementation seems to have declined in recent years, as there are almost no current resources available. The latest official source was published in 2012 and should inform the reader about the online version of ELP. To this date, the e-portfolio is still available to the learners, however, the most recent changes were done in 2014.

4.2 ELP and its parts

It was discussed that the ELP has several versions depending on the age of the learners to which it is intended to. The differences mainly concern the complexity of the language which is appropriate for the given group and this is connected to the already discussed levels of language proficiency. However, there are always three parts of the ELP that remain the same. This subchapter focuses on the introduction of each part but it is important to note that since this paper focuses on the lower-secondary classes, *The European Language Portfolio for learners aged 11 to 15 in the Czech Republic* will serve as an example.

4.2.1 Language passport

This part of the ELP serves as a clear and concise overview of the language learner as both home and school contexts are included. At first the learners are instructed to fill-in their personal information e.g. name, address, mother tongue and other languages they use. Then the learners should focus on the following areas:

- My language study
- Other ways I learn languages and get to know other cultures
- How do I assess myself?
- Languages in which I can do more
- Teacher' assessment
- Language exams

(ELP 2001, 5-8)

Moreover, the learner is provided with self-assessment grids which are directly connected to the levels of proficiency in CEFR (see subchapter 4.1.1). The language passport does not and cannot in any way replace official documents such as certificates and diplomas (Brychová, Janíková, and Sladkovská 2012, 34).

Because the language passport clearly and comprehensibly describes what the learner knows and which practical experience of using the language he or she has acquired, the user can use it, for example, when transferring from one school to another, when changing teachers, when enrolling in a language course or when applying for internship (ibid).

4.2.2 Language biography

The term which could be used when defining this part of the ELP is "a language process guide". This section is based on learners self-assessment as they are asked to cover the following questions:

- How can you learn foreign language?
- Can you become a better language learner?
- What do you want to be able to do?
- What can you already do?
- Your own list of what you can already do

(ELP 2001, 12-34)

The part "What can you already do?" is the most complex one as the learners should compare their communicative language competences with the levels of proficiency defined in CEFR. Each skill has its own indicators, also called *can do statements*, and is further elaborated with the connection to the given level (A1, A2 and B1). For instance, concerning the spoken production at A1 level, the learners are provided with the indicator "*I can describe where I live*". It is up to the learners to decide whether the statement is true for them or not. It is also assumed that the user will make additional notes concerning the given statement. By making these notes, the learner is encouraged to reflect on his/her learning styles, strategies and other intercultural experiences.

The remaining parts help the user with setting their personal goals they want to achieve in the second language and also with finding the ways of accomplishing them (Brychová, Janíková, and Sladkovská 2012, 23).

It is important to note, that the Language Biography is a part that is ever-changing as it should be updated regularly. By this ongoing work, the users will obtain a better understanding of their progress (McLagan 2006, 6).
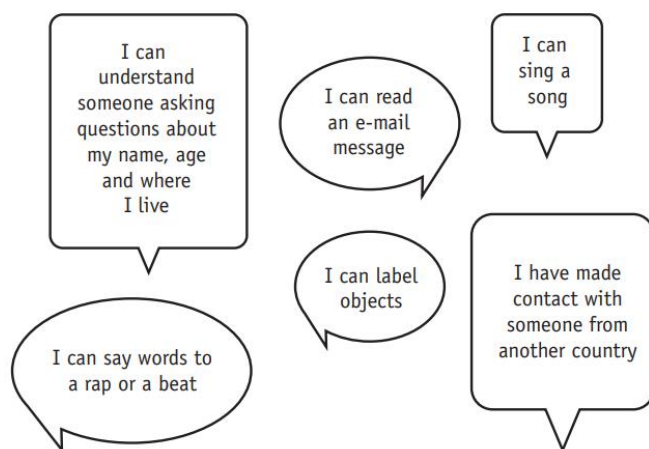
Figure 1: Speech bubbles in the Language Biography (McLagan 2006, 7)

4.2.3 Dossier

The last part is called the Dossier and it is considered to be one of the most important sections of the ELP. It is a selection of the user's materials and it serves as an evidence of the language learning process. There is no regulation that determines what belongs here and what does not. Moreover, it is up to the judgment of each portfolio user what he or she considers valuable. However, these criteria might change with age and therefore, revision of the included materials is recommended (Brychová, Janíková, and Sladkovská 2012, 39).

It was implied that the Dossier should be updated regularly and therefore, the collection becomes more complex with time. McLagan (2006, 8) thus suggests "children can divide it into different sections according to different skills, intercultural materials, or on a term-by-term or yearly basis to show progress, for example".

Figure 2: Possible sections in the Dossier (McLagan 2006,7)

4.3 Functions of the ELP

The ELP was designed in order to fulfill two functions: reporting and pedagogical. The reporting function is similar to an artist who shows his abilities through portfolio. The user of the ELP also puts his knowledge and abilities on display but in relation to foreign languages. As it was stated, the ELP cannot replace official diplomas and certificates, but it can serve as its complement as it provides additional information about the user. This function corresponds to the Council of Europe's interest in "facilitating individual mobility and relating regional and national qualifications to internationally agreed standards in CEFR" (Little and Perclová 2001, 3).

Concerning the pedagogical function, by ongoing reflection and self-assessment, the learning process becomes not only more transparent to the learners but they also gain more responsibility for their own learning (ibid). This function is connected to the interest of the Council of Europe in "fostering the development of learner autonomy and promoting lifelong learning" (ibid).

4.4 Aims of the ELP

"The ultimate aim of the ELP is to support and improve the learning and teaching of languages" (Council of Europe, n.d.). This is achieved by keeping the learners motivated through the use of the ELP. Moreover, the learners are encouraged to set up their personal goals in language learning. These goals need to be supported by learner's efforts and dedication to the whole process. As the users progress with their work on the portfolio, they are provided with

"a record of the linguistic and cultural skills they have acquired" (ibid). This way, the progress is visible to the learners which might result in learner's satisfaction with the language learning process.

There are other sub-aims of the ELP and they include:

- The ELP encourages learners to take responsibility for their learning.
- The ELP promotes communication within the class by providing a common language.
- The ELP helps make achievement visible and comprehensible for employers, for other schools, etc.
- The ELP puts learning into a wider European context.
- The ELP facilitates mobility.

(Council of Europe, n.d.)

4.5. Using the ELP in the classroom

When implementing the ELP into the classroom, the preparation must start with the teacher. Moreover, it is necessary for him to be familiar with ELP's contents and its aims and functions because only then he will be able to convey this information to the learners and motivate them to use the portfolio.

When considering how often should the learners work with the portfolio, there are two important aspects that the teachers have to bear in mind. The first one concerns the pupils and their work with the ELP and the second one involves the teacher and his time devoted to the discussion, reflection or setting targets related to the ELP. Generally, it is recommended to work with the ELP at regular intervals throughout the whole school year. The first part that should be filled-in is the Language Passport as it serves as the concise overview of the learner. The work on the Language Biography should also begin from the outset and then the learners should go back to each section regularly in order to reflect on their progress, achievements and goals they have set for themselves. And finally, the Dossier should be updated whenever the learners feel that some specific material should be included in the folder as a concrete evidence of the learning process (McLagan 2006, 12-13).

As it was already mentioned, the ELP aims at developing learner's autonomy. However, the teacher cannot be excluded from the process of working with this tool. The teacher has to set up fixed routine connected to the work with portfolio and also function as a guide throughout the whole process (Little 2000, 12). Also, the information provided by the learners might serve

as the basis for further discussion and it is the teacher's responsibility to moderate such discussions in order to help the learners understand their struggles and other questions related to the process of language learning (McLagan 2006, 12).

Moreover, McLagan (ibid) suggests that the work with the ELP should also be supported by classroom activities which are directly based on the "can do statements" because this way, the learners can easily decide whether they have achieved the aim of the activity and they are also being trained to complete the self-assessment tasks in the ELP as they are connected to the "can do statements" as well.

5 Self-assessment and portfolio through the lens of research

As it was already stated, self-assessment and its specific technique in the form of portfolio became two fashionable terms that are frequently used by various authors in the field of education. Any person interested in this topic is provided with a plethora of sources in which these terms are explained in detail, including its functions and forms and most importantly, the reader is encouraged to accept that these techniques are desirable and beneficial not only for the learner but also for the teacher himself.

For the purposes of this thesis, the book *Pedagogika pro učitele*, written by Vališová and Kasíková in 2011 serves as an example of the above mentioned issue. This book claims to be "the indispensable source of information for future teachers" as it covers contemporary pedagogical trends and ideas. In the chapter *Current trends in development of school assessment*, the authors present two main tendencies: the learner should be assessed in a complex way and the learner should be included in the process of assessment. Surprisingly, the authors do not cover these aspects any further as they discuss whether it is reasonable to replace traditional way of assessment which are the grades.

To shift the focus to the authors interested in the field of foreign language teaching, Harmer (2015), Richards and Rodgers (2014) and Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) mention self-assessment and portfolio in the relation with techniques that should be implemented in the foreign language classrooms. None of these aforementioned authors, however, supports this idea by some concrete study which would confirm this claim.

The above-mentioned facts made the author of this thesis interested in actual studies exploring the effects and assumed benefits of self-assessment and its techniques in the English

classroom. It should be noted, that not all of the mentioned studies focus directly on lower-secondary classes, as not many of them have been conducted.

Starting with the most recent source available to the author of this thesis, Keplová (2021) carried out a literature review of ten research studies focusing on the development of self-assessment in English studies in tertiary education. It is not possible to summarize this review unequivocally as it has produced mixed results. To begin with, the included teachers view self-assessment to be beneficial on one hand, but demanding on the other one. Concerning the benefits, according to the review, learners who were involved in self-assessment techniques were significantly more successful in passing tests and exams. Also, self-assessment carried out in a written form has been proved to improve learners' writing skills in English. Furthermore, students have a positive attitude towards self-assessment, which is, however, conditioned by the role of the teacher, who must set clear criteria and also raise awareness about techniques, which are connected to self-assessment.

To shift the focus towards portfolios in particular, group of researchers from Netherlands were interested if there is any relation between the use of portfolios with the support of self-assessment techniques and student motivation towards second language learning. They created two groups of learners[2]: experimental and control. The experimental group involved learners who were using portfolios as the basis for further reflection of their learning processes. The control group did not use the portfolio and the learners were not involved in self-assessment techniques. The questionnaire survey revealed that student motivation was not enhanced by the portfolio implementation and therefore, the relation between the use of portfolios and motivation is not as straightforward as it is assumed in the literature (Baas, Vermeulen, Castelijns, Martens and Mien Segers 2020).

Concerning the studies focusing on the ELP implementation, the case study conducted by Spanish researches has shown that the learners[3] were more motivated towards second language learning as they felt responsible for their own progress in the second language. Moreover, the communication in the target language between the learners and teachers increased due to the use of the ELP. Nevertheless, learners were not able to work with the

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[2] The experimental group included 419 learners and the control one consisted of 117 learners. They were all 9-12 years old.
[3] This case study lasted 4 months and included 25 fifth graders.

portfolio on their own and needed precise instructions and assistance from the teacher (Román and Soriano 2015).

The second example is a study that investigates the experiences with the ELP in a private school in Turkey[4]. This school created their own version of the ELP which is based on their school curriculum and is validated by the Council of Europe to publish it and use it. The implementation of the ELP is supported by five common practices: raising awareness, goal tracking, making choices, reflection and self-assessment. In practice, this is accomplished by the teacher selecting a descriptor that becomes the aim of the lesson. Learners assess themselves before and after the activity and plan the strategies needed for mastering the task. The main finding of this study is that if learners have a specific goal, they are also motivated to learn a foreign language. Furthermore, learners agreed that they apply the strategies they learn in school in real life and they also have more self-confidence because they have a clear picture of what they can do in a given context (Yilmaz and Akcan 2011).

To conclude, the implementation of self-assessment and portfolios in particular is proposed by various authors not only in education in general, but also in the context of language teaching. However, there is thin empirical evidence that would either proved the assumed benefits or covered the concrete practices which are used to foster learner involvement in self-assessment techniques. Nevertheless, the studies reviewed by the author of this thesis indicate that self-assessment in language teaching can be beneficial, but it is conditioned by the role of the teacher, which is crucial in its implementation, as the teacher must not only set clear criteria related to the learner's self-assessment, but must guide the learner through the whole process.

6 The learner in the seventh grade of basic school

Since this thesis focuses on a learner who is in the seventh grade of basic school, it is necessary to take a closer look at this age group and to introduce characteristics that could be relevant to the context of this thesis.

A seventh grade student is normally around 12-13 years old. Vágnerová (2005, 323) refers to this period as early adolescence. It is a period where, in addition to rapid and seemingly noticeable physical changes, emotional, cognitive and social development continues (Thorová 2015, 414).

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[4] This study included 44 learners (9-12 years) and two teachers. They were observed for 3 months.

As part of the overall development there is a change in the way of thinking, the adolescent is able to think abstractly, even about variants that do not really exist (Vágnerová 2005; Thorová 2015; Langmeier and Krejčířová 2006). Piaget (1966, 1970) refers to this period as the formal operational stage of cognitive development. It means that the adolescent is able to work with various information systematically as he or she is able to set up different hypotheses and by successive steps either to rule them out or confirm them (Vágnerová 2005, 333). Langmeier and Krejčířová (2006, 150) even describe the adolescent as a researcher who forms different hypotheses.

Due to the new way of thinking, there is a change in the approach to the time dimension. For adolescents, the future becomes important. This may involve anticipating or planning future events. In a similar way, it is possible to think about the past - to think about why a given situation happened, whether it was necessary and whether it could have developed differently (Vágnerová 2005, 335).

The development of metacognition is also linked to the above-mentioned, as the estimation of one's own abilities and skills improves. Based on this, the adolescents can set more realistic goals they can achieve (ibid p. 339).

However, it is important to mention that the new way of thinking becomes a source of uncertainty. Adolescents tend to be overly critical when assessing their own performance. This may be due to general insecurity and emotional imbalance, which manifests itself as low self-confidence or fear of failure (ibid).

To shift the focus back towards implementation of portfolio, the learner in the 7th grade of basic school possesses all the prerequisites to be able to work with this tool as the ability to work critically with different information should be developed as well as the ability to assess one's performance and plan realistic goals. However, it is important to take into account the fact that adolescents can be overly critical and insecure about their performance.

Practical part

7 Action research

The empirical part of this thesis presents an action research that was designed and conducted by the author of this paper. To begin with, it should be mentioned that the author is a trainee teacher, who conducted this research during her teaching practice at a basic school in the Pardubice region. The action research began with a diagnostic phase in February 2021 and formally ended in January 2022 with a group discussion with the involved pupils.

7.1 Introduction

Before introducing the aim, questions and specific methods of this research, it is necessary to introduce the reader to what led the author of this research to explore this topic. In addition, from now on, the first person "I" is used in this thesis because as Tracy states "it reminds the reader of the researcher's presence and influence" (Tracy 2013, 234).

In the course of studies, we often encounter the term "professional identity", which includes, for example, teacher's beliefs, values and approach to teaching in general. On this basis, I also reflected on how I would describe myself as an English language teacher. Personally, I believe that it is desirable for the learner to be involved in the learning process, and for this reason I have also been interested in literature which discusses and supports this belief. One of the tools to achieve this is the portfolio, which is often mentioned and recommended by the authors. Later, I began to notice how the term was sometimes overused, which sparked my curiosity about the subject. It also raised another question in my mind: *How could I consider something to be part of my professional identity when I do not have sufficient empirical evidence for it, nor have I experienced it for myself?*

7.2 Research aim

The main aim of this action research is to incorporate The European English Portfolio into the lower-secondary English classroom. Furthermore, this research aims to investigate the whole process of integration of the ELP from the point of view of the teacher.

Based on the above-mentioned aim, the following research questions were set for the practical part of the thesis:

- *What challenges might a teacher face when implementing the EJP?*
- *What are the concrete steps when implementing the EJP?*

7.3 Research methodology and schedule

Regarding the chosen methodology, for the purpose of this thesis the previously mentioned action research was selected. Action research can be applied in many social domains, but if we focus on the context of education, it means that the teacher selects specific area of his teaching that could be improved, better explored or understood and suggests new practices or alternatives to improve his teaching practice (Burns 2010, 2). The teacher thus becomes a researcher, or what Petty calls a "reflective practitioner," who not only critically examines the context of his own teaching, but also becomes a participant in that research (Petty 2009, 4).

Action research is characterized by its cyclical nature. Although the authors describe the phases of this research in different ways, what they agree on is that these cycles may repeat until the researcher determines that satisfactory results have been achieved (Burns 2010, 7). The model chosen for this research includes the following phases:

1. Planning
2. Action
3. Observation
4. Reflection

(Burns 2010, 8)

To introduce the aforementioned phases in the context of this action research, the planning phase started with a diagnosis of the situation in the chosen classroom in February 2021, in response to the data, preparations for the implementation of the European Language Portfolio took place over the course of June and August 2021, with final changes being made in October 2021. In addition, action points of the research were selected. The intervention and observation were carried out over a period of 5 weeks, followed by a reflection on the first cycle, for which one week was set aside. Based on the reflection, changes were made to the intervention, which together with the observation lasted for another 5 weeks. In early January 2022, the research was formally concluded with a group discussion with the involved pupils.

7.3.1 Instruments for data collection

In order to answer the research questions, a variety of instruments were used. To be more specific, observations, interviews, reflective diary, filled-in ELP and other classroom documents were used to collect qualitative data. Starting with the first tool, observation, enabled me to focus on specific information. For instance, during the diagnostic phase, I focused on

situations during which the learners are given opportunities to assess their own performance and also on activities which are based on portfolio work. As Burns (2010, 63) recommends, I created very simple check list which covered the two aforementioned issues.

Concerning the interviews, they were conducted during the planning phase in order to gather more information on the use self-assessment techniques and work with portfolio from the point of view of the mentor. Moreover, interviews with the learners took place at the end of the research in order to find out learners' opinions in regards to the new techniques which were presented to them. To further specify the nature of the interviews, they were conducted as semi-structured interviews. This means that I had specific areas that I wanted to explore and thus, I prepared concrete questions or points which were presented to the mentor or the learners. Then it was necessary for me to lead the interview and guide the participants. As Burns (2010, 75) points out "you are likely to find out some things in more depth and so will get richer information" by conducting a semi-structured interview.

As for the reflective diary, which Burn (2010, 89) defines as a tool which "allows you to record the events and happenings in your location, your reflections, beliefs and teaching philosophies, your ideas and insights about your practice", I started keeping it in May 2021 during the diagnostic phase of the research, since the results raised important questions and issues that needed to be addressed afterwards. Furthermore, I finished writing the journal after the final lesson dedicated to ELP took place in January 2022.

And lastly, filled-in ELP and other classroom documents, in this case, concern lesson plans and self-assessment materials used throughout the phase of intervention. Moreover, as Burns (2010, 91) proposes these materials "can become a means for collecting data and identifying the key issues".

7.4 Research background

Before presenting the specific phases of this action research in detail, I consider it necessary to give a closer look at the background in which this research was carried out, as it had a great influence on the course of the whole research. It has been already mentioned that this research was performed during my teaching practice, meaning that I first observed my mentor's lessons and then conducted the lessons myself while being observed and evaluated by the mentor.

However, the course of the teaching practice was significantly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, due to which all schools in the Czech Republic were closed for several months. As

a result, teaching was dramatically affected as it was moved to online platforms. Pupils and teachers were therefore joining classes from home which was challenging for both of the parties. Due to these facts, the planning phase of this research was especially affected as it was challenging to get a comprehensive view of the classroom in which I was to conduct my research. It was clear that not all of the practices in my mentor's teaching were transferable to the online environment.

To continue, the intervention was also influenced by the pandemic, mainly in the sense of uncertainty in the case of teaching moving back to online mode, which I was prepared for, but I was also aware that this could significantly bias the research results. In the end, the intervention was not carried out with the support of online platforms. However, in the previous chapter, it is stated the intervention together with the observation lasted five weeks in both cases. Nevertheless, four weeks were initially allocated for these phases. The delay was caused by the pupils being either in quarantine or due to other organizational issues, which will be addressed later on.

To give a closer look at the school where the research took place, it was a medium-sized school located in the Pardubice region. Regarding the pupils involved, it was a seventh grade class that was split in half. Thus, 15 pupils participated in the research.

The group that was selected for the purpose of this research was chosen on the recommendation of my mentor, as she is also the form teacher of this class and thus, knows the pupils very well. According to her, this was a group with a good classroom climate, so she anticipated that the pupils would also be open to new approaches to teaching.

Moreover, the selected group had three English lessons per week. For the purposes of this research, Thursdays were set aside for ELP work and other related activities were covered during the remaining lessons.

7.5 Planning the action

This phase of research begins with a clear definition of a problem or issue to be focused on. However, it does not end there, in addition, plan of action that will bring about change in the given area has to be developed (Burns 2010, 8). According to Burns (ibid), these issues should be taken into consideration: "i) what kind of investigation is possible within the realities and constrains of the teaching situation; and ii) what potential improvements are possible". In my case, however, the goal was clearly stated; what needed to be explored and well understood

was the environment in which the research would be conducted. The following chapter therefore discusses how this initial diagnosis was carried out and what results it produced.

7.5.1 Diagnostic phase

As mentioned, this phase began in February 2021 during the teaching practice, which was conducted in an online format. At the beginning of the practice, I observed my mentor and set two questions that I wanted to answer using the simple checklist:

- *Do they use The European Language Portfolio or other forms of portfolio?*
- *Do the learners have opportunities to assess their own performance?*

To continue, a class suitable for this research was recommended to me by my mentor, however, it must be added that during the time of observations, she was not yet informed about the aim of the research. That was done in order to ensure that the observations were not influenced by anything, even indirectly.

Based on the observations, it can be concluded that the selected learners did not use the European Language portfolio in English classes or any other form of portfolio. Concerning the opportunities for self-assessment, I encountered several situations during which the teacher asked the learners if they thought they were able to complete e.g. a test or a homework or whether there was still something they needed to work on in detail. However, majority of the learners confirmed that everything was clear and no further practice or explanation was necessary. It is only a speculation of mine, but I am not certain if the learners truly contemplated about the issues they might be having in terms of their language acquisition.

Also, during one of my observations, the aim of the lesson was a revision of the current unit (grammar, vocabulary) from the textbook. Moreover, in the textbook there was a final exercise in which the learners were asked about their progress in the particular unit. The mentor let each pupil reflect on this and then they could individually comment if they wanted to. Some pupils simply said that the unit was easy for them, others said it was too hard, but no specific achievements or struggles were mentioned.

To summarize, the observations showed that pupils do not use the European Language Portfolio in English lessons. As for the opportunities during which they are encouraged to assess their own performance, they do occur, but they are rather shallow as they are based more on preferences and a more in-depth assessment is not much fostered.

As the end of the teaching practice period approached in May, schools reopened in the Czech Republic and the teaching format was once again face-to-face. Therefore, I decided to interview the mentor and as already mentioned, I used semi-structured interview and focused on the following areas:

- *Does the mentor have some experiences with the European Language Portfolio?*
- *Does she use any form of portfolio in her lessons?*
- *What is mentor's view on self-assessment in English classes?*

Based on the interview, I could conclude that the mentor heard about the ELP during her university studies and therefore, she had some general idea about its aim but she was not familiar with its functions and the specific aims. Following this information, I gave her more comprehensive insight into the usage of the ELP.

As I introduced the Dossier to her, she told me that her students are used to having something similar to this. Although they call it a "portfolio" it rather performs the functions of a folder. Each of the students should have their own folder in which they gather everything connected to their work in English lessons e.g. tests, projects and handouts. Maintenance of this folder is compulsory however, it is up to the learners to decide which materials are worth gathering.

The mentor then said that the folder servers the learners either as a complex study material where they can find relevant sources for their further learning or practice e.g. in case there is a mid-term test, the materials in the folder should cover the important areas needed for passing the test. Also, the folder should remind the learners of the progress they made during the school year.

From the point of the mentor, at the end of the term she collects all of the folders and marks them. However, she is not focused on each individual piece in the folder but rather on the folder as a whole. The main area of interest is regularity for the mentor as the folder should mirror the progress during the year. Also, when there are cases in which the teacher is conflicted between two marks at the end of the term, she goes through the folder once again and it helps her to decide which mark is more suitable for the learner. The mentor also mentioned that the families of the learners find the folder beneficial too since they can see all the work their child or grandchild did throughout the year.

Concerning her views on implementation of self-assessment into the classroom, she finds it suitable to focus on them at the end of the given unit. Moreover, in her view, the exercises in the textbooks are sufficient.

To summarize the diagnostic phase of this action research, it yielded three important results:

- The work with The European Langue Portfolio will be completely new experience for the selected learners.
- The learners are used to maintaining portfolio, however it is used as a means of gathering classroom materials. This folder might serve as a learning material for the learners, however, it is not used for self-assessment.
- Activities focusing on pupils' self-assessment are marginally introduced but without further depth as they tend to focus on general views and opinions.

On the basis of the afore-mentioned, I had to start planning the concrete steps that need to be made when implementing this tool. The following subchapter focuses on this issue.

7.5.2 Preparation for implementation of the ELP

Based on the conclusions of the previous section, it was essential to plan how exactly The European Language Portfolio will be introduced to the learners and how the work with this tool will be organized and further supported by other self-assessment techniques. The first and quite reasonable source of information for me was the official manuals which, in my view, should cover these issues. Unfortunately, to my knowledge, the official sources focus more on the general introduction of this tool, e.g. its history, parts, functions and aims, or its connection with the CEFR. An example that illustrates this issue may be the handbook *Preparing teachers to use the European Language Portfolio* written in 2007 by the major proponents of this tool Little, Cohonen and Perclová, as it does not contain any specific steps or activities related to the actual implementation.

In light of the above, there was a need to review studies that dealt with the implementation of the ELP and thus mentioned specific steps that needed to be taken or other information that was relevant. From July to August 2022, I attempted to piece together information from various studies conducted around the world. Some of these studies are mentioned in Chapter 5, others were not included because they contained similar results. To summarize the information that I have found to be important for the conduct of this research, these are:

- Implementation of the ELP is considered to be successful if it is supported by the use of other self-assessment techniques.
- The role of the teacher is crucial when implementing the ELP, as he should guide the learners throughout the process and provide concrete criteria.
- Working with aim has been proved to be a beneficial technique when raising self-assessment awareness in learners.

With these insights and experiences, it was possible to have a better idea of what working with the portfolio during the research process might look like. However in the course of preparation, two more questions arose that needed to be answered:

- *Should the whole European language portfolio be included or only part of it?*
- *Should the online or the printed version be used?*

Concerning the first question, the ELP is designed to be worked with over a long period of time e.g. throughout the whole school year, however, two months were set aside for the research. Based on this information, I started to wonder, whether it is even possible to conduct the research in such a short period of time. As for the second question, as it was mentioned in chapter 4.1.3, there is an online version of the ELP and I began to consider whether it would be more appropriate to use this version, especially in light of the unclear situation around the pandemic and the possibility that teaching would move back to an online format.

The second question was promptly answered by the mentor. As there is one computer room at the school, access would need to be arranged in advance and there is no guarantee that it would be free at the time needed. Consequently, the mentor pointed out to me that a lot of time would pass before pupils switched on their computers and logged into their accounts. Moreover, she also mentioned that she had a poor experience with pupils having to create their own accounts somewhere and being responsible for the login details. Thus, this question was considered to be answered.

As for the first question, I had the opportunity to make an appointment with a teacher who had experience with using the ELP in their classes. This meeting that took place in Přelouč was beyond useful. The teacher was introduced to the aim of this research and to concerns connected with it. Before answering my questions, she revealed to me that she was using her modified version of the ELP since the official version contains, especially the Language Passport, a lot of data that is not useful for the learners and might be perceived as overwhelming. Instead, her version contains the section My English World which is based on the Language

Passport but is designed in a simplified form. Afterwards, she recommended that since there were only two months to conduct the research, it would be more appropriate to focus on just one skill from the Language Biography. In this manner, there might be more space for developing self-assessment awareness in learners rather than spending this very limited time by filling in the ELP. Hence, she suggested that simple self-assessment techniques should be included, especially as this would be a new experience for the pupils.

Thanks to this preparatory phase, during which I first examined the necessary literature and relevant studies and then discussed the issues with experienced teachers, I was able to develop an action plan for this research. However, before proceeding to the presentation of the plan, it is necessary to introduce my modified version of the European Language Portfolio which is a direct result of this phase.

7.5.3 Modified version of the ELP

It has already been mentioned that I have created my own modified version of the European Language Portfolio. The reasons for these modifications have been noted between the lines, but need to be mentioned again specifically. The first reason is that it would not be possible to focus on the whole portfolio due to the very limited time allocation for this research. Based on this reason, I decided to focus on only one skill, which is speaking. The learners are thus provided with descriptors for these areas at A1 and A2 level, as in the original version. Also, it is important to mention that a self-assessment grid for all language skills is available to the pupils in case they are interested.

Another reason is the Language Passport section, which is not only disproportionately broad but does not reflect the current interests of the students. To be more specific, in this section the pupils are asked to fill in the opportunities in which they use the English language apart from school, but there is no mention of areas such as music, films, websites and apps. Considering the fact that this version of the portfolio was published 20 years ago and has not been edited in any way since, one is hardly surprised. Therefore, this section is simplified and focuses on topics that might be close to the students' interests. Also, due to major changes that no longer correspond to the original form of this section, I have decided to name it, in the same way as the teacher I had a meeting with, My English World.

The other reasons are rather subjective, however, from my point of view, the dominant language in the portfolio should not be Czech, but English. In the official version, all information is always stated and explained in Czech and then translated into English and in

smaller font. In my version it is the opposite, thus the description of the task is first presented in English and then in Czech.

In addition, and this is very much based on my personal opinion, the overall design of the portfolio is not attractive to young learners as it appears more like some sort of manual at first glance. For this reason, I attempted to create a more appealing cover of the portfolio, as it displays typical symbols of English-speaking countries. As for the inside of the portfolio, I aimed for a simplified content. I also added some motivational pictures to encourage the learners.

In summary, my version of the portfolio is simplified as it focuses on only one of the language skills. The other apparent change which concerns the Language Passport was renamed My English World, is also condensed and at the same time enhanced to include areas in English that might reflect students' current interests. Regarding the overall design of the portfolio, efforts have been made to make it more attractive and straightforward.

7.5.4 Action points

Taking into account the information and findings from the planning phase of this research, three main areas of focus were established for the intervention:

<u>Implementation of the modified version of The European Language Portfolio</u>

The following steps have been proposed to support a course of action in this area:

- For the next 4 weeks, every Thursday will be allocated for portfolio work (20 to 15 minutes at the end of the lesson)
- In each of these lessons, learners will be introduced to a specific part of the portfolio. Each pupil will first work alone and then a group discussion will take place.
- My role will consist of monitoring the students, answering any queries, assisting with completion and formulating ideas. I will then lead a discussion based on the information I have gathered from the pupils and then, they might update their notes.

<u>Development of self-assessment awareness in learners</u>

The following steps have been proposed to support a course of action in this area:

- Pupils will be engaged in simple activities based on self-assessment. These might include simple check-lists after some activity, verbal assessment of given task either from point of view of individual learners or in groups.

- My role will involve developing pupils' responses. It is not desirable for pupils to simply rate how they liked the activity or lesson as a whole, but rather to try to articulate exactly why they did well, what could have been done in a better way, etc. These questions are further discussed in chapter 2.2.

<u>Work with short-term goals that are based on the long-term goals in the ELP</u>

The following steps have been proposed to support a course of action in this area:

- Activities that focus on speaking will be based on the descriptors in the ELP where possible.

- After completing such activities, pupils will be asked to take the portfolio and attempt to find which aims were involved and also try to formulate the reasons why they think so.

- My role will be to develop activities that are based on the descriptors in the ELP and also to evaluate the appropriateness of the activities for the lesson as a whole. Also, I will be helping the pupils to formulate their ideas and leading the follow-up discussion.

For the purposes of the intervention, which includes these action points, I have created a table in which I will record the steps on a weekly basis. It is not possible to plan in advance which activity, apart from the EJP work, will fit exactly into the overall aims of the lessons that will take place in the next 4 weeks. Moreover, I also intend to continue to keep a reflective diary so that later on I will be able to capture this phase as genuinely as possible.

7.6 Intervention I

In order to maintain clarity, each week of the intervention will be described in relation to the three areas mentioned in the previous chapter.

WEEK 1

<u>Implementation of the modified version of The European Language Portfolio</u>

As this was the first lesson in which the pupils worked with the portfolio, it was necessary to introduce them to the tool and what it is used for. Also, the pupils were made aware of why they would be working with this tool, that is, it was the subject of my research. The pupils were then invited to ask questions concerning the portfolio. There were three areas of interest to the pupils:

- *Will the portfolio be graded?*

- *Is it compulsory?*
- *Will the portfolio be shown to anyone?*

Although the mentor and I discussed these possible issues prior to the lesson, I did not want to present it to the pupils as facts, but rather as an outcome based on a group discussion of everyone involved. The discussion resulted in:

- The portfolio itself will not be graded, but will be part of the materials that pupils place in the folder they are already familiar with.
- Participation in portfolio work will not be mandatory.
- Access to the portfolio, apart from the pupils themselves, will be provided to the mentor and myself. There is also the possibility that I will scan some parts, but it will be published anonymously and with the consent of the pupils.

After the initial discussion, one page was handed out to the pupils focusing on *My English World*. This part was presented to the pupils and as there were no questions, the pupils started to fill it in. This page took them about 15 minutes to complete. However, the rate of completion varied from pupil to pupil. All pupils participated.

Development of self-assessment awareness in learners

As part of the textbook exercise, the pupils were asked to write about a person they admire and then share their piece with a classmate. Afterwards, a whole-class discussion took place to determine whether the learners were successful in the tasks and their reasoning for thinking so. As both activities had clear criteria, in the first one the pupils were given clues to cover and in the second one, the aim was to present their writing, it was not difficult for the them to explain specifically, whether they had met the criteria or not.

Work with short-term aims that are based on the long-term goals in the ELP

Since the portfolio work started at the end of the week, there was not space to focus on this area.

WEEK 2

As the Autumn Holiday took place during this week, and the only English lesson was focused on Halloween, there was not space for the areas on which this research focuses.

WEEK 3

<u>Implementation of the modified version of The European Language Portfolio</u>

Pupils were presented with another page from *My English World*. Discussion then followed again, focusing on the areas of interest covered on this page.

<u>Development of self-assessment awareness in learners</u>

After completing a reading comprehension activity, the pupils were requested to complete a simple check list in which they assessed their performance.

<u>Work with short-term aims that are based on the long-term goals in the ELP</u>

The aim of one activity was to interview a classmate about their weekend, e.g. what they did and how they felt about it, and then switch roles. When the activity was finished, the learners were asked to match the aim of this activity with the aims described in the ELP, for instance *"I can describe what I did in the past"*.

WEEK 4

<u>Implementation of the modified version of The European Language Portfolio</u>

A new section in the portfolio, *the Language Biography*, has been presented to the learners. Within 15 minutes at the end of the lesson, the pupils managed to fill one page, which focused on *How can you learn foreign languages?*. Afterwards, a whole-class discussion was held again.

<u>Development of self-assessment awareness in learners</u>

This lesson was designed to review the current unit. At the end of the lesson, I set aside 10 minutes during which the learners were asked to reflect on what they had learned in the unit, what they had done well, what they could focus on more and how they could specifically achieve it.

<u>Work with short-term aims that are based on the long-term goals in the ELP</u>

No such activity took place this week in order not to overwhelm the pupils by reflecting on their performance.

WEEK 5

<u>Implementation of the modified version of The European Language Portfolio</u>

In this lesson, the focus was once again on *the Language Biography*, specifically on the part *Can you become a better English learner?*. After the learners completed the page, a whole-class discussion was again held, focusing on the ideas that arose during the course of filling it out.

<u>Development of self-assessment awareness in learners</u>

Since, one of the lesson was dedicated to a unit test this week, there was not enough space for incorporating such activity.

<u>Work with short-term aims that are based on the long-term goals in the ELP</u>

An activity in the textbook focused on expressions related to inviting someone to an event. The pupils were then asked to participate in a conversation during which they would invite a classmate to the event and then, they were asked to answer the questions. Once they were finished, the pupils were requested to match the descriptor in the ELP to the aim of the activity. The primary descriptor was "*I can invite someone somewhere and respond to invitations*", however, there were other options that could be accepted as well.

7.6.1 Reflection of Intervention I

As in the previous chapters, this one will be structured according to the action points that were identified for this research in order to maintain clarity.

<u>Implementation of the modified version of The European Language Portfolio</u>

Regarding this area, I consider the first lesson, during which the portfolio was presented to the pupils to be fundamental, as it set the tone for the whole research. The learners were introduced to the aims and possible benefits of keeping the portfolio and to the overall design. In addition, they were informed that their opinions are valid and welcomed in order to determine whether these claims were true. After being told this information, the pupils seemed to be relieved and I would also say that they appeared to be more motivated, not only to keep a portfolio but also to take part in the whole research.

Based on the intervention, I consider the main benefit of this modified version of the ELP to be the fact that the pupils realized that learning English does not only takes place in school or when studying for a test, but rather that the process includes any situation in which

they use the target language. For some it was playing computer games, for others watching videos and movies. I have often been asked by pupils "*Does this really count?*".

The paragraph above suggests another finding of this intervention. My assistance was required while working with the portfolio. To be more specific, the learners needed my reassurance that what they intended to write was 'correct'. Moreover, they found it helpful if I asked them additional questions about the section, which helped them to further elaborate on their ideas. Also, during the last lesson, two pupils worked together, as both were absent for the previous lesson. I have observed that if the areas and issues they encountered could be discussed with their peers, it was easier for them to work with the portfolio as the experience was shared.

In addition, I got to know the learners quickly through the portfolio work, as I found out what they are interested in and what they do in their free time. Moreover, I found out what strategies they use when learning a foreign language. Also, I can conclude that due to these factors, planning lessons for these learners was much easier.

Development of self-assessment awareness in learners

Regarding this area, I can report that I was surprised by how well the pupils responded to the development of self-assessment. At times they definitely seemed a little lost and needed assistance in developing their ideas. It was clear that some pupils were not very comfortable with having to assess their own performance and tended to focus more on expressing an opinion as to whether or not they enjoyed the activity.

During the third week of the research, a situation worth mentioning happened. After completing a reading comprehension task, the learners were asked to assess their performance in a simple checklist. I noticed that although they were finished with the first task, the self-assessment exercise had not been completed. When I asked the whole class about this issue, they unanimously told me that they did not yet know how they felt about the exercise since the results had not been checked. Thus, I requested them to complete it according to their current feelings. It was evident that they were unsure of their performance and not comfortable with it. When we checked the results, almost the entire class had the answers correct. Afterwards, I asked them again about the checklist, whereupon the mood of the class changed completely and the pupils told me that it was easy and they were satisfied with their performance.

Despite the fact that these activities were not too challenging for the pupils, I consider this area to be the most critical. Since I only focused on speaking-based activities, selecting appropriate opportunities for them to be included was not as straightforward as I originally assumed. This was compounded by other reasons, for example, many pupils were absent during this period due to the pandemic, so learning fundamentals such as practicing new grammar was considered to be more important by the mentor.

Other comments

During the week I used to reflect on this phase of the research, the pandemic situation at the school worsened. Many classes were in quarantine or awaiting the results of whether they would be quarantined. If pupils were in school, they were only in small numbers. Thus, it was understandable the mentor wished to take maximum advantage of the time when the pupils were present., i.e. to write a test with them or to teach new grammar in case they switched to the online mode of teaching. Given these circumstances, it was clear that there would not be as much space to focus on all points of the research, and if so, to a limited extent. Therefore, these factors had to be taken into consideration when planning changes in the intervention.

7.7. Revision of intervention

In this chapter, the modifications for Intervention II will be explained with direct connection to reflection of Intervention I. Again, each area will be discussed separately.

Implementation of the modified version of The European Language Portfolio

- The implementation of the portfolio remains, but the organizational form will change. Pupils will be divided into three or two groups and each group will be assigned a task. One group will focus on portfolio work, and the other two will receive assignments either from me or the mentor. After fifteen minutes, the groups will be switched.
- Three factors reflect this change. The first is that, based on my observation, I noticed that the learners might work better on the portfolio if they can share their insights and ideas with other classmates. Second, by having smaller groups, my assistance and help with developing ideas will also be more efficient. Thirdly, the most will be made of the lesson as the mentor can focus with the pupils on areas she considers to be important.

Development of self-assessment awareness in learners

- This area remains the same, but in some cases the mentor will be involved. This change was suggested based on discussions with the mentor who was both interested in issue and, as mentioned, my time in the classroom became limited.
- If a mentor is involved, instructions will be given to her first and then she will report on the situation to me in detail.

Work with short-term aims that are based on the long-term goals in the ELP

- This area will be modified to continue to focus on short-term aims, but these aims may not be linked to the aims defined in the EJP. Furthermore, not all activities will be based on speaking.
- This is because it has been shown that if only speaking is targeted, the choice of these activities becomes limiting. Especially when considering the current situation at the school related to the pandemic.

7.8 Intervention II

This section is again structured to describe what specific steps have been taken to support the development in the three pre-identified areas. Also, it should be noted at the outset that this phase had to be postponed by a week as the class was in quarantine.

WEEK 1

Implementation of the modified version of The European Language Portfolio

As part of the group work, pupils were introduced to another section of the Language Biography, which addressed the question *What would you like to be able to do?*. There were three to four pupils in each group.

Development of self-assessment awareness in learners

Due to time limitations, there was not enough space to develop this area.

Working with short-term aims

The aim of the lesson was presented to the pupils: "The pupils will be able to identify new vocabulary associated with the future and summarize the reading". At the end of the lesson, 5 minutes were set aside for a discussion to find out, whether the pupils considered the aim to be achieved, and what evidence they had to support their claims.

WEEK 2

<u>Implementation of the modified version of The European Language Portfolio</u>

In this lesson, the pupils started to assess their language proficiency by using the descriptors provided in the ELP. In some groups, they managed to use the descriptors only for level A1, in other groups they started to work with the section dedicated to level A2.

<u>Development of self-assessment awareness in learners</u>

The class, led by the mentor, focused on comprehensive practice of future tenses and related vocabulary. In some activities, the pupils worked on their own, while others required cooperation. At the end of the lesson, the mentor set aside 5 minutes for discussion, the subject of which was the pupils' self-assessment in terms of both performance and cooperation.

<u>Working with short-term aims</u>

The pupils were assigned to interview their classmates using the phrases listed in the textbook. When they had finished, they were requested to find a descriptor in the EJP that could be matched to the aim of the activity and to explain their reasoning for the choice. The primary descriptor was "*I can ask people questions about what they do at work or at school and in their free time, and answer such questions*", however, other options were possible as well.

WEEK 3

<u>Implementation of the modified version of The European Language Portfolio</u>

In this lesson, the pupils were divided into groups to either continue with the self-assessment through descriptors or to start working on the last part of the Language Biography, which is *Your own list of what can you already do in English.*

<u>Development of self-assessment awareness in learners</u>

After completing a listening comprehension activity, the pupils were requested to complete a simple check list in which they assessed their performance.

<u>Working with short-term aims</u>

The aim of the lesson was presented to the pupils: "Pupils will be able to explain what their lives will look like in 20 years". The pupils were then asked to determine whether the aim had been met and to name concrete evidence to support their opinion.

WEEK 4

<u>Implementation of the modified version of The European Language Portfolio</u>

The pupils were asked to browse through the whole portfolio again and to fill in any additional information. Each group then discussed the entire process of completing the portfolio and the other elements of the research.

<u>Development of self-assessment awareness in learners</u>

The mentor facilitated a discussion with the pupils regarding their state of preparation for the test that would follow in the next lesson. Thus, the discussion covered the steps the learners had taken to prepare for the test and their areas of strengths and weakness.

<u>Working with short-term aims</u>

Due to time limitations, there was not enough space to develop this area.

7.9 Reflection and Evaluation

The purpose of this chapter is to present two perspectives on the research after its completion: the learners' and the teacher's. The source of the data is the semi-structured interview I conducted with the pupils during the final lesson and also the reflective journal I had maintained.

7.9.1 Learners' perspective on the research

As discussed earlier, the interviews with the pupils were conducted as part of the group work during the final lesson in early January 2022. As explained in section 7.3.1, this was a semi-structured interview during which I focused on the three identified areas of research. The aim was to investigate the pupils' views on the procedures and activities related to these areas. The pupils initially discussed these issues in groups and then presented their views to me, whereupon I further developed their ideas with additional questions. On the basis of their answers, notes were recorded. In addition, it should be mentioned that these discussions were held mostly in Czech, but some of the pupils attempted to express themselves in English.

<u>Implementation of the modified version of the ELP</u>

Regarding the pupils' general views on the EJP, they agreed that they did not mind working with it and also that they perceived it as a relaxing activity. Some of the pupils commented that it was unusual for them to reflect on some of the issues mentioned, e.g. what

helps them to learn English, as they had never thought about it. The most popular section was *My English World* as it was a reflection of what pupils enjoy about English outside of school. Some pupils also commented on the change in organization and agreed that working in groups made them much more comfortable about the given tasks.

This was followed by specific questions on the area concerned:

- *How could you benefit from long-term work with EJP?*

The pupils agreed that this tool would enable them to see the progress they have made in English. However, this would be dependent on careful and sustained recording and not all were convinced that they would have this commitment.

- *Did you find it difficult to assess yourself using the descriptors?*

Here the pupils' opinions were divided into two groups. According to one of them, this was not difficult at all, since they knew exactly what to imagine by the given descriptor. For the other part, this was perceived as challenging, and they needed the situation to be put into context.

- *Would you be interested in working with EJP in the future?*

The pupils agreed almost unanimously that although they did not mind working with the EJP, they would not use it themselves if it was not required of them. However, if their teacher would work with it in the future, they would have no issue with the tool and would continue to participate.

Development of self-assessment awareness in learners

The pupils were not informed in advance that these activities, which were based on self-assessment, were in fact part of the research. For this reason, I initially reminded them of these activities again. Following this reminder, pupils seemed to have a kind of 'aha moment' as they told me that they felt that these activities were somehow linked to completing the portfolio.

In general, the pupils agreed that they were most surprised by the checklists since they had never filled them out. Nevertheless, they did not find the remaining activities difficult as they are used to discussing their progress or issues at the end of the unit.

In relation to this area, pupils were asked only one question which referred to what they mentioned in the introduction:

- *What was the specific link between the work with EJP and these activities based on self-assessment?*

Pupils agreed that in both cases the main interest was in their opinions and feelings. One of the learners stated: "*It was all about us*".

<u>Working with short-term aims</u>

In this case too, the pupils were not informed that these activities were part of the research. After I introduced the activities again, some pupils told me that they thought it was a game because they were asked to search for something in the EJP. They also told me that it was not difficult for them to assess whether the aim was achieved because I specifically told them what they were going to learn in that lesson.

Subsequently, I had no further questions.

7.9.2 Teacher's perspective on the research

This chapter discusses the three main areas of research from my perspective, a teacher who participated in the research; the basis for these conclusions is the reflective diary.

<u>Implementation of the modified version of the ELP</u>

I perceive the EJP as a helpful tool to get to know the learners more deeply. It provided me with a comprehensive overview of what particular pupils enjoy and what they like to do in their free time in connection to the English language. Based on this knowledge, I was better able to plan lessons for the class and generally enjoyed attending these classes. I always looked forward to the discussion and topics that the pupils would open up thanks to one sheet of paper. Clearly, some of the learners were a bit skeptical about the tool itself, but all of them participated in discussions to varying degrees and this is what I consider to be essential.

Moreover, I found the moments during which the pupils seemed to realize, through the EJP work, that learning a foreign language does not only take place in school, but that all activities related to the foreign language are included and equally important, to be the most important.

<u>Development of self-assessment awareness in learners</u>

The development in this area has reinforced to me the importance of precise criteria for both teacher and learner. This may be seen in Intervention I, Week 1. As I emphasized the precise clarification of what was expected of the pupils, it was not difficult for them to

subsequently assess whether they were succeeded in the task. However, it should be stressed that not all pupils were equally involved as not everyone was comfortable with expressing their views on this matter.

<u>Working with short-term aims</u>

This area is linked to the above. By making sure that the lesson aim was stated as clearly and specifically as possible, I made it easier for the pupils to decide whether the lesson aim had been achieved and what the evidence was.

<u>Other comments</u>

As already mentioned in chapter 7.1, one of the reasons why I have decided to investigate the topic of portfolios was to form my own stance on this issue with regard to my future teaching practice. Having completed this research, I can confidently conclude that I perceive the portfolio as a tool that has great potential for both the learner and the teacher. Thus, I would like to continue with this tool and explore its possibilities during my teaching career. However, I would rather use a modified version again or explore other current possibilities that are available in the context of English language teaching.

7.10 Final evaluation of the action points

In this chapter, the action points determined for this research and their fulfilment is evaluated. The first action point, the implementation of the European Language Portfolio in lower-secondary English classroom, was stated first, as it is the overall aim of the research. The remaining two action points, i.e. development of self-assessment awareness in learners, and working with short-term aims, were thus identified in order to support the first action point of this research as they are a direct result of the diagnostic phase.

As for the first action point, it can be regarded as successfully accomplished. The pupils were first familiarized with the aims and functions of the EJP and then proceeded to actively use the tool. All pupils were involved, but the rate of completion varied. The ELP caused the learners to reflect on areas such as their learning strategies, their goals in the language or showed them that learning a foreign language does not exclusively take place in school. As the EJP raised issues that were new to the pupils, they practiced discussion and argumentation. Although most of these discussions were held in Czech, it could still be stated that the communicative competence described in FEP BE (2021, 11) was being developed in the pupils, which was not originally anticipated but was discovered in the process of reflection.

Furthermore, due to the EJP, pupils practiced their written proficiency in English, although some of them used Czech.

The second action point, development of self-assessment in learners, was achieved as well. Pupils were engaged in activities in which their ability to assess their own performance was developed. Moreover, they were encouraged to elaborate on their answers rather than focusing on the attractiveness of the activity. To illustrate, the pupils were requested to articulate precisely what they had done well, what could have been better and how specifically this could be achieved in the future. Nevertheless, this thesis does not claim that the pupils have mastered the ability of self-assessment, but rather that they have been introduced to techniques to foster this ability.

The third action point, working with short-term aims that are based on the long-term goals in the ELP, was after the Intervention I modified to "working with short-term aims" since focusing solely on the aims mentioned in the ELP was quite limiting. Nonetheless, this action point was successfully fulfilled as well since the learners were involved in activities during which they were required to match the aim of the activity with the aim described in the ELP, or they were requested to judge whether the overall aim of the lesson was achieved and also present their evidence for thinking so. Improvements in this area were noticeable over time, as the pupils not only needed less time to formulate their answers, but they were also more concrete.

To summarize, all the identified areas have been successfully developed. The main achievement of this research is that the EJP has been implemented in an English language classroom and has also been supported by other techniques that foster portfolio work and subsequent self-assessment. Nevertheless, the limitations inherent in this action research are important to address and this will be achieved in the conclusion of this thesis.

8 Summary of the research outcomes

The purpose of this chapter is to link the aim and the questions of this research to the instruments that were chosen for data collection. The aim of this research was to incorporate The European Language Portfolio into the lower-secondary English classroom and to investigate the whole process of integration of the ELP from the point of view of the teacher. Subsequently, the following research questions were established:

1. *What challenges might a teacher face when implementing the EJP?*
2. *What are the concrete steps when implementing the EJP?*

In order to integrate the EJP into the classroom, it is first essential to explore and understand the classroom environment. To achieve this, classroom observations and a semi-structured interview with the mentor were used in the diagnostic phase. These instruments revealed that working with the ELP would be a new experience for the pupils. Also, the pupils were used to keeping a portfolio but only as a means of gathering materials. And lastly, self-assessment based activities were only marginally introduced to the learners.

During the preparation for implementation of the ELP, the relevant literature and studies had to be reviewed. Based on the findings, two more interviews were conducted. The first one with the mentor and the second one with a teacher experienced in working with her version of the ELP. This phase resulted in a modified version of the EJP which was then used during 8 lessons with the selected group of learners. During the final lesson, which served as the formal conclusion of the research, the pupils were, as part of a group work, interviewed in order to express their opinions on the procedures and activities to which they were exposed during the research.

As for the first research question, reflective diary, kept by the author, significantly influenced all the steps taken throughout the research. Furthermore, this diary contained the momentary feelings and questions that gradually arose from the diagnostic phase to the final lesson. Based on the reflective diary, the challenges a teacher might face when implementing the ELP are:

- To decide whether the official or modified version of the ELP will be used.
    - These modifications might include the length or the actual content.
- To decide whether the printed or online version will be used.
- To specifically plan how the EJP will be used in the classroom.

- o This might include time allocation and also organizational forms.
- ▪ To consider which activities could enhance the work with the EJP.
  - o In the case of this research, these included developing self-assessment awareness in learners and work with short-term aims.

Concerning the second question, the answer was indicated. If the classroom environment is well investigated, supportive activities can be designed. In the case of this research, concrete activities were described in both interventions. These included, simple checklists, discussions, and working with the aim of the lesson or the aim described in the EJP. For clarity, two tables were created to provide a summary of such activities.

To conclude, as the European Language Portfolio has been implemented into the lower-secondary English classroom and the whole process has been thoroughly investigated, recorded in detail and subsequently evaluated, it can be assumed that the aim of the research has been accomplished.

CONCLUSION

This thesis dealt with the portfolio as a means of learner self-assessment in English classes. The paper was divided into two parts: theoretical and practical. The theoretical part was structured in such a way that the reader was first introduced to the general context of the thesis and then the attention was drawn towards more specific notions. In the practical part, action research was conducted, during which the European Language Portfolio was implemented into a lower-secondary English classroom.

The first part of this thesis aimed to provide the theoretical background on which the practical part was constructed. The reader was thus introduced to an approach to assessment that involves the pupil himself, as he learns to assess his own progress, to suggest concrete steps to improve his future performance or to articulate why he succeeded in a given task. This approach, which is based on formative assessment, is called pupil self-assessment. Moreover, a specific technique that fosters pupil self-assessment is the portfolio, which is an organized collection of selected materials produced during pupils' learning. It is important to note that it is not the goal of pupil learning but a means to it. Therefore, the activities that pupils engage in while working with the portfolio are important, i.e. collecting, sorting, continuous reflection and self-assessment, sharing, presenting and defending. Furthermore, it serves the learner to learn effectively, to be aware of the learning process, to monitor their own efforts and progress in learning, to participate in planning for further learning and personal development. To link the tool back to the general terminology, by selecting and defending their best work, it enables the pupils to participate in assessment.

As part of the practical part, action research was conducted with the aim of integrating the European Language Portfolio into the lower-secondary English classroom and also, to investigate the whole process from the point of view of interested teacher. For the purposes of the research, a modified version of the EJP was developed that reflected the initial diagnosis in the selected classroom, recommendations from experienced teachers, and the time allocation for this research. The portfolio was successfully integrated into the classroom and also supported by other activities such as self-assessment awareness and working with short-term aims. The author of the research documented, reflected and evaluated this process over time. The main findings of the research include, the importance of the role of the teacher, who must choose the most precise criteria and also guide the pupils through the whole process of implementation.

Nevertheless, it is also relevant to mention the limitations of the research. The classroom in which the research was conducted was chosen because of the good climate and the expected cooperation from the pupils. However, if it had been a classroom that did not meet these conditions, learners might not have been willing to engage in the chosen activities and might not have accepted the portfolio work in general. Furthermore, this was a relatively small research sample, thus it cannot be assumed that every attempt to implement EJP would be conducted in this manner. The challenges encountered by the research author are hence very subjective in their nature and may not apply to every teacher involved.

RESUMÉ

Rozvoj žákovy schopnosti sebereflexe a s ní spojené zaznamenávání vlastního pokroku, plánování či sledování vlastního rozvoje pomocí portfolia, je v současné společnosti považováno za žádoucí. Důkazem je nejen přítomnost těchto témat v kurikulárních a legislativních dokumentech na území České republiky, ale také zájem zahraničních i tuzemských autorů o tuto problematiku napříč jejich specializací – v obecném vzdělávání či ve výuce anglického jazyka. Tato práce, spadající do kontextu výuky anglického jazyka, si klade za cíl čtenáři nejprve představit teoretické pozadí této problematiky, tak aby se pozornost postupně mohla ubírat ke konkrétnějším informacím, které vždy logicky navazují na předchozí obecnější oblast. Nicméně, aby se nejednalo pouze o výklad teoretických pojmů a definic, autorka se snaží čtenáři představit i kritický vhled do této problematiky.

Tato diplomová práce je standardně rozčleněna na dvě části: praktickou a teoretickou. Pojetí teoretické části již bylo zmíněno v předchozím odstavci. Co se týče části praktické, je koncipována tak, aby stavěla na teoretických východiscích a konkrétně je rozvíjela.

Teoretická část se skládá ze šesti hlavních kapitol. První kapitola je věnována nejvíce obecným konceptům, které jsou ovšem důležité pro uvedení do tématu této práce. Jedná se o pojmy hodnocení a evaluace, které mohou být v obecné rovině označeny za synonyma, ovšem v kontextu pedagogickém obsahují patrné rozdíly. Evaluace je široký pojem, do kterého spadá hodnocení nejrůznějších pedagogických jevů, např. kvalita vzdělávacího systému jako celku, či jeho části. Hodnocení je oproti tomu využíváno pro konkrétní případy, např. hodnocení žáků či učitelů. Pro účely této práce tak autorka preferuje termín hodnocení, kterým se následně konkrétně zabývá, jak v obecné rovině vzdělávání, tak v kontextu výuky anglického jazyka. Čtenářovi jsou tak představeny funkce a typy hodnocení. Jedním ze zmíněných typů hodnocení, je formativní hodnocení, které slouží jako podklad pro získávání průběžných informací ohledně žákova učebního procesu. Tento druh hodnocení je založen na formulaci nejen celkových cílů, ale hlavně co nejpřesnější formulaci cílů dílčích, díky čemuž nejen učitel, ale i žák získává ucelený obraz toho, co se od žáka očekává.

Druhá kapitola se zabývá sebehodnocením, které je specifickou kategorií hodnocení, vycházející z principů formativního hodnocení. Čtenář je seznámen s tím, že důraz na rozvoj žákova sebehodnocení je jasně stanoven v Rámcovém vzdělávacím programu pro základní vzdělání jako součást jedné z klíčových kompetencí, kterou by si žák v průběhu základního vzdělávání měl osvojit. Pojem sebehodnocení je následně vysvětlen za pomocí základních

definic, ale zároveň jsou čtenářovi poskytnuty i jiné vhledy, např. sebehodnocení může být chápáno jako jedna z nepřímých učebních či motivačních strategií žáků. Poté je představen jeden z doporučených postupů, jak sebehodnocení do výuky obecně integrovat. Zásadní ovšem je nejprve role učitele, který musí být přesvědčen, že nové metody přinesou úspěchy i přes to, že integrace sebehodnocení do výuky nemusí být zpočátku jednoduchá.

Třetí kapitola si klade za cíl představit konkrétní techniku pro rozvoj žákova sebehodnocení, tedy portfolio. Již zpočátku je čtenář upozorněn, že napříč autory panuje nejednoznačnost, nejen při definování tohoto termínu, ale i celkový přístup k němu se zdá být rozličný. Dále se zdá, že se jedná o pojem, který je v posledních letech považován za moderní a díky tomu i autory naduživaný. Nedostatečné pochopení tohoto nástroje je tak patrné i mezi samotnými učiteli. Portfolio se tak často stává složkou obsahující nejrůznější materiály, která bývá uložena kdesi ve třídě, ovšem další systematická práce s tímto nástrojem není se žáky rozvíjena. Aby se z portfolia stal užitečný nástroj, který může žákovi sloužit jako prostředek k učení, zaznamenávání vlastního pokroku a podklad pro sebehodnocení, musí k němu být i takový přístup. Žáci totiž netvoří své materiály s tím záměrem, aby je mohli uložit do portfolia, ale aby s nimi dále pracovali. Portfolio by se tak mělo chápat jako odrazový můstek pro další činnosti, jako je například reflexe, diskuze nad vybranými materiály, sdílení či třídění.

Ve čtvrté kapitole je čtenářovi představen konkrétní nástroj založený na principu portfolia. Jedná se o Evropské jazykové portfolio (EJP), které vzniklo pod vedením Rady Evropy jako ambiciózní projekt, který cílil na propojení sebehodnocení a zaznamenávání pokroku v cizím jazyce s deskriptory popsanými ve Společném evropském referenčním rámci. Nejprve je tak popsán kontext, ve kterém před více než dvaceti lety, tento projekt vznikal, následné pilotní projekty, do kterých se kromě 15 evropských států zapojila i Česká republika a v neposlední řadě je poskytnut bližší pohled na EJP a jeho vývoj v tuzemsku. Poté je čtenářovi představeno portfolio z pohledu jeho tří částí: Jazykový pas, Jazykový životopis a Sbírka. Hlavním cílem EJP je podpora a zlepšení procesu učení se nového jazyku všem jeho majitelům.

Pátá kapitola se dívá na sebehodnocení a portfolio optikou výzkumu. Jak již bylo řečeno, čtenáři se nabízí plejáda nepřeberného množství informací ohledně toho, že by se sebehodnocení a konkrétně portfolio mělo do výuky zaintegrovat. Autoři se předhánějí, kdo tyto pojmy vydefinuje lépe a jaké další dobré důvody pro jejich zavedení čtenářovi představí. Malá pozornost se již ale věnuje následnému dopadu na žáky a tomu, zda je to opravdu tak efektivní, jak se v literatuře tvrdí. Autorka této práce tak prozkoumala několik současných

studií, které se těmto tématům věnují v kontextu učení se cizího jazyka. Tyto prostudované zdroje naznačují, že integrace sebehodnocení, a tedy i portfolia, do výuky může být pro žáky efektivní, avšak je to podmíněno rolí učitele, která je naprosto zásadní. Učitel musí připravit v dané třídě takové podmínky, aby byl rozvoj sebehodnocení podpořen doprovodnými činnostmi. Doporučuje se tak například práce s krátkodobými cíli, vymezení jasných kritérií a také funkce učitele jakožto průvodce tímto procesem.

Žák sedmé třídy na základní škole zaujímá důležitou roli v této práci, jelikož je součástí praktické části. Šestá, a tedy poslední kapitola si tak klade za cíl představit čtenáři tuto věkovou skupinu a s ní spojená specifika. Věk žáka sedmé třídy se běžně pohybuje mezi 12-13 lety a prochází tak obdobím rané adolescence. Kromě na první pohled jasných fyzických změn, se také jedná o období, kdy se člověk rozvíjí po emoční, kognitivní i sociální stránce. Nejvíce relevantní změnou pro kontext této práce je ovšem kognitivní rozvoj a s ním spojený nový způsob myšlení, který se u této věkové skupiny postupně rozvíjí. Adolescent totiž začíná být schopný přemýšlet abstraktně, což znamená, že je schopen vytvářet různé hypotézy a poté je kriticky vyhodnocovat. Mění se tak i přístup k vnímání časové dimenze. Adolescent bere v potaz nejenom minulé události, ale zároveň se čím dál více umí kriticky dívat do budoucnosti. Díky rozvoji v těchto oblastech, by měl žák sedmé třídy mít všechny předpoklady pro vyhodnocování vlastního pokroku, či plánování budoucích cílů. Je však nutné podotknout, že adolescenti mohou být díky nově rozvinutému kritickému myšlení také přehnaně kritičtí ke svému vlastnímu výkonu a může se tak jednat o citlivé téma.

Praktická část prezentuje akční výzkum, který byl proveden na základní škole v Pardubickém kraji. Tento výzkum započal v únoru 2021 a skončil v lednu 2022 a zúčastnilo se ho 15 žáků sedmé třídy. Cílem tohoto výzkumu bylo zaintegrovat do zvolené třídy Evropské jazykové portfolio a celý tento proces detailně popsat z pohledu učitele. Pro sběr dat byly využity observace, polostrukturované rozhovory, reflektivní deník a jiné třídnické dokumenty, včetně vyplněného EJP.

Akční výzkum usiluje o změnu v sociální rovině, v tomto případě v hodinách anglického jazyka zvolené třídy. Je také známý svou cykličností, což znamená, že má určité fáze, které se mohou opakovat, dokud se změnou není výzkumník spokojený. Tento konkrétní akční výzkum započal diagnostickou fází v únoru 2021, jejíž cílem bylo zjistit, zda zvolená třída používá EJP nebo jiný druh portfolia a zda se objevují příležitosti, během nichž jsou žáci aktivně zapojováni do sebehodnotících aktivit. Důležité je ovšem zmínit, že tato fáze byla

narušena probíhající pandemií COVID-19, která zapříčinila, že výuka na celém území České republiky probíhala v online režimu.

Observace odhalily, že žáci EJP a ani jinou formu portfolia nepoužívají a že sice jsou zapojováni do aktivit, během nichž hodnotí svůj pokrok, např. v dané lekci, ale jedná se o hodnocení velice povrchní. V květnu 2021 se opět školy otevřely, a tím se tak naskytla příležitost vyzpovídat učitelku dané třídy pomocí polostrukturovaného rozhovoru. Jeho zjištěním bylo, že ačkoliv to v online hodinách nebylo patrné, žáci jsou zvyklí si vést své portfolio, které ovšem slouží spíše jako složka, obsahující materiály za určité období, kterou mohou využít k následnému procvičování probrané látky. Postoj učitelky k sebehodnocení žáků byl kladný, ale dostačující v takové podobě, která byla observována. Diagnostická fáze tak zjistila, že jak zavedení EJP, tak sebehodnotících aktivit, bude pro žáky kompletně nová zkušenost.

Další přípravná fáze probíhala od července do srpna 2021. Jejím cílem bylo shromáždit informace ze specializované literatury, která se zabývá implementací EJP do výuky. Bohužel bylo zjištěno, že se oficiální publikace soustředí spíše na obecné představení tohoto nástroje, ale praktické tipy obsažené již nejsou. Autorka tedy prostudovala dostupné výzkumy, které se implementací EJP zabývají a zároveň si vedla reflektivní deník, který obsahoval její momentální dilemata. Hlavním z nich byla časová dotace na provedení akčního výzkumu, tedy dva měsíce a fakt, že EJP je považováno za nástroj, který vyžaduje dlouhodobé zapojení na straně jeho uživatelů.

Následně v první půlce října proběhlo setkání s učitelkou, která má zkušenosti s používáním své upravené verze EJP. Díky poskytnutým doporučením bylo možné vytvořit finální intervenční plán pro následující fázi výzkumu. Byly vytyčeny tři akční body, na které se autorka rozhodla soustředit. První z nich byla samotná implementace EJP, která byla podpořena vytvořením modifikované verze EJP, která odrážela jak potřeby výzkumu, tak časové omezení na provedení. Další dva akční body byly stanoveny na podporu implementace EJP. Jednalo se o zapojení žáků do jednoduchých aktivit založené na sebehodnocení vlastního výkonu a práci s krátkodobými cíli, které byly propojeny s dlouhodobými cíli definovanými v EJP. Po dobu 4 týdnů tak probíhala první intervence, kterou autorka zapisovala do předem navržené tabulky, vedla si reflektivní deník a shromažďovala další potřebné dokumenty.

Poté bylo třeba první intervenci vyhodnotit a navrhnout změny ke zlepšení. Implementace EJP zůstala, ale změna byla provedena v organizačních formách a žáci tak

nepracovali samostatně, ale ve skupinách a o daných tématech tak mohli nejdříve diskutovat. Aktivity pro zvědomování sebehodnocení také zůstaly, ale v některých případech se zapojila i učitelka dané třídy. Tato změna reflektovala zájem učitelky o toto téma, ale hlavně zhoršující se pandemickou situaci a jisté omezení na výkon výzkumu. Práce s krátkodobými cíli také zůstala, ale bylo rozhodnuto, že se nemusí výlučně týkat cílů definovaných v modifikované verzi EJP, protože se ukázalo, že tento postup může být značně limitující.

Závěrečná hodina, která byla věnována formálnímu zakončení práce s EJP, proběhla v lednu 2022. Žáci během ní pracovali opět ve skupinách a byli požádáni společně zhodnotit celkový průběh tohoto výzkumu. Mezi hlavní zjištění patří fakt, že žákům práce s portfoliem nevadila, viděli v ní dlouhodobý přínos – který je ovšem podmíněn pílí a značným odhodláním, ale sami by s portfoliem nepracovali, kdyby se to po nich nevyžadovalo. Dále byl poskytnut pohled autorky výzkumu, jakožto budoucí učitelky, která shrnuje, že v práci s portfoliem a v rozvoji sebehodnocení vidí potenciál, ale oficiální verzi by pravděpodobně nepoužívala, jelikož nereflektuje současné zájmy žáků.

V závěru je diskutováno naplnění konkrétních akčních bodů a také celkové dosažení vytyčeného cíle této diplomové práce. Autorka neopomíjí zdůraznění možných limitů tohoto výzkumu. Tato práce je také doplněna soupisem použité literatury a dalších internetových zdrojů a relevantními přílohami.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

CHECKLIST FOR A DIAGNOSTIC PHASE

Aim: To find out whether these activities occurred during the observed lessons and to provide a description of their conduct.

Instructions: *Make a ✓ and describe the situation.*

PORTFOLIO WORK		SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY	

European Language Portfolio

(modified and simplified version)

_____

Name

Excerpts from Evropské jazykové Portfolio: Pro žáky a žákyně ve věku 11-15 let v České republice (Perclová, Marešová, 2001) were used for educational purposes only. The part *My English World* is only inspired by the ELP

My English World

Ways I learn languages and get to know other cultures/ Jak se učím jazyky a poznávám nové kultury

Traveling Cestování	Description/Popis What have I learnt about the country/Co jsem se naučil/a o této zemi?

Reading (books, websites, magazines) Čtení (knihy, internetové stránky, časopisy)	Description/Popis What was it about?/O čem to bylo?

My favorite English songs Moje oblíbené anglické písničky	Description/Popis What the song is about? Why do I like it? O čem ta písnička je? Proč se mi líbí?

The Screen (TV and PC)
Do I play any PC games or watch movies or TV series in English?/ Hraju nějaké hry či sleduji filmy a seriály v AJ?

Description/Popis
What is it about? Why do I like it?/O čem to je? Proč mě to baví?

Other situations
Jiné situace, během kterých používám AJ

Description/Popis

Self-assessment grid/Tabulka sebehodnocení

		A1	A2
P O R O Z U M Ě N Í	**Poslech**	Rozumím známým slovům a zcela základním frázím týkajícím se mé osoby, mé rodiny a bezprostředního konkrétního okolí, pokud lidé hovoří pomalu a zřetelně.	Rozumím frázím a nejběžnější slovní zásobě vztahující se k oblastem, které se mě bezprostředně týkají (např. základní informace o mně a mé rodině, o nakupování, zaměstnání). Dokážu pochopit smysl krátkých jasných zpráv a hlášení.
	Čtení	Rozumím známým jménům, slovům a velmi jednoduchým větám, například ve vývěskách, plakátech a katalozích.	Umím číst krátké jednoduché texty. Umím vyhledat konkrétní předvídatelné informace v jednoduchých každodenních materiálech, např. v inzerátech, prospektech, jídelních lístcích a jízdních řádech. Rozumím krátkým a jednoduchým dopisům.
M L U V E N Í	**Ústní interakce**	Umím se jednoduchým způsobem domluvit, je-li můj partner ochoten zopakovat pomaleji svou výpověď nebo ji přeformulovat a pomoci mi formulovat, co se snažím říct. Umím klást jednoduché otázky a na podobné otázky odpovídat, pokud se týkají mých základních potřeb, nebo jde-li o věci, které mi jsou známé.	Umím komunikovat v jednoduchých běžných situacích vyžadující jednoduchou přímou výměnu informací o známých tématech a činnostech. Zvládnu velmi krátkou společenskou konverzaci, i když obvykle nerozumím natolik, abych konverzaci sám/sama dokázal(a) udržet.
	Samostatný ústní projev	Umím jednoduchými frázemi a větami popsat místo, kde žiji a lidi, které znám.	Umím použít řadu frází a vět, abych jednoduchým způsobem popsal(a) vlastní rodinu a další lidi, životní podmínky, dosažené vzdělání.
P S A N Í	**Písemný projev**	Umím napsat stručný jednoduchý text na pohlednici, například pozdrav z dovolené. Umím vyplnit formuláře obsahující osobní údaje, například své jméno, národnost a adresu při přihlašování v hotelu.	Umím napsat krátké jednoduché poznámky a zprávy týkající se mých základních potřeb. Umím napsat velmi jednoduchý osobní dopis, například poděkování.

1) How can you learn foreign languages?/Jak se můžeš učit cizí jazyky?

Think about opportunities there are to learn English outside of school: for example listening to foreign songs, watching foreign films, playing computer games, trying to make yourself understood when abroad, staying at a language camp.

Přemýšlej o možnostech, jak se učit angličtinu mimo školu: například tím, že posloucháš písně v cizím jazyce, díváš se na zahraniční filmy, hraješ počítačové hry, zkoušíš se domluvit při cestě do zahraničí, jedeš na jazykový tábor.

Date/Datum	My contacts with English outside of school/ Má mimoškolní setkání s cizími jazyky

2) Can you become a better English learner?/Můžeš se učit angličtinu lépe?

Try to think about the ways you learn the English language. Which ways are most helpful? You can write down your good ideas in the following table (for example repeating words aloud, drawing little pictures in a vocabulary notebook, forming groups of words which rhyme or have something in common, guessing the meaning of unknown words, listening to tape recordings, acting out a dialogue with your friends). What experiences do your classmates have?

Snaž se přemýšlet o tom, jak se učíš cizí jazyky. Co ti nejvíce pomáhá? Dobré nápady si můžeš zapsat do následující tabulky (například: opakování slov nahlas, kreslení obrázků do slovníčku, vytváření skupin slov, která se rýmují nebo mají něco společného, odhadování významu neznámých slov, poslouchání nahrávek, předvádění rozhovoru s kamarády). Můžeš se učit také jinak? Jaké zkušenosti mají tví spolužáci?

Date/Datum	What helps me when I learn English/ Co mi pomáhá při učení angličtiny

3) What do you want to be able to do? Co chceš umět?

Think about what you are good at and what you need to work harder on. Write down your plans (for example to learn to read silently, to be able to write a one-page letter about myself, to create a crossword or a game for my classmates, to write a short poem, to manage to talk about my hobbies for two minutes, to act out a fairy tale with my classmates, to understand a computer game, to give directions to a foreigner).

Přemýšlej, co se ti daří a v čem potřebuješ přidat. Zapiš si, čeho chceš dosáhnout (například: naučit se číst potichu, umět o sobě napsat jednostránkový dopis, sestavit pro spolužáky cizojazyčnou křížovku nebo hru, napsat krátkou básničku, dokázat dvě minuty vyprávět o svých koníčcích, zahrát se spolužáky pohádku, rozumět počítačové hře nebo poradit cizinci, jak se dostane na určité místo.

Date/Datum	What I want to achieve, what I want to improve/ Čeho chci dosáhnout, v čem se chci zlepšit

4) What can you already do in terms of your speaking skills?

Co z hlediska svého mluveného projevu už umíš?

A1

Spoken interaction/Rozhovory

1) I can introduce myself. I can thank someone./ Umím se představit. Umím poděkovat.

2) I can greet somebody and say goodbye to them. I can introduce somebody./Umím pozdravit a rozloučit se. Dokážu někoho představit.

3) I can ask for something and respond to somebody's requests./Umím si o něco říct a umím reagovat na žádost někoho jiného.

4) I can ask somebody how they are and answer similar questions./Umím se zeptat, jak se někomu daří, a umím na podobné otázky odpovídat.

5) I can ask for things in a shop making gestures to help me./Dokážu si říct o věci v obchodě, pomáhám si při tom gesty.

6) I can use numbers and say what time it is./ Umím používat čísla a říct, kolik je hodin.

7) I can ask questions about where people live, whom they know and what things they have and answer such questions./Dokážu se ptát na to, kde lidé žijí, koho znají a co mají, a dokážu na takové otázky odpovídat.

Spoken production/ Samostatný ústní projev

8) I can talk about my home, my family and people I know in simple sentences./Umím mluvit jednoduchými větami o svém domově, své rodině a lidech, které znám.

9) I can describe where I live./ Umím popsat, kde žiju.

10) I can say who I am and what I do./Umím říct, kdo jsem a čím jsem.

Color the bubbles, if you think you can do it./ Vybarvi bublinu, pokud myslíš, že to umíš.
You can also color only a part of the bubble./ Můžeš vybarvit i pouze část bubliny.

What progress with tasks 1-10 are you making? Make notes on your progress in the table below./V následující tabulce si dělej poznámky o tom, jak se ti daří plnit úkoly 1-10.

Task number Číslo úkolu	My notes Mé poznámky
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

5) What can you already do in terms of your speaking skills?

Co z hlediska svého mluveného projevu už umíš?

A2

Spoken interaction/Rozhovory

11) I can invite someone somewhere and respond to invitations./Umím někoho někam pozvat a reagovat na pozvání.

12) I can address people in a polite way./Umím lidi zdvořile oslovit.

13) I can make and accept apologies./Umím se omluvit a přijmout omluvu.

14) I can discuss with friends what to do, where to go and when and where to meet./Umím se s kamarády domluvit na tom, co budeme dělat, kam a v kolik se sejdeme.

15) I can order something to eat or drink./ Umím si objednat jídlo a pití.

17) I can ask for basic information about public transport and buy tickets./ Dokážu se zeptat na základní informace o veřejné dopravě a koupit si jízdenky.

16) I can say what I want and ask about the price in places like shops./ Umím říct, co chci, a zeptat se na cenu, například v obchodě.

18) I can ask for directions or give help someone with the help of a map or a plan./ S pomocí mapy nebo plánku se dokážu zeptat na cestu nebo poradit někomu jinému.

19) I can ask people questions about what they do at work or at school and in their free time, and answer such questions./ Umím se zeptat na to, co lidé dělají v práci nebo ve škole, či ve volném čase, a umím na takové otázky odpovídat.

20) I can express how I feel in a simple way./ Umím jednoduše vyjádřit, jak se cítím.

21) I can participate in a short conversation on a topic that interests me./ Dokážu se účastnit krátké konverzace o tom, co mě zajímá.

22) I can express agreement and disagreement with other./ Dokážu vyjádřit souhlas a nesouhlas s ostatními.

23) I can ask questions about hobbies and answer such questions./ Umím se ptát na záliby a umím na otázky o zálibách odpovídat.

24) I can ask questions about past activities and answer such questions./ Umím se ptát na to, co lidé dělali a umím na takové otázky odpovědět.

25) When I don't understand something, I can very simply ask the person to repeat what they said./ Když něčemu nerozumím, umím jednoduše požádat o zopakování řečeného.

Spoken Production/Samostatný ústní projev

26) **I can describe myself, my family and other people./** Umím popsat sebe, svou rodinu a další lidi.

27) **I can describe places and objects in a simple way./** Umím jednoduše popsat místa a předměty.

28) **I can talk about my school and about my work at school./** Dokážu mluvit o své škole.

30) **I can describe what I do regularly./** Umím popsat, co pravidelně dělám.

29) **I can express what I like and dislike./** Umím vyjádřit, co mám a nemám rád/a.

32) **I can describe what I plan to do./** Umím popsat, jaké mám plány.

31) **I can describe what I did in the past./** Umím popsat, co jsem dělal/a v minulosti.

Color the bubbles, if you think you can do it./ Vybarvi bublinu, pokud myslíš, že to umíš.

You can also color only a part of the bubble./ Můžeš vybarvit i pouze část bubliny.

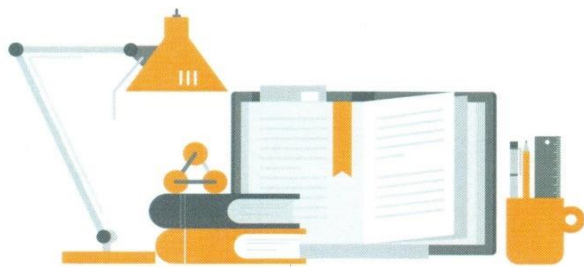**You are doing great! Don't give up!**

What progress with tasks 11-32 are you making? Make notes on your progress in the table below./ V následující tabulce si dělej poznámky o tom, jak se ti daří plnit úkoly 11-32.

Task number Číslo úkolu	My notes Mé poznámky
11	
12	
13	
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	
22	

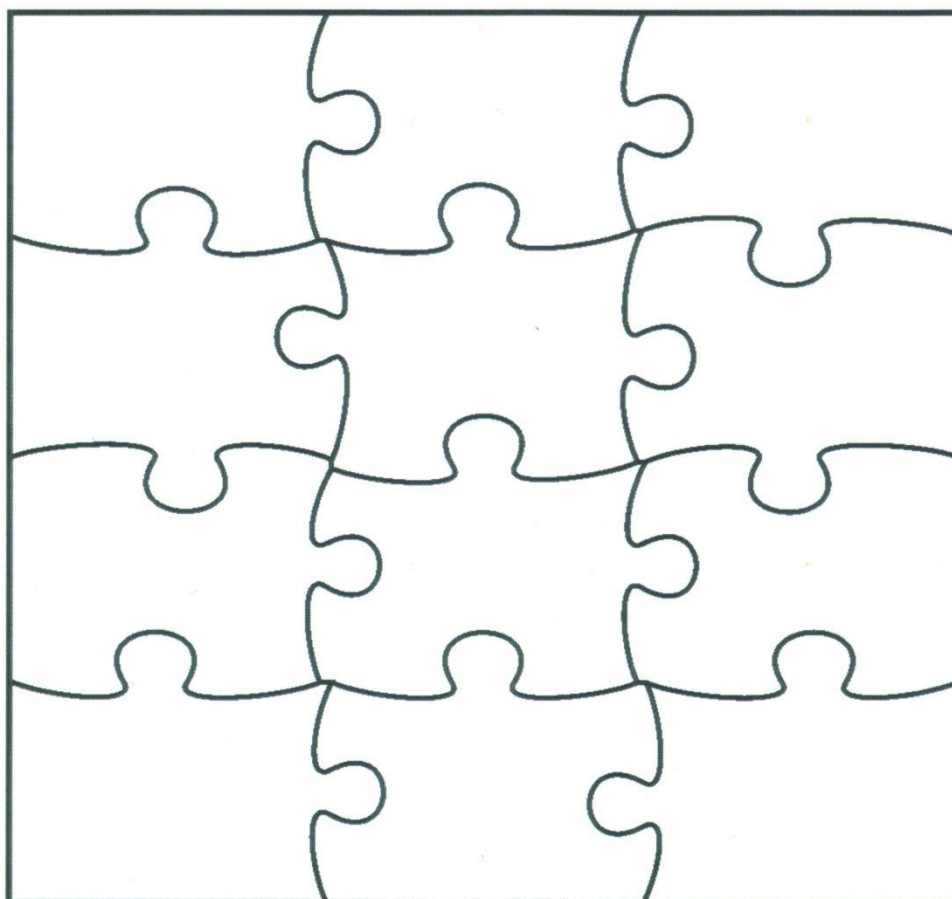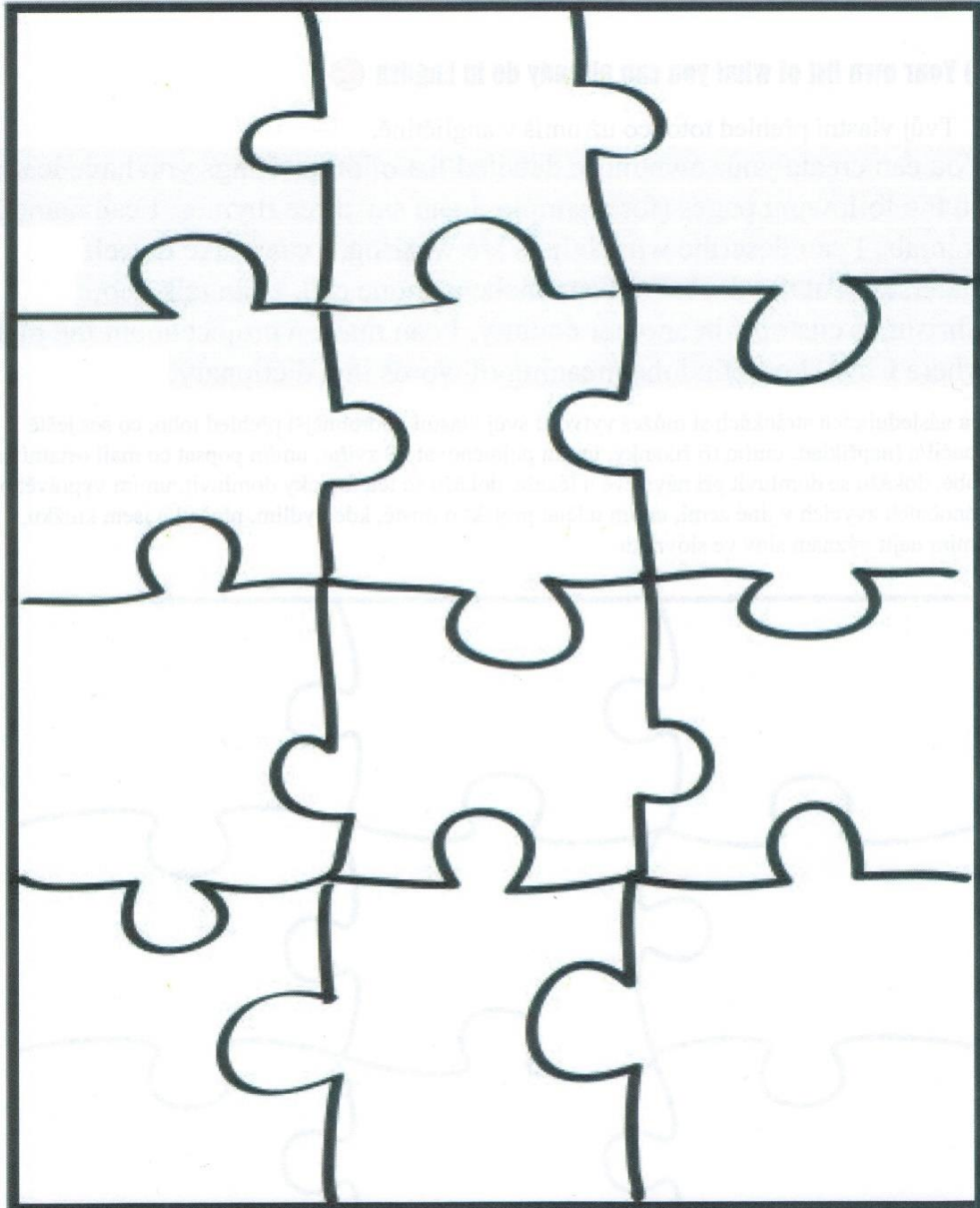|	
23	
24	
25	
26	
27	
28	
29	
30	
31	
32	

6) Your own list of what you can already do in English 😊

Tvůj vlastní přehled toto, co už umíš v angličtině.

You can create your own more detailed list of other things you have learnt on the following pages (for example: I can say three rhymes, I can name 20 animals, I can describe what others are wearing, I can make myself understood at the doctor's, I can make a phone call, I can talk about Christmas customs in another country, I can make a project about the place where I live, I can find the meaning of words in a dictionary.

Na následujících stránkách si můžeš vytvořit svůj vlastní podrobnější přehled toho, co ses ještě naučil/a (například: umím tři říkanky, umím pojmenovat 20 zvířat, umím popsat co mají ostatní na sobě, dokážu se domluvit při návštěvě u lékaře, dokážu se telefonicky domluvit, umím vyprávět o vánočních zvycích v jiné zemi, umím udělat projekt o místě, kde bydlím, přečetl/a jsem knížku, umím najít význam slov ve slovníku.

Good job! Keep it up!

My family: Reading comprehension (čtení s porozuměním)

Your task: Read the text and fill-in the right column. (Přečti si text a vyplň pravou stranu tabulky)

Question/Statement	Your answer
What is Dan doing?	
Where is Jack?	
Does the mum work in an office?	Yes No
Peter's wife was born in April.	True False We don't know
Does Nicola have a boyfriend?	Yes No
Chloe has got two nieces.	True False We don't know
Chloe's nickname is Lolo.	Yes No

This task was (tento úkol byl) ....

EASY	HARD	SO SO

The vocabulary in the reading was (slovíčka v tomto textu byla) …

EASY	HARD	SO SO

The grammar in the reading was (gramatika v tomto textu byla) …

EASY	HARD	SO SO

There was enough time for the reading (na čtení bylo dost času) ...

EASY	HARD	SO SO

Appendix D – *Example of a lesson plan (Intervention II, Week 2)*

Overall aim of the lesson: *See the individual objectives described below.*

Note: After 15 minutes, the groups will switch.

ACTIVITY	MATERIALS AND AIDS	TIME NEEDED	INTERACTION PATTERNS	OBJECTIVES
1. GROUP Language Biography (A1 + A2 descriptors) + group discussion	Printed ELP	15 min	Group discussion	The aim of the activity is to raise self-assessment awareness in the learners.
2. GROUP Pupils are given dice with pictures, their task is to roll the dice and make up a story that includes all the pictures. They can use a dictionary.	Dice with pictures	15 min	Group work	By the end of this activity, the pupils are able to collaboratively create a story using a dictionary.
3. GROUP The pupils are given picture cards. One of them chooses a card and determines who to ask the question. Then they swap.	Picture cards	15 min	Pupil ↔ pupil	By the end of this activity, the pupils are able to produce answers to questions using the future tense.

Links to FEP BE (in relation to the ELP activity)

Communication competencies

The pupil: formulates and expresses his or her ideas and opinions in a logical sequence; listens to other people's utterances; participates effectively in debates; defends his or her opinion and uses appropriate arguments;

Social and personal competencies

The pupil: cooperates efficiently with other members of his or her group; participates − together with teachers; contributes to discussions within a small group

Learning competencies

The pupil: assesses his or her own progress and identifies obstacles or problems hindering his or her learning progress; makes plans as to how to improve his or her learning; makes a critical assessment of his or her own learning results and discusses them.

Appendix E – *Table illustrating Intervention I*

Intervention I

WEEK	MODIFIED VERSION OF THE EUROPEAN LANGUAGE PORTFOLIO	SELF-ASSESSMENT AWARENESS	SHORT-TERM AIMS BASED ON THE LONG TERM GOALS IN THE ELP
1	INTRODUCTION 1 page of My English World + whole-class discussion	Whole-class discussion after writing & speaking activity	-
2	The Autumn Holiday		
3	1 page of My English World + whole-class discussion	Check-list (after reading comprehension task)	Matching aim of the activity with ELP descriptors
4	1 page of the Language Biography "*How can you learn foreign languages?*" + whole-class discussion	Whole-class discussion about the finished unit	-
5	1 page of the Language Biography "*Can you become a better English learner?*" + whole-class discussion	-	Matching aim of the activity with ELP descriptors

Appendix F – *Table illustrating Intervention II*

Intervention II

WEEK	MODIFIED VERSION OF THE EUROPEAN LANGUAGE PORTFOLIO	SELF-ASSESSMENT AWARENESS	WORK WITH SHORT-TERM AIMS
0	THE LEARNERS WERE QUARANTINED		
1	1 page of the Language Biography "*What would you like to be able to do?*" + group discussion	-	Whole-class discussion about the aim of the lesson (*Was it achieved? Why? Why not?*)
2	1-2 pages of the Language Biography (A1 + A2 descriptors) + group discussion	Whole-class discussion concerning the learners' performance and cooperation	Matching aim of the activity with ELP descriptors
3	The Language Biography: A2 descriptors or *Your own list of what can you already do in English* + group discussion	Check-list (after listening comprehension task)	Whole-class discussion about the aim of the lesson (*Was it achieved? Why? Why not?*)
4	Final revision of the ELP + group discussion	Group and whole-class discussion about the state of preparation for an upcoming test	-

Appendix G – *Example of Reflective diary*

ZAČALI JSME POUŽÍVAT EJP
- ukázala jsem jim celé portfolio a vysvětlila, k čemu to bude
- hlavní dotazy: Bude se to známkovat?
                 Bude to povinné?
                 Budeme to někomu ukazovat?
- Bylo patrné, že se žákům ulevilo, že jsem EJP nevymyslela já a že vůbec netvrdím, že je "skvělé" a efektivní. Naopak jsem jim řekla, že potřebuji jejich názor a že potřebuji POMOCT, aby mi řekli, zda jim to vyhovuje a nebo jestli v tom vidí smysl (nebo ne)
- přišlo mi, že jim to pro ně motivující, že mě hlavně zajímá jejich názor a další postřehy → bez ohledu na to, jaké budou.

- vyhrála jsem 1 list z My English World, trvalo jim zhruba 15 minut, než ho vyplnili

DALŠÍ POZNÁMKY
- zapojili se všichni žáci, ale různou mírou.
- líbilo se mi, že to hezky zrcadlilo, co je baví a čemu se v AJ věnují → kde přicházejí s AJ do styku
- průběžně jsem je obcházela, četla si odpovědi → většina žáků potřebovala pomoct (formulace myšlenky, kladla jsem doplňující dotazy a navigovala je k odpovědi)
- uvědomili si, že se s AJ setkávají více než myslí
- měli radost, když jsem jim řekla, že vše co v AJ dělají se "počítá"
- pár žákům nestačily kolonky, některé slečny chtěly čisté listy, aby to hezčeji mohly vyplnit znova
- někteří se snaží psát čistě v AJ, jiní pouze v ČJ a jsou i tací, co kombinují oba jazyky

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My English World

Language Passport

Ways I learn languages and get to know other cultures/ Jak se učím jazyky a poznávám nové kultury

Traveling Cestování	**Description/Popis** What have I learnt about the country/Co jsem se naučil/a o této zemi?
Crotia I was in ~~Chorcio~~ last summer. I	I ask for Ice creem

Reading (books, websites, magazines) Čtení (knihy, internetové stránky, časopisy)	**Description/Popis** What was it about?/O čem to bylo?
Witch Terg	It was about witch Terg. She goes to school for witch. She get a magic ring for birday

My favorite English songs Moje oblíbené anglické písničky	**Description/Popis** What is the song about? Why do I like it? O čem ta písnička je? Proč se mi líbí?
I like Shut up and dance	~~it~~
I like stay	

The Screen (TV and PC) Do I play any PC games or watch movies or TV series in English?/ Hraju nějaké hry či sleduji filmy a seriály v AJ?	Description/Popis What is it about? Why do I like it?/O čem to je? Proč mě to baví?
Once upon a time	Bicose about a ~~stry~~ character in a story skeping beutz, Sinderela, Snow White, wilins
Hobbit	Bicose it's SUPER
Lord of the rings	Bicose it's Super
Letopysy Narnie	BICOSE IT'S SUPER

Other situations Jiné situace, během kterých používám AJ	Description/Popis
I talk whit Nicky whit my mother and with my sister	

1) How can you learn foreign languages?/Jak se můžeš učit cizí jazyky?

Think about opportunities there are to learn English outside of school: for example listening to foreign songs, watching foreign films, playing computer games, trying to make yourself understood when abroad, staying at a language camp.

Přemýšlej o možnostech, jak se učit angličtinu mimo školu: například tím, že posloucháš písně v cizím jazyce, díváš se na zahraniční filmy, hraješ počítačové hry, zkoušíš se domluvit při cestě do zahraničí, jedeš na jazykový tábor.

Date/Datum	My contacts with English outside of school/ Má mimoškolní setkání s cizími jazyky
	What helps you to learn English?
	I listen to music, I speeka lot, I wath Netflix (my favorite movies), [I really love wath films in original version), I speek with my cousin and he's from Australia), speek witt a person who just speek English, just wath youtube (make up tuturials)

2) Can you become a better English learner?/Můžeš se učit angličtinu lépe?

Try to think about the ways you learn the English language. Which ways are most helpful? You can write down your good ideas in the following table (for example repeating words aloud, drawing little pictures in a vocabulary notebook, forming groups of words which rhyme or have something in common, guessing the meaning of unknown words, listening to tape recordings, acting out a dialogue with your friends). What experiences do your classmates have?

Snaž se přemýšlet o tom, jak se učíš cizí jazyky. Co ti nejvíce pomáhá? Dobré nápady si můžeš zapsat do následující tabulky (například: opakování slov nahlas, kreslení obrázků do slovníčku, vytváření skupin slov, která se rýmují nebo mají něco společného, odhadování významu neznámých slov, poslouchání nahrávek, předvádění rozhovoru s kamarády). Můžeš se učit také jinak? Jaké zkušenosti mají tví spolužáci?

Date/Datum	What helps me when I learn English/ Co mi pomáhá při učení angličtiny
	zakrývám si slovíčka
	čtu si nahlas slovíčka
	pomáhá mi sešit
	sledování videa

4) What can you already do in terms of your speaking skills?

Co z hlediska svého mluveného projevu už umíš?

Spoken interaction/Rozhovory

A1

1) I can introduce myself. I can thank someone./ Umím se představit. Umím poděkovat.

2) I can greet somebody and say goodbye to them. I can introduce somebody./Umím pozdravit a rozloučit se. Dokážu někoho představit.

3) I can ask for something and respond to somebody's requests./Umím si o něco říct a umím reagovat na žádost někoho jiného.

4) I can ask somebody how they are and answer similar questions./Umím se zeptat, jak se někomu daří, a umím na podobné otázky odpovídat.

5) I can ask for things in a shop making gestures to help me./Dokážu si říct o věci v obchodě, pomáhám si při tom gesty.

6) I can use numbers and say what time it is./Umím se zeptat, jak se někomu daří, a umím na podobné otázky odpovídat.

7) I can ask questions about where people live, whom they know and what things they have and answer such questions./Dokážu se ptat na to, kde lidé žijí, koho znají a co mají, a dokážu na takové otázky odpovídat.

Spoken production/ Samostatný ústní projev

8) I can talk about my home, my family and people I know in simple sentences./Umím mluvit jednoduchými větami o svém domově, své rodině a lidech, které znám.

9) I can describe where I live./ Umím popsat, kde žiju.

10) I can say who I am and what I do./Umím říct, kdo jsem a čím jsem.

Color the bubbles, if you think you can do it./ Vybarvi bublinu, pokud myslíš, že to umíš.

You can also color only a part of the bubble./ Můžeš vybarvit i pouze část bubliny.

5) What can you already do in terms of your speaking skills?

Co z hlediska svého mluveného projevu už umíš?

Spoken interaction/Rozhovory

A2

11) I can invite someone somewhere and respond to invitations./Umím někoho někam pozvat a reagovat na pozvání.

12) I can address people in a polite way./Umím lidi zdvořile oslovit.

13) I can make and accept apologies./Umím se omluvit a přijmout omluvu.

14) I can discuss with friends what to do, where to go and when and where to meet./Umím se s kamarády domluvit na tom, co budeme dělat, kam a v kolik se sejdeme.

15) I can order something to eat or drink./ Umím si objednat jídlo a pití.

17) I can ask for basic information about public transport and buy tickets./ Dokážu se zeptat na základní informace o veřejné dopravě a koupit si jízdenky.

16) I can say what I want and ask about the price in places like shops./ Umím říct, co chci, a zeptat se na cenu, například v obchodě.

18) I can ask for directions or give help someone with the help of a map or a plan./ S pomocí mapy nebo plánku se dokážu zeptat na cestu nebo poradit někomu jinému.

19) I can ask people questions about what they do at work or at school and in their free time, and answer such questions./ Umím se zeptat na to, co lidé dělají v práci nebo ve škole, či ve volném čase, a umím na takové otázky

20) I can express how I feel in a simple way./ Umím jednoduše vyjádřit, jak se cítím.

21) I can participate in a short conversation on a topic that interests me./ Dokážu se účastnit krátké konverzace o tom, co mě zajímá.

22) I can express agreement and disagreement with other./ Dokážu vyjádřit souhlas a nesouhlas s ostatními.

23) I can ask questions about hobbies and answer such questions./ Umím se ptát na záliby a umím na otázky o zálibách odpovídat.

24) I can ask questions about past activities and answer such questions./ Umím se ptát na to, co lidé dělali a umím na takové otázky odpovědět.
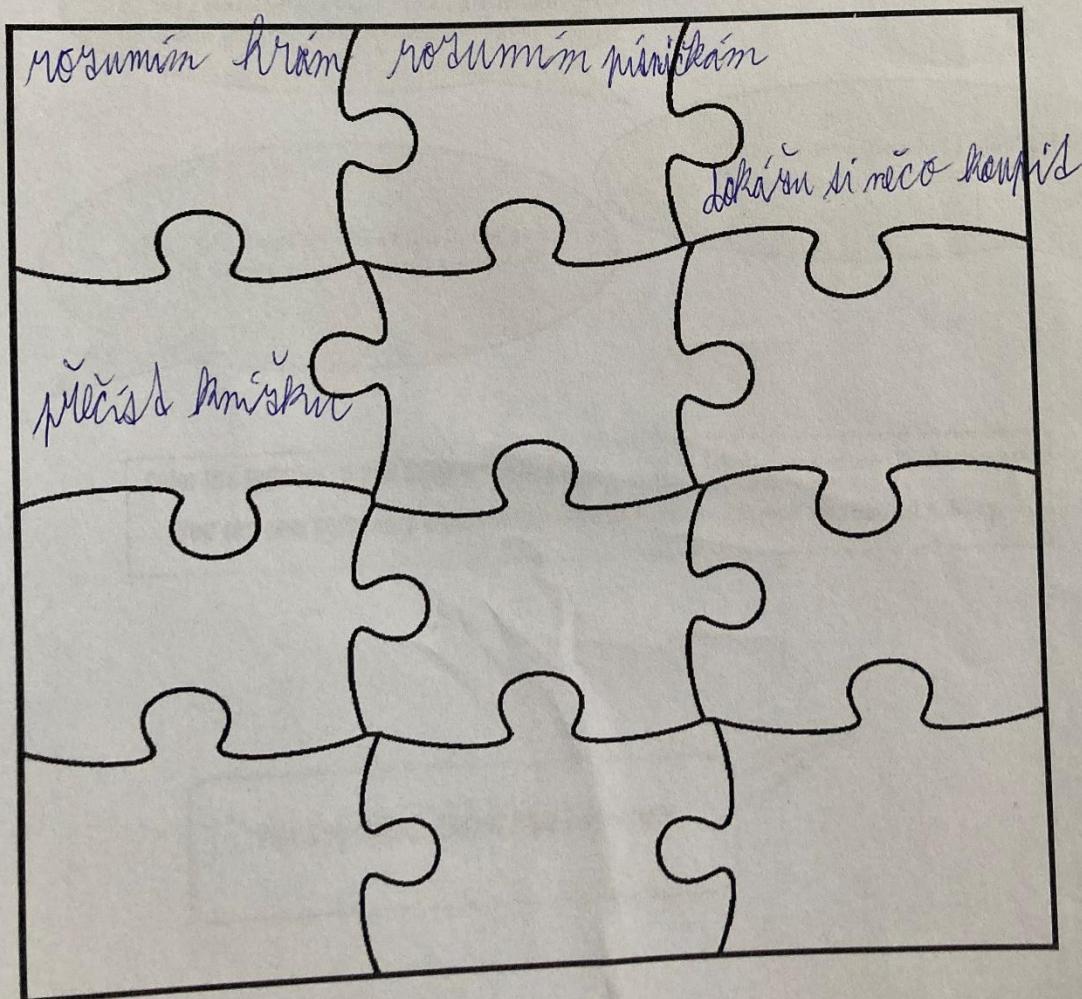
25) When I don't understand something, I can very simply ask the person to repeat what they said./ Když něčemu nerozumím, umím jednoduše požádat o zopakování řečeného.

6) Your own list of what you can already do in English 😊

Tvůj vlastní přehled toto, co už umíš v angličtině.

You can create your own more detailed list of other things you have learnt on the following pages (for example: I can say three rhymes, I can name 20 animals, I can describe what others are wearing, I can make myself understood at the doctor's, I can make a phone call, I can talk about Christmas customs in another country, I can make a project about the place where I live, I can find the meaning of words in a dictionary.

Na následujících stránkách si můžeš vytvořit svůj vlastní podrobnější přehled toho, co ses ještě naučil/a (například: umím tři říkanky, umím pojmenovat 20 zvířat, umím popsat co mají ostatní na sobě, dokážu se domluvit při návštěvě u lékaře, dokážu se telefonicky domluvit, umím vyprávět o vánočních zvycích v jiné zemi, umím udělat projekt o místě, kde bydlím, přečetl/a jsem knížku, umím najít význam slov ve slovníku.
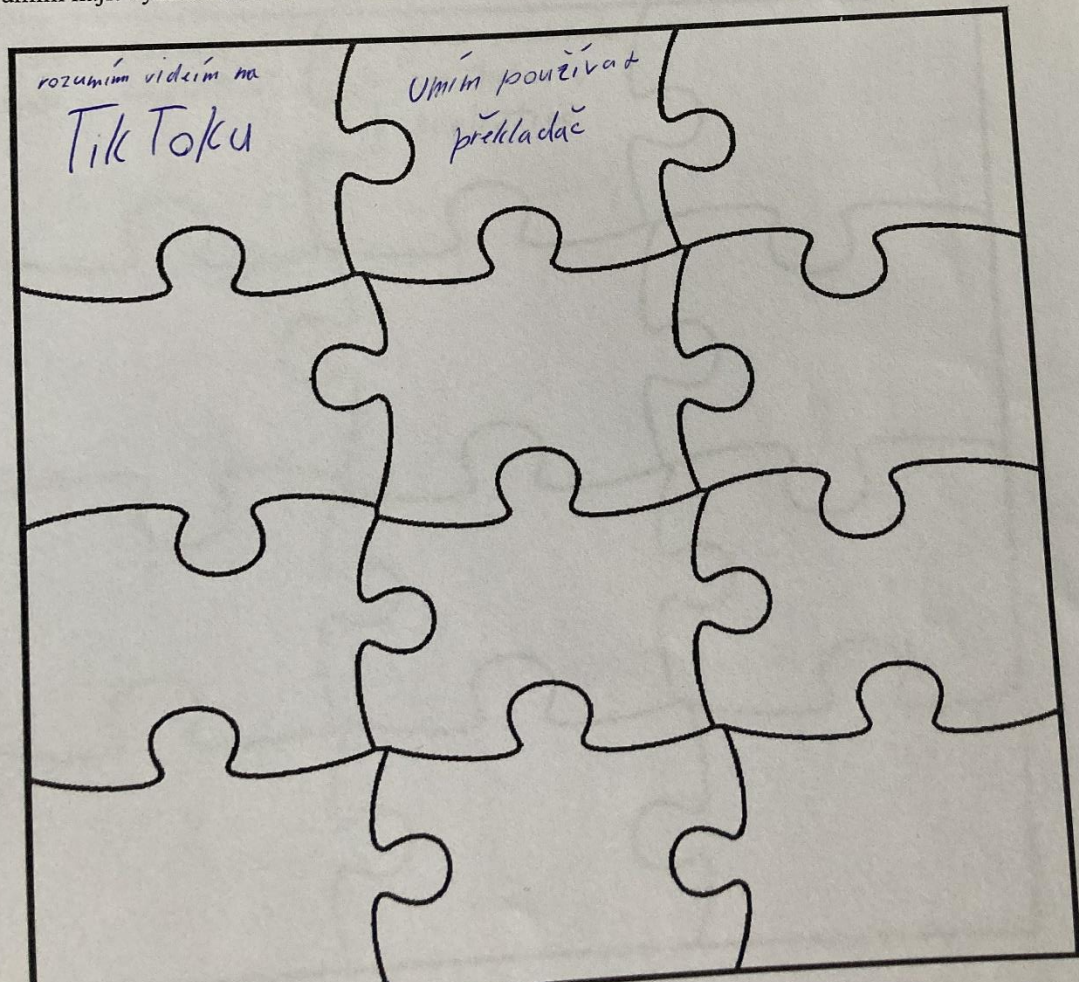
rozumím hrám   rozumím písničkám

dokážu si něco koupit

přečíst knížku

6) Your own list of what you can already do in English ☺

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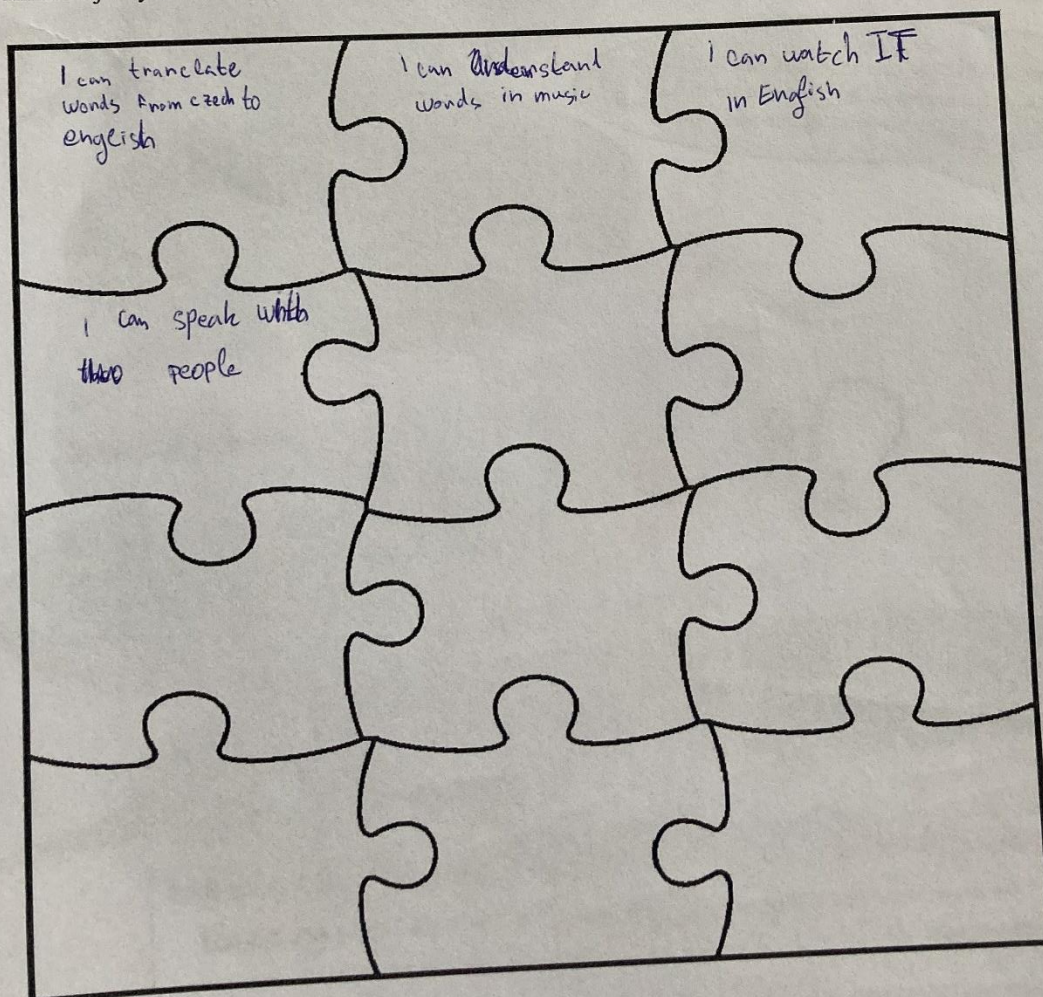
rozumím vidim na
Tik Toku

Umím používat
překladač

6) Your own list of what you can already do in English 😊

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I can tranclate words from czech to english

I can understand words in music

I can watch IF in English

I can speak whth thwo people

6) Your own list of what you can already do in English 😊

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I can listen music

I can translate text

I can speak with my mum

I can name 10 animals.