

**UNIVERSITY OF LATVIA
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**READING ACTIVITIES AS A MEANS OF RAISING STUDENTS' INTEREST
ABOUT READING IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSES IN FORM 10**

**LASĪŠANAS AKTIVITĀTES – VEIDS KĀ VEICINĀT SKOLĒNU INTERESI PAR
LASĪŠANU ANĢĻU VALODAS STUNDĀS 10. KLASĒ**

DIPLOMA PAPER

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DECLARATION OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

I declare that this study is my own and does not contain any unacknowledged work from any source.

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26 May, 2008

ABSTRACT

The theme of the Diploma Paper is “Reading activities as a means of raising interest in the English language classes in Form 10”. This topic was chosen as communication is a very important part of people’s daily life and reading is also a part of it. The author of the Diploma Paper has observed that students rarely choose reading as their hobby that is why the aim of the Diploma Paper is to raise students’ interest in reading in the English language classes with a help of reading activities. The Case study was used as a research method and questionnaire, feedback and observation was used as a data collection method to reach the aim of the Diploma Paper.

The Case study was carried out to find out students’ opinion about reading in the English language classroom in the Form 10. The case study consisted of three steps – pre-questionnaire, reading activities tried out in the Form 10 and post-questionnaire. The pre-questionnaire was designed and distributed among the students in the Form 10, in two groups, to find out their attitude to reading. As well as the results of the pre-questionnaire were used to work out the criteria for the selection of the reading materials and tasks. In the Case study, different texts and activities were tried out and after each activity, students’ feedbacks about the text and the activity appointed by the teacher, were gathered. The post-questionnaire was distributed to students to find out whether they would like to continue reading additional materials and doing interesting activities. Results showed that students like to read and the case study, from the author of the Diploma Paper opinion, was successful, as the majority of them would like to continue reading additional materials. At the same time, there were also students who doubted whether they want to do the intensive reading, which shows that teacher must pay special attention and observe which reading tasks raise their interest and to use these observations in practice.

The author of the Diploma paper also concludes that additionally to the criteria which were compiled after the study of literature and the results of the pre-questionnaire (the text should be selected according to students’ interest, the tasks should be challenging, but at the same time it should not discourage students with its difficulty, it can have a gap of knowledge / experience, it should raise students’ curiosity and they should be varied), there are three more factors which influence students’ interest rate in the process of reading and they are: variety or unusualness, entertainment and communication.

ANOTĀCIJA

Diplomdarba tēma ir “Lasīšanas aktivitātes – veids kā veicināt skolēnu interesi par lasīšanu angļu valodas stundās 10. klasē”. Šī tēma tika izvēlēta, jo komunikācija ir viena no svarīgākajām cilvēku dzīves daļām un arī lasīšana ir daļa no tās. Diplomdarba autore ir novērojusi, ka skolnieki reti kad izvēlas lasīšanu kā savu hobiju, tāpēc Diplomdarba mērķis ir veicināt skolēnu interesi par lasīšanu angļu valodas stundās izmantojot lasīšanas aktivitātes. Gadījuma izpēte tika izvēlēta kā izpētes metode un aptauja un novērojumi tika izvēlēti kā informācijas ieguves rīki, lai sasniegtu Diplomdarba mērķi.

Ar gadījuma izpētes palīdzību, Diplomdarba autore vēlējās noskaidrot skolnieku attieksmi pret lasīšanu, un, balstoties uz anketas rezultātiem, izstrādāt kritērijus lasīšanas uzdevumu atlasei. Anketa tika izdalīta divām desmito klašu grupām. Gadījuma izpētē tika lasīti teksti un izmēģinātas dažādas aktivitātes, un pēc kurām skolēniem bija jāaizpilda aptaujas, kurā viņi vērtēja tekstu un uzdevuma intereses pakāpi. Pēc gadījuma izpētes, vēl viena aptauja tika izveidota, lai noskaidrotu kā ir izmainījies skolēnu viedoklis par lasīšanu angļu valodas stundās un, vai viņi vēlētos lasīt papildus arī turpmāk. Aptaujas rezultātos var redzēt, ka lielākā daļa vēlētos lasīt papildus materiālus un tekstus, kā arī pildīt dažādas interesantas aktivitātes paralēli tiem, kaut arī vēl joprojām ir skolēni, kur par to šaubās. Tas liecina par to, ka skolotājam būtu jāveic vēl papildus novērojumi, lai redzētu kādi uzdevumi izraisa lielāku interesi un nākotnē veidojot aktivitātes, jāņem šos kritērijus vērā.

Diplomdarba autore arī secina, ka papildus kritērijiem, kuri tika izveidoti pēc literatūras analīzes un aptaujas rezultātiem (ka tekstam ir jārosina skolēnu interesi, tam ir jāatbilst skolēnu interesēm, lasīšanas aktivitātes nedrīkst atbaidīt skolēnus ar savu grūtības pakāpi, aktivitātei ir jābūt rosinošai, tā var uzreiz nesniegt visu informāciju un aktivitātēm jābūt dažādām) ir vēl trīs faktori, kuri rosina skolēnu interesi lasīšanas procesa laikā un tie ir: dažādība/ neparastums, iespēja komunicēt un izklaidējošs motīvs.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	7
1. The nature and the process of reading	10
1.1 The development of reading skills to young adolescence	11
2. Selection of the text	16
3. Reading activities as a part of the reading process	19
4. Interest as an inseparable part of the learning process	22
5. Case Study	24
5.1 Pre-Questionnaire	25
5.2 Description of reading activities	35
5.3 Post-questionnaire	54
Conclusion	59
Thesis	61
Bibliography	62
Appendices	

INTRODUCTION

According to the definition given by Cambridge Advanced Learner's dictionary, reading is a skill or activity of getting information from books. The author of the Diploma Paper would like to continue, that reading is a part of people's daily life, furthermore, it is an integral part of communication, which shows intellectual abilities and capacities of a person.

As reading nowadays serves as a way how to spend the free time or to get the information, the author of the Diploma Paper has observed that reading is more popular among adults and students treat it as a boring process. If century ago reading was a prestige activity and the people who had an access to different books and reading materials were treated very respectfully, then nowadays more and more people choose other daily activities to spend their free time, especially students, who have read only course books or magazines, and they do not know what do world famous authors have written about.

To find out how do students prefer to spend their free time, the author of the Diploma paper in the terms of the study process, asked the students from the secondary school to make the questionnaire presentations about their classmates' daily routines and the way they spend their free time. It turned out that 41 % of students meet their friends in their free time, 8 % watch TV, 30 % do sports and 10 % play the computer and 11 % go out, while none of the students does reading.

The presentations were one of the reasons why the author of the Diploma Paper chose this topic, as students should be encouraged to read and to enjoy the process of reading to develop their outlook, to learn how to express opinion and be able to participate in the discussions about different themes as reading can be not only an entertainment but also as a way of learning and the source of information. The other reason was that the author of the Diploma paper has reading as a hobby and she believes that the reading is not only a process. It is a non-stopping communication between the writer and the reader, the reader and the person reading the same text. It is sharing of experiences. It is pleasure.

As reading is usually an individual process, the author of the Diploma paper thinks that in school it could be done more effectively and it could be a more successful way how to raise students' interest in the reading process, as it can be combined with interesting and motivating reading tasks. The author of the Diploma Paper has made certain conclusions as nowadays course books mostly offers traditional reading tasks, which can not raise any interest in reading, which it can also be seen in the lesson, as there is a little response from the students during the reading process in the lesson. Moreover, the activities in the course

books are so predictable that even the thought of reading the next text again, discourages students to take the good emotions from this process.

That is why **the aim** of the Diploma Paper is to find different possibilities how to raise students' interest in the reading process in the English language lesson with a help of reading activities.

To achieve the aim the following **objectives** were stated:

- To review the literature about the development of reading skills and the age peculiarities which should be taken into consideration when developing reading skills;
- To design a pre-questionnaire to find out students' attitude to reading;
- To work out the criteria for the selection of the tasks based on the study of the literature and the pre-questionnaire;
- To select the activities for the English reading classes and to try them out in Form 10;
- To design feedback questionnaire and collect the students' reflections after each of the activity to find out students' opinion about the texts and the tasks;
- To design and complete the observation sheet in order to compare students' and the author's of the Diploma paper reflections about the activities;
- To design the post-questionnaire and distribute it among students to find out how has students' attitude to reading in the language classroom changed.

Hypothesis of the paper is that if the selected reading activities correspond to the learners' needs and interest, they motivate and encourage students to read in the English language classroom.

Research questions:

- What does reading process involve ;
- How reading skills can be developed to the young adolescence;
- How students' interest and motivation can be increased by the help of different activities;
- How to select the text and activities to raise students' interest about the reading;

To achieve the aim of the Diploma Paper the Case study was used as a **research method** to find out students' opinion about reading in the English language classroom in the Form 10.

Questionnaire, observation and feedback were used as **method of data collection** in order to get students' opinions about different reading activities based on different types of text and to compare their opinions and the author's of the Diploma Paper reflections about the activities.

The Diploma Paper consists of five chapters:

The first chapter deals with the analysis of literature about the reading process, the possibilities of developing reading skills for adolescence in order to raise their interest in the reading process;

The second chapter deals with the analysis of different types of text and their characteristic features, and how each of the texts can be presented and taught in the classroom to raise students' interest in the reading process;

The third chapter deals with the reading stages used to develop reading skills and the activities used in the certain stage.

The fourth chapter deals with the emotions which are inseparable part of the learning process, such as interest, curiosity and anxiety.

The fifth chapter is a case study and it is the analysis of students' attitude to reading before the activities and after them, furthermore also the students' and the author's of the Diploma Paper opinion about the activities used in the teaching process, as well as the comparison of students and teacher's reflections.

1. THE NATURE AND THE PROCESS OF READING

The term “reading” can be understood in many ways, as people use it differently. In order to understand what reading is, it is advisable to think about reading process. Firstly, reading is a communication, i.e., it is a part of language, which can be received and sent in order to establish a communication. It means that everything that is being done with a help of reading, is done intentionally and for a purpose, whereas, the purpose of that can be different. Secondly, reading is a part of a context or an extended text (Nuttal 1996). “In methodology they distinguish between reading as an aim and reading as a means of learning a foreign language. The former comprises the techniques of decoding written symbols of language. The latter implies discovering the meaning ‘behind’ symbols and extracting new information, getting pleasure and enlarging one’s vocabulary” (Sardiko 1998: 102).

If different reading items could be taken, for example, newspaper article, recipe, telephone message, etc, it is seen that the reason for reading each of this item, will be different (Hood, Solomon and Burns 1996), furthermore, also the way of reading each of the item will be different, while the goal for all of them, would be the same, i.e., to understand a message (Nuttal 1996).

The role of a message is also very important, as it is an idea, a fact, a feeling, etc, which the author of the text had intended to send to the reader. When this message is received, it can be said, the communication between the writer and the reader has taken place. Meanwhile, the response to this message is another matter, as not all the meaning of the text gets into reader’s mind because people are different in the perception, and it is known, that a text that seems easy to one person may seem difficult to another (Nuttal 1996).

The difficulty of perceiving the text as the writer had intended may arise from the fact, that a reader and a writer does not have certain things in common, in order to understand the message.

“The kinds of assumptions we make about the world depend on what we have experienced and how our minds have organized the knowledge we have got from our experiences. (..) The way we interpret depends on the schemata activated by the text; and whether we interpret successfully depends on whether our schemata are sufficiently similar to the writer’s” (Nuttal 1996: 7).

Schema (or plural “schemata”) is a mental structure of the existing knowledge of the world, which is based on the past and present experiences, and in the context of

reading, it often helps the reader to interpret the text. (Nuttal 1996) It means that reading process involves much more than “decoding from print to sound. It involves cultural, social and personal knowledge, and the ability to bring this knowledge to our sampling of the text and our understanding of its meaning.” (Hood, Solomon and Burns 1996: 5) If the writer and the reader shares similar presuppositions, it will be easy to read the text. In fact, it may happen that the text for reader is so predictable, that there is no use of reading it. (Nuttal 1996) Therefore, the teacher in order to activate the schemata and understand the text may use a prediction – it may start with the title, topic or even sentence, but it has been proven that “prediction is one of the attractions of the stories about what will happen which urges us to read to the end” (Nuttal 1996: 13). Besides that, the teacher should explain the students that even if their predictions do not agree with the text, it does not mean that they are incompetent readers. It only shows that the author while writing always has different options about the text, and the option students predicted, could have been equally good.

The interpretation of the text is one thing, but the reader should not forget about the understanding of the text. If, for example, during the conversation, one can stop the person and ask for explanation of the confusing things, then in the reading process it can not be done. And this is the case, where the “good reader” appears. In such situation, it is advisable to stop and think, and even go back and check the previous passages or reread the parts which cause confusion, because the reader has to make the sense of the text, in order to understand it (Nuttal 1996).

The author of the Diploma Paper agrees to the quote that “we all have different purposes in reading, different opinions, backgrounds and experiences, and, thus different schemata.” (Nuttal 1996: 18) And it is only natural that every reader gets something different from the text as becoming readers, we tend to take different roles during the reading process, for example, read story books as children, read to our children as parents, read textbooks for educational purposes, read to keep up with national and international events, etc. (Hood, Solomon and Burns 1996).

1.1. DEVELOPMENT OF READING SKILLS TO YOUNG ADOLESCENCE

The reason why to teach students reading may differ, especially, reading of a target language. Many of them want to read texts either because of their job and career, or for

study purposes or simply for pleasure. The period from 10 to 15 years old for students is a time, when they start the growth and development from the childhood to adolescence, which is called young or early adolescence (Rose 2005) and the author of the Diploma Paper thinks that one of the ways how they can gain the information and knowledge about the world is the process of reading.

It is observed that any contact with the text of the target language is good for students, as it is believed that some of the language sticks in their minds during the process of the language learning, especially, if the text seems interesting for them. Furthermore, the reading of a text gives an opportunity not only to study the language, but also allows students to understand the grammar, punctuation and the construction of the text and get know about interesting topics, which can stimulate the discussion in the classroom and make the lesson very attractive (Harmer 1998). The author of the Diploma paper wants to add, that it is also the way how students can satisfy their developmental needs.

If the teacher has intended to bring the reading classes into her lessons, it is very advisable for teacher to establish certain guidelines to follow according to the age group in order to make the reading course and reading process successful. The author of the Diploma Paper suggests the following guidelines, which results from the analysis of the literature about the development of the reading skills (Harmer 1998, Nuttal 1996), and the age peculiarities in the terms of the reading process (Daggett 2007, National Middle School Association 2007).

- Teacher should enable students to work efficiently, as they have to get accustomed to the effective and purposeful learning process and the ability to take different challenges during it;
- To engage students into the reading process, in order they benefit from it, as it is a way how students can learn not only for their studies, but also for the real life;
- To encourage students to respond to what is happening in the text, which brings into a reading process not only a personal touch, but also the ability to formulate and express their opinion;
- To enjoy the reading process and the material which is chosen for the reading classes, as young adolescence tend to believe that their problems, experiences and feelings are unique and reading is the way how students can find different answers;
- To promote students to read without help, because teacher's responsibility is to make her/his support during the reading process unnecessary. This can

be done giving individual work with the text and later praise students for their work to raise their self-esteem, which at that age is very important for them;

- To prepare students for the authentic texts, because they come from real-life situations. But it is up to the teacher when to choose the right time when to start dealing with them, because if it is done too early, the problems will arise if it is their first time experience with that task and it can influence their motivation and even self-esteem to do similar task in the future;
- To match the task to the topic, because the most interesting text can be made boring by asking inappropriate questions and the most ordinary story can be made really exciting with a help of challenging tasks, as the variety in methods, approaches and materials is a key for the successful learning process and the way how teacher can satisfy all students' needs (National Middle School Association 2007).

As previously stated, the *role of the teacher* is very important as the age of 12 – 15 is the time when students search for the role-model, and if the teacher from the students' point of view can be able to be such, the learning process would be more successful, as teacher knowing that most of the students nowadays have a lack of interest in the school subjects, can show that learning is interesting and necessary. Moreover, the teacher can attract students to reading by choosing the suitable reading material and make the reading process as fun. Nevertheless, while teaching reading, the teacher should not forget about students' capacities and set or make tasks according to their level of knowledge and ability, at the same time also keeping in mind, that although their knowledge of language is not so good, the tasks still should be very effective and interesting, so the students want to do them.

The key to teacher's success is also monitoring. The teacher should not forget to observe each student and also the progress of the class, at the same time also encouraging students to work more productively to become not only competent but also a good readers, and be able to work with the text without teacher's assistance.

Learning process without the students will not be complete. That is why the *role of the student* is also very important (Nuttal 1996). As reading is rather learning than teaching, the student has to keep in mind that he/she has to take an active part in this learning process, because "only the learners can do the learning" (Nuttal 1996: 33). Besides that, students should monitor their work, especially the comprehension of the text,

and if he sees that he is having some difficulties, he has to understand why it is so and to develop his own way of learning, or seek for help from the teacher's side.

All in all, this means that both the teacher and a student have to observe their responsibilities in order to become successful in the reading lesson (Nuttal 1996). From the teacher's side these are the abilities to deliver a efficient lesson, taken into a consideration the learner's needs, the variety in the methods and materials, as well as the praise or other way how to motivate students to work, while the student's responsibility is to take everything he/she can from the teacher and the lesson and to invest all the effort and attention in the study process. Moreover, both the teacher and the students will feel satisfied during the reading process if they see that they have done with the text as much as they could.

To get the maximum benefit from the reading, teacher has to prepare students to do both intensive and extensive reading. Extensive reading deals with teacher's encouragement to students in order to choose the reading material on their own and to do it whether for pleasure or improvement of the language, while intensive reading is basically chosen by the teacher, happens in the classroom and is meant for developing specific receptive skills (Harmer 2001).

Overall, in extensive reading, it is not enough with simply telling students to read a lot outside the classroom. It is advisable to give an opportunity to do extensive reading by providing students with information where to find the materials and books, or even provide them with a reading material in the form of a small library in the classroom. Furthermore, one of the conditions of an extensive reading is that students have to understand what they are reading. There are special materials written for extensive reading called "readers" or "simplified readers". Mostly they appear in the form of fiction and non-fiction books, as well as simplified works of literature (Harmer 2001).

In order to see, how students are getting on with their readings, the teacher should ask students to report on their reading in a form of the diary, where students put down different ideas about the reading materials, quotes, etc or the presentation of the book (Nuttal 1996). The author of the Diploma paper thinks that it is not only the checking of students work, but also a good way how to promote other students to read.

The way of reading the text is another factor which teacher should take into consideration in the language classroom. There are three possible ways of reading. Firstly,

the students all read silently to themselves at their own speed. Secondly, the teacher reads aloud, while students follow in their books and, thirdly, students read aloud in turns (Doff 1997). That is why teachers should not forget that not only the purpose of reading is important in order to read effectively, but also the way of reading. Therefore, before starting to read, the teacher should observe the class and think which will be the most suitable way of reading for them. For example, some students will find reading aloud very helpful, as it helps to practice pronunciation, stress patterns, etc, while at the same time, it may be disturbing as students can be more focused on the correct reading than on the reading material as such. Another method is that the teacher is reading aloud the text, which makes students to follow the speed set by teacher, but at the same time, shows the correct pronunciation. That is why silent reading together with comprehension questions is better, as it gives students an opportunity to read at their own speed and go back, if some misunderstanding of the text arises. At the same time, some teachers are afraid of silent reading, as there is silence in the classroom and it seems that nothing is happening, but they forget about the fact, that students are concentrating on the text and thinking about it.

In the terms of reading aloud, it is observed that it may be useful in the early stages of reading. It is believed also, that only if one student is reading aloud, the others are not listening at all or listening to a bad model. Furthermore, it is an unnatural activity, as in real life situations, most people barely ever read aloud (Doff 1997).

In conclusion, each person can read, but to read effectively, everybody needs to be trained. That is why the role of the teacher in the development of reading skills is very important, as a successfully planned work from the teacher's side and effective work from student's side, will bring the result both sides have planned to reach – to become a competent reader, and here the selection of the text can be a factor which can influence it, therefore the next chapter will discuss the key points which should be taken into account when choosing a text.

2. SELECTION OF THE TEXT

The selection of the text is one of the first steps in the reading process, as without the text, the reading can not happen. To find a good reading material, the teacher should consider two things. First of all, it is a relevance of the content and, secondly, the level of difficulty. (Hood, Solomon and Burns 1996) while Ch. Nuttal (1996) states that another three criteria which influences the choice of the text are exploitability, readability and variety.

Relevant text is a text, which goes together with students' life and experience, furthermore, students' needs. As it is sometimes difficult to combine these things when selecting a text, it is important to remember to explain to the students, why the teacher has chosen exactly this text (Hood, Solomon and Burns 1996).

At the same time, when selecting relevant text, the teacher should take into consideration also the level of difficulty which depends on the context and the features of the text, such as the knowledge and experience the reader brings to the text, the nature of the reading task and the language of the text, although it can match students' interest, the level of difficulty can discourage students to read it. It is assumed that the knowledge and experience shows how easy or difficult it is to understand the text and the more reader's experience and knowledge matches with the writer's, the easier it is to understand the text. If the teacher sees that the text can cause difficulties, for example, because of different cultural experiences, it is advisable to select the tasks which may help to understand the cultural differences. The same as with the difficulty of a text, as the relevant tasks can help to understand the reading material (Hood, Solomon and Burns 1996).

Some of the texts are assumed to be easier than other because of the language used in the text. For example, a text, where the author argues about certain issue is more difficult to read than a text with a spoken language features, such as a letter or an e-mail. At the same time, not only language, but also the design of a text – headings, spacing, pictures, letters – are also affecting the readability of it. (Hood, Solomon and Burns 1996) That is why when choosing the text, the teacher should pay an attention also to these factors, as students are very easy to unmotivated. At the same time it is said that “text that grips a reader will carry him along in spite of its difficulty” (Nuttal 1996: 176).

As in most cases the choice of the text is up to teacher, Hood, Solomon and Burns (1996) suggest that it is better to start with the text of the easier level and later progress to more difficult texts or sequence the texts according to the reading strategies which teacher wants to develop. At the same time Hunter (2005) suggests that also students can

participate in the selections of the text as they would feel proud and excited when seeing that combined with the interesting activities of the teacher's side, the reading lesson becomes non-stopping communication between the text, the task, the teacher and the students. Furthermore, Hunter (2005) points out that the interest or motivation level rises during the reading process.

At the same time, it is very difficult to find a text which will interest all students, as tastes differ because the text, which students will find interesting, will make their work more effective.

In order to find out what students like, it is advisable to carry out an investigation in a form of the questionnaire or the observation. One factor which will help the teacher to select a text for the classroom use is to ask students whether they read and what do they read. Also books in the mother tongue indicate their personal preferences, unless it is not literature appointed to read by the teachers in the reading course. Also the reading material they carry with them, such as newspapers or magazines may serve as a source for searching the topic for the reading text, if provided in the target language. Besides, it is much easier to teach if the text interests also the teacher.

Exploitability of a text is the next criteria after interest, because when teacher exploits it, students' competence as readers is being developed. However, it can not be forgotten that the aim of the reading lesson is not to teach the language. It is a language and the content of the reading material and "how language is used for conveying content for a purpose" (Nuttal 1996: 172)

Authentic texts can be motivating because they are a proof that the language is used for real-life purposes by real people. And authentic text is not only literal texts, but also travel brochures, advertisements, leaflets, tickets, letters, etc. But the motivation may decrease if the text is used only for academic exercises. Also course books nowadays tend to present the reading material similar to authentic ones, for example, a news story is made to look like a piece cut out of the newspaper, etc, that is another proof authentic material could raise the interest in students.

To increase students' motivation to read, the teacher should use varied texts, materials and tasks, as it gives teacher an opportunity to match all students' needs and to make the learning and reading process more interesting.

In the end of this chapter, the author of the Diploma Paper has made certain conclusions about the selection of the reading material: the reading material should be authentic, to show different language constructions and to teach new vocabulary. It should be also logical and informative, to be easier understood and perceived by students, and to

convey the idea for students to see why they are reading it. Nevertheless, it should be interesting enough to attract readers' attention, and if it can not be done with a text, the teacher should raise students' interest with a help of activities. The text should be also be of optional length, as teacher can not spend the whole lesson simply reading the text and then in the last minutes do a short activity, despite of the fact that adolescent have longer attention span, they still need variety and change of the activities to avoid the misbehaving and keep them interested in the lesson.

3. READING ACTIVITIES AS A PART OF THE READING PROCESS

Reading is an interactive process – it is a communication between writer and the reader, and the author of the Diploma Paper thinks that in the language classroom, the reading is another mean of communication between the teacher and the student, as there is a certain message the teacher wants to send with the text chosen.

To make this communication more successful, the reading classroom is divided into three stages:

1. Pre-reading stage – it is the first stage of the reading lesson. The aim of this stage is to activate students' background knowledge about the topic or theme teacher will present with a help of the reading text and to raise students interest in it (Harmer 2001). This stage is very important as students have to be prepared to the activities and the text to help them better perceive the information read and to broaden their experience thus showing what they already know and what can they get to know. Furthermore, if the students are interested in the beginning of the reading stage, their level of interest increases with each task and the author of the Diploma Paper thinks, that also in future, students will be more interested if similar routine is practiced and students are gradually engaged in the reading process. (Hood, Solomon, Burns, 1996). The most popular activities used in the pre-reading stage are:
 - Brainstorming – students tell or write the ideas which come to their mind about the certain issue/topic told or picture showed by the teacher;
 - Predicting – the teacher writes or says the title of the text/story and students have to think what the text/story will be about;
 - Asking the guiding questions or having a discussion to activate students' background knowledge on certain topic;
 - The introduction of the new vocabulary;
 - Sequencing pictures, etc. (Hood, Solomon, Burns, 1996).

2. While-reading stage – it is the second stage of the development of reading skills and it focuses on the reading text and the possibilities what can be done with it:
 - Getting the information. In order to find out some information from the text, skimming and scanning skills are used. *Scanning* means that students do not have to read every word in the line, but quickly looking through the text find the place where is written about the specific information needed, for example, to scan a recipe to get to know how much water you need to pour in the pot. While *skimming* means casting the eyes over the text in order to get the general idea what it is about, e.g. to skim a newspaper article to get the general idea of a political situation in the country. Skimming and scanning is very essential part of a reading process, and teacher has to explain it to the students, as the way of reading sometimes can be extremely important;
 - Reading for pleasure;
 - Reading for detailed comprehension, which means that students look for the detailed information or language, and usually requires student's concentration on what they are reading;
 - Reading for communicative purpose;
 - Reading as a part of other activity;
 - Reading as a source of information;
 - Reading as a source of identifying specific uses of language, etc (Harmer 1998, 2001).

This is the stage, where teacher can do with a text as much as she/he can. The most popular activities used in the while-reading stage are:

- Matching a heading / photos / titles / chapters, etc;
- Completing the table, the chart, the crossword puzzle according to the information read in the text;
- Answering questions (True or False, comprehension questions);
- Sequencing sentences, paragraphs, pictures according to the text;
- Cloze activities – there are deleted parts of the text and students have to insert the word, phrase or sentence in the blank space;
- Guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words or underlining the unknown vocabulary;

- Focusing on certain vocabulary;
- Making the key points or summarizing the text;
- Find the words describing main characters, etc;
- Find the main idea of the text, etc. (Hood, Solomon, Burns, 1996);

3. Post-reading stage – the aim of this stage is to check the comprehension of the text and to develop the idea/topic presented in the text. (Sardiko, 1998) The author of the Diploma Paper thinks that it is the stage where teacher can show their creativeness and the ability to make the task where students can have the higher level of interest, as the activities can be both creative and unusual – drama, role-play, discussion, debate, essay, the presentation/project of the certain topic, a drawing, a poem, etc. (Hood, Solomon, Burns, 1996) The author of the Diploma Paper also agrees with Harmer (2001) that the reading activities are mainly a “prelude to speaking or writing activity”.

4. STUDENTS' LEVEL OF INTEREST AS AN INSEPARABLE PART OF THE LEARNING PROCESS

Inseparable things besides everything what is going on in the classroom are also emotions because even emotions can affect students' motivation to learn. (Fetsco and McClure 1996) "Emotions are an automatic physical and mental response to a perceived situation" (Fetsco and McClure 1996: 165)

People, who are connected with education, differentiated three particular emotions which to their mind have very important effect on how students interpret the perceived information and react to classroom activities or what teacher or classmates say. These emotions are: interest, curiosity and anxiety.

Interest is another very disputable issue because what one person finds interesting, another interprets it boring. But talking about teacher and students, it is very important to make students interested in subject and task because interested students are more active and easier to engage in learning (Fetsco and McClure 1996), but teacher has to remember that although he has to maintain students interest during the lesson, he can't forget that student can not have equal interest to all subjects and topics. (Albrehta 2001)

Students often become interested in a topic or activity because they already have background knowledge relevant to the situation or because topic seems interesting enough to pay attention to.

Talking about interest it is very important not to mix two types of interest – individual and situational interest. Individual interest derives from specific knowledge, beliefs or values of the student while situational interest can be found only in situations when student finds some task challenging and enjoyable to do to satisfy his need but after satisfaction, the interest will be lost. (Fetsco and McClure 1996)

What students know can affect their interest in a subject but their emotions are also affected by what they do not know. Curiosity is a cognitively based emotion that causes us to engage in seeking new experiences or gathering additional information, asking questions and looking up information in books, thinking, etc. (Fetsco and McClure 1996) Anxiety is an emotion that causes students to try to withdraw from or avoid the person or situation causing anxiety. (Fetsco and McClure 1996) Here we can add that if we compare these two emotions we can conclude that they both seem to be related to learner's uncertainty. (Fetsco and McClure 1996)

If we talk more about curiosity, we can say that whenever students detect a gap of knowledge or experience an event that breaks their expectations, they are more motivated to fill this gap or at least try to explain why such contradictions appear. In situations when students find environment less stimulating or exciting, the situation can be called boring and not only students, but also people in general, try to take action which at that moment seems to be more interesting and exciting in order to stop the boredom. The only thing teacher can do to avoid such situations is to provide students with something new and interesting, as well as complicated or surprising. (Fetsco and McClure 1996)

To sum up, it is proved that students ability to focus their attention on something is easy to distract, that is why it is very important for teacher to know different aspects of how to keep students active and how to rise their interest in order the work they are doing becomes more effective both for them and teacher, because with a help of different motives and challenges, teacher can rise not only students interest in learning, but also establish good working conditions, as well as develop students ability to learn and understand how important is to feel self-satisfaction, self-achievement and curiosity.

5. CASE STUDY

The aim of the Diploma Paper is to raise students' interest about the reading activities in the English language classroom in form 10, in Āgenskalns State Grammar School. The form 10 was chosen as teens (16 – 19 years old) like to do problem-solving tasks, enjoy the discussions and personal activities. Altogether 23 students (12 from Group 1, 11 from Group 2) participated in the case study.

One of the *first steps* to be done to complete the aim was to pre-questionnaire students to find out their attitude to reading and to get different tips which later could be used in the selection of the reading tasks in the case study.

The *second step* was to work out the criteria for the selection of the tasks based on the study of the literature.

The *third step* was to design or select the activities according to the criteria worked out, and try them out in the Form 10.

The *fourth step* was to design the students' and the teacher's feedback questionnaire. The aim of this feedback was to gather students' reflections about the reading tasks, as well as to compare how it matches with the teacher's observations and feedback.

The *fifth step* was to carry out the post-questionnaire to find out how has students' opinion about the reading changed during the case study.

The pre-questionnaire was distributed among the students of form 10 from two groups to find out their opinion about reading. First group (or later *Group 1*) consisted of 12 students (five boys and seven girls). The work with this group is very difficult as they are very easy to distract with different side things. They are very talkative although, usually not about the lesson or topic. Boys, along with the work done in the lesson, usually do their side things while girls are doing the whole work. At the same time, all boys are very smart and enjoy the activities which are not connected with grammar or the activities from the course book. The most appropriate way of learning is an individual work combined with active teacher's monitoring as an inseparable part of the lesson to avoid misbehaving and to complete the aim of the lesson.

The second group (or later *Group 2*) consists of 11 students (ten girls and one boy). This group is always very active and curious. They always ask different questions during the lesson. They enjoy the learning process, and are very responsive, communicative and

creative. Group 2 prefers group work, and as they are very independent learners, the teacher in the lesson is usually a facilitator and helper.

5.1. PRE-QUESTIONNAIRE

In total 21 student participated in the pre-questionnaire –11 students from Group 1 and 10 students from Group 2. Two students did not participate in the pre-questionnaire as they were absent on that day.

The pre-questionnaire consisted of fourteen questions (Appendix 1) which could be divided into three sets. The first set dealt with the questions connected with reading in the English language classes and reading in English (Question 1 – 3, 6, 7), the second set was connected with the reading process generally (Question 5, 10 – 14) and the third set dealt with questions which are connected with a topic “competent reader” (Question 8 – 9).

The author of the Diploma Paper started the pre-questionnaire with the question how often students have English classes in a week. The results show that all students have English three times in a week. The author of the Diploma paper wants to add that the Agenskalns Sate Grammar school is a school, where German is the first language, the author of the Diploma Paper wanted to present reading texts which are suitable for higher level students, but they still can cope with them rather successfully as they have quite good knowledge of English.

When asked how often students read in their English language classes (Figure 1), the results differed a lot. It can be explained with a fact that each student treats reading process and, furthermore, the text they read, differently. If one thinks that the reading of the text is one page long, then in others' opinion, the text is only a passage, for example, of small advertisement. According to the Figure 1, 48 % of the students (10 students) answered that they read texts in English lessons three times a week, which means that if they have English classes three times a week, they that they also read something every lesson. 19 % of students (4 students) suggested reading twice a week, and 10 % (2 students) - once a week. Surprising results were 10 % of students (2 students) who stated that they read 4 times a week and 14 % of students (3 students) who answered that they read 6 times in a week and even more. The explanation for students' answers can be that they on average have counted different pieces of reading material, for example, dialogues, stories, advertisements, instructions, etc, in the English language lessons and then treated

them as a separate reading material. None of the students choose an answer “I read texts five times a week” or “I never read in English language lesson”.

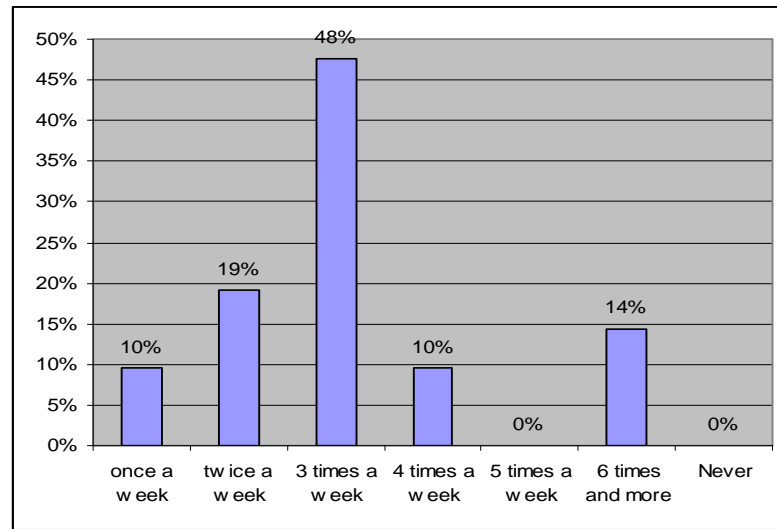


Figure 1. How often do you read texts in English language classes?

In the third question, students had to answer how often they read texts in English outside the classroom (see Figure 2). The reason for asking this question was to find out whether they read in English. The results were pleasing, as they showed that most of the students really read texts in English. 24 % of students (5 students) read texts several times, and similar number of students – 19 % (4 students) answered that they read texts in English once a week or even more often. 10 % of the respondents (2 students) stated that they read in English only once a month, less than once a month, or couple of times. This means that English language is quiet popular among students, although rarely, but they still face it outside the classroom and it can motivate them to learn the language also at school, as they can see that this language is widespread and practical to know.

If in Figure 2. it is possible to see the results of how often students read English texts outside the school, Figure 3 shows students’ responses to the reading in general outside the school. The results show that largest part of students (9 students) reads more than six times a week. One third of the students (6 students) read one and two times a week, 19 % (4 students) read three to four times a week and the rest of the students (2

students) - six times a week. This shows that despite of the time spent with modern technologies, reading is still a way how students get the information.

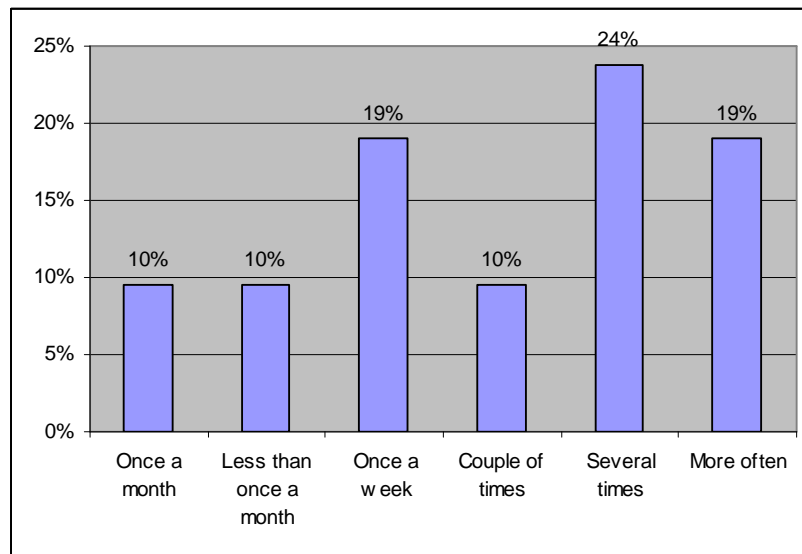


Figure 2. How often do you read texts in English outside the school?

The next thing the author of the Diploma Paper wanted to find out was whether there is a difference if a text must be read in mother tongue or in a foreign language. The results showed that the majority of the students (13 students) state that their reading style really differs from the text read in their mother tongue. The reasons they suggested why this happens is the difficulty of the language, pronunciation and lots of unknown words, and, especially, if the first time read, can causes trouble of understanding what the text is about. Some students also mentioned that if in the mother tongue they read the text from the beginning till the end, then in English they look over the text they are going to read in order to get the idea of it and not to stumble with the words and make the reading more fluent. For the rest of the students (8 students) there is no difference if the text is read in the mother tongue or in English.

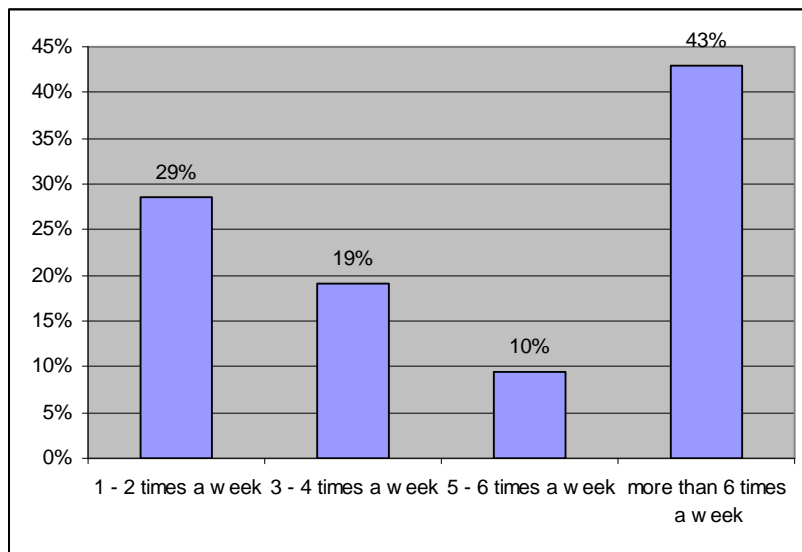


Figure 3. How often do you read outside the school?

The way how students read basically differs from the reading style in the classroom, especially, if it is a foreign language lesson. That is why it was also interesting to find out, what reading technique teachers use in the reading process in the English language lesson. The results showed (see Figure 4) that the most popular reading technique (20 students) is reading one after the other, which, to author's of the Diploma Paper mind, helps practice both pronunciation and fluency in a little time with a maximum people. The second popular technique (33 %, 7 students) was reading silently, by themselves and the least popular (10 %, 2 students) was the technique, where one student reads whole text aloud. The latter reading technique mentioned could work if a student has got very good pronunciation and reads fluently and it could serve as an example for others in order to hear the correct pronunciation. The results also show that the teacher never reads the whole text aloud, which maybe explained that teacher during the reading process wants to focus more on students. All in all, it seems that basically the way of reading differs according to the task, the aim of the lesson and also the class or age group.

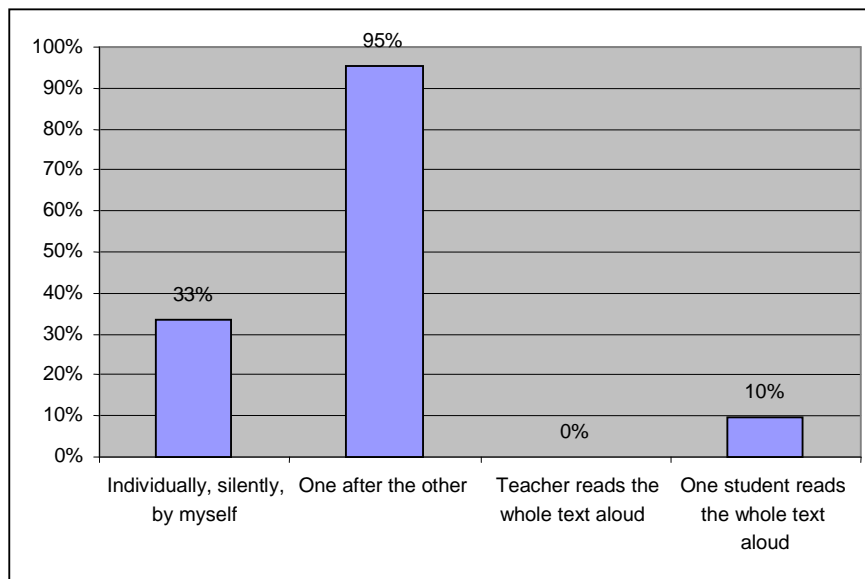


Figure 4. How is reading organized in the English language class?

In Figure 6 is seen what students think of a competent reader. While answering this question, students could choose more than one answer. 86 % of students (18 students) think that competent reader should understand what he reads. 76 % of the students (16 students) think that competent reader should read with expression, 71 % (15 students) - pronounce words clearly, 67 % (14 students) think that a competent reader must read books of higher difficulty and concentrate on the reading.

43 % of the students (9 students) think that a competent reader must enjoy the reading process. 38 % (8 students) of the students think that he should read a lot, while only 10 % of respondents (2 students) think that a good reader is the person who always discusses the book or the topic he has read with someone else. 29 % (6 students) think that a competent reader should know the meaning of the most of the words, and 19 % (4 students) - that he should read fast. 5 % (1 student) suggests that a good reader can be a person who reads fluently, without hesitation.

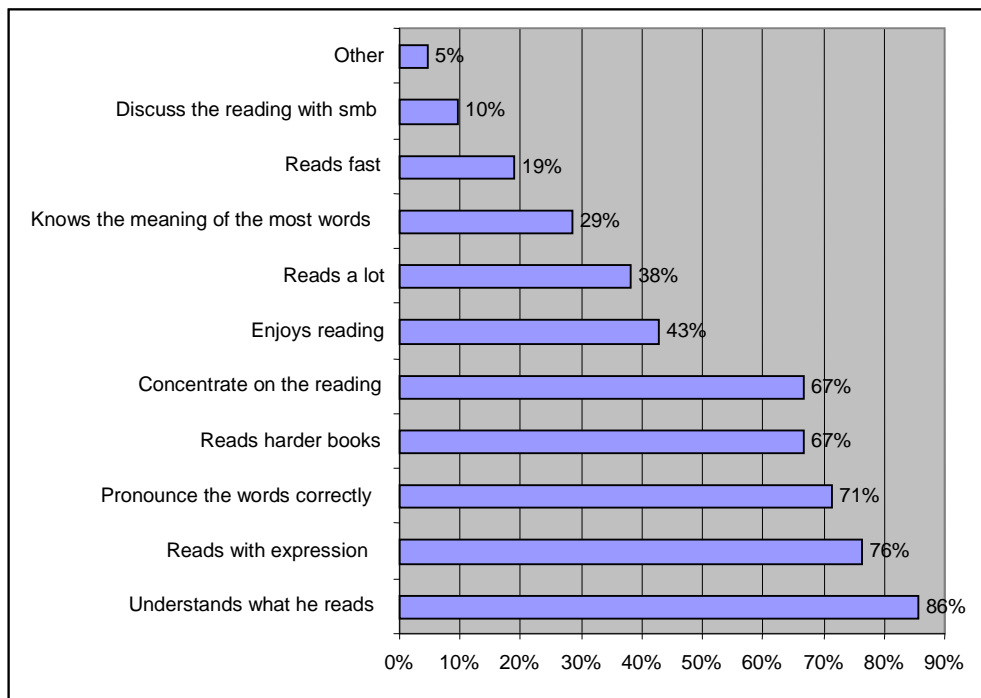


Figure 5. What are the features of a competent reader?

When asked if they are competent readers (Figure 6), only one third (7 students) gave positive answer, while half of the students (11 students) said that it depends on the situation. 2 students (10 %) think that they are not competent readers, and if we compare their answers to the Figure 6, were they say that competent reader must have these qualities – understanding of what he reads (86 %, 18 students), good pronunciation (71%, 15 students) and expression while reading (76 %, 16 students), the teacher should take into account these factors and to focus on them more often to raise students’ self-awareness in a role of competent readers.

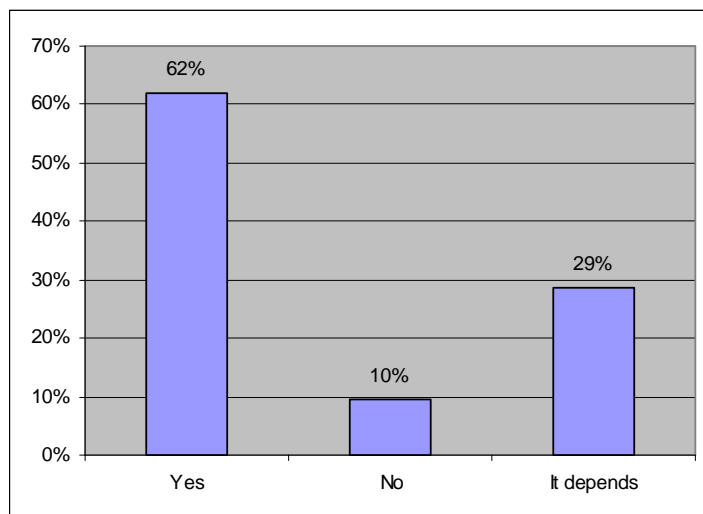


Figure 6. Are you a competent reader?

Students' willingness to read something outside the school could help teachers to draw parallels with their lessons and to bring some idea taken from the reading material they like to read to the class in order to raise their interest in the reading also inside the classroom. While answering the question what they read outside the school, students could choose more than one answer and the results show (Figure 7) that almost all students (95 %, 20 students) read magazines outside the school. Very popular reading materials were also letters and e-mails (76 %, 16 students), which show that students like to communicate and combine several things or activities together. Song lyrics are popular among 52 % of students (11 students). Nearly half of the students (48 %, 10 students) stated that they read novels outside the school. 33 % of respondents (7 students) read newspapers and 33 % (7 students) - manuals or stories. 19 % of students (4 students) like to read comics and 10 % (2 students) - poetry. 29 % of students (6 students) wrote that they also read interviews, results of different data and publications in the Internet, while only 1 student (5 %) admitted that he does not read outside the school.

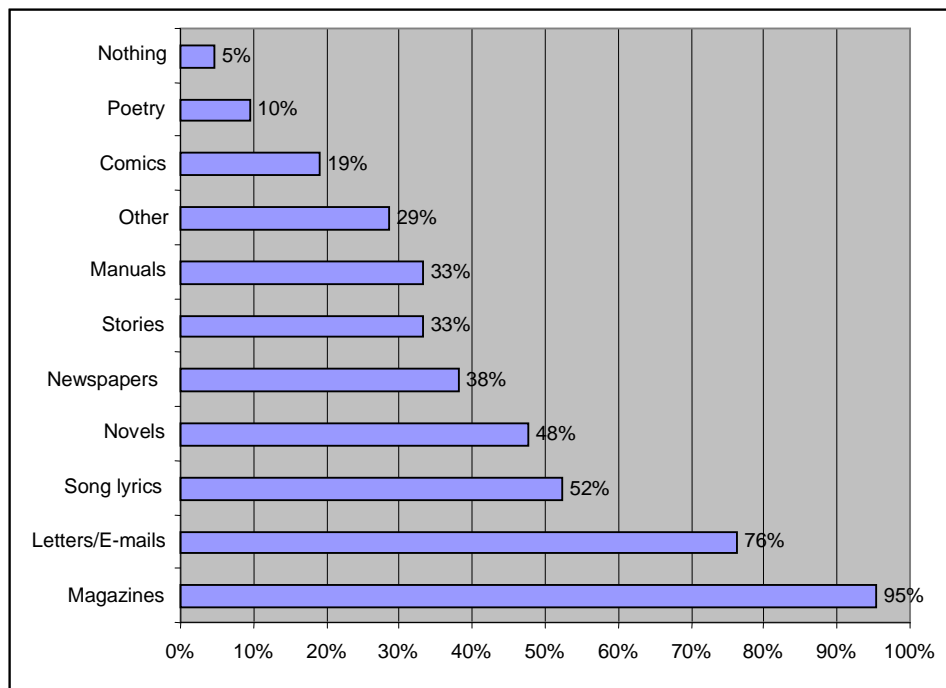


Figure 7. What do you read outside the school?

When asked about the books they like to read (see Figure 8), students also could choose several answers. The results show that one of the students' favourite types of books are books with humor (71 %, 15 students). Then come history books (48 %, 10 students), adventure stories (48 %, 10 students) and romantics (43 %, 9 students). Similar number of

students (38 %, 8 students) answered that they like short stories and poetry. Mystery and true life drama is popular among 33 % of students (7 students). Teen issues, biography or science fiction – among 24 % of students (5 students). Horror and thrillers are popular among 14 % of students (3 students). 2 students (10 %) like drama while 1 student (5 %) stated that it does not matter for them what kind of book it is. 14 % (3 students) answered that they do not have their favourite books. These results are very important for the author of the Diploma paper to find the appropriate reading text which could motivate students to read, moreover, which maybe can combine several popular features students mentioned in this question.

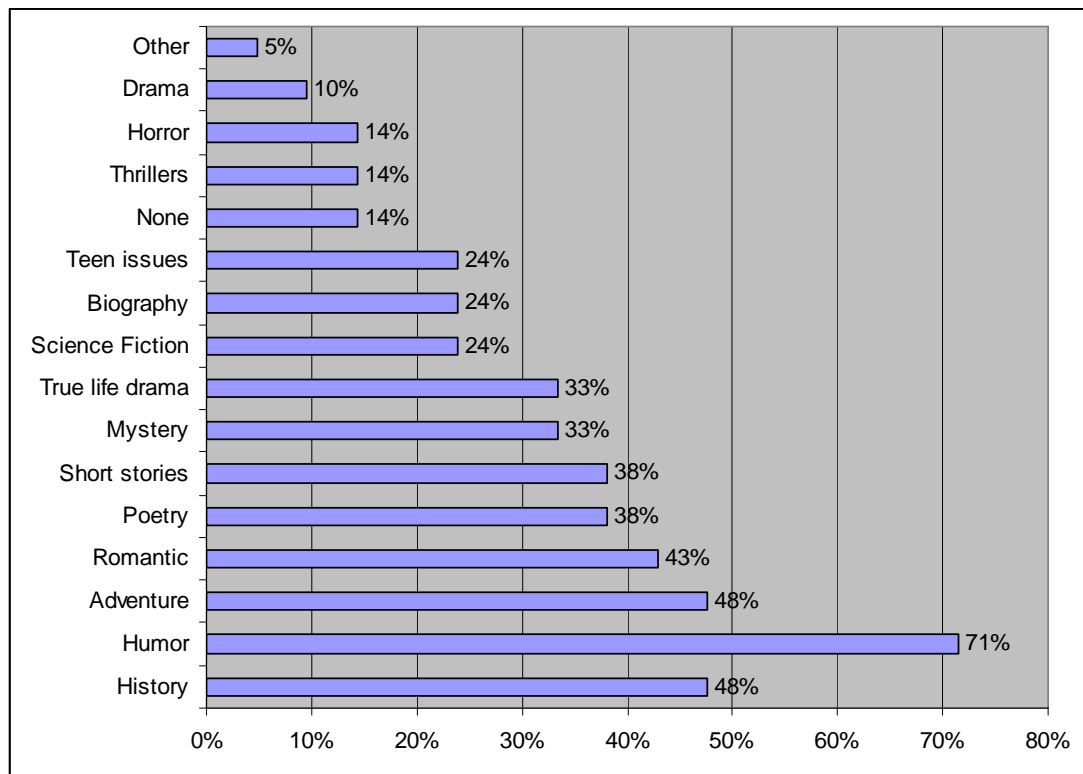


Figure 8. What kind of books do you like to read?

Next students were asked about the criteria for choosing the books for reading. Students could answer more than one answer, and it turned out (Figure 9) that the main criterion for selecting a book is the title (18 students). The next popular criterion (48 %, 15 students) is a recommendation of somebody or a review/annotation. Popularity (52 %, 11 students) is also the factor that influences the choice of the book, the same as the genre (38 %, 11 students) and the author (33 %, 8 students). Age suitability was the popular criterion among 24 % of respondents (5 students), length – among 19 % of respondents (4 students), while price (14 %, 3 students), pictures in the book (10 %, 2 students) and a reading of a

few pages (10 %, 2 students) were the least essential factors for the selection of the book. It shows that the authority in a form of an author plays an important role in students' selection criteria, and this is the fact which can be used by a teacher, because when introducing the most popular authors of all times in the language classes, and showing interesting pieces of work, as well as presenting them so that it raises interest in students, the teacher can attract students for choosing these authors for reading them outside the classroom. The same as when selecting the title – whether it is interesting enough to arouse students' interest or prove the opposite – that not only attracting titles are followed by interesting text.

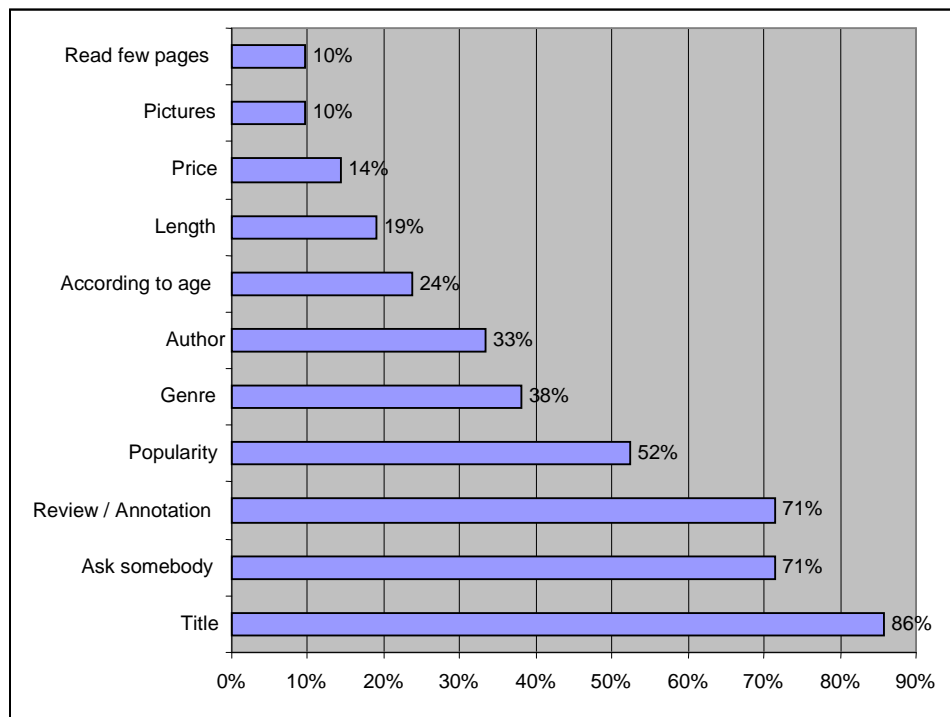


Figure 9. How do you choose a book?

When students were asked whether they like reading, the results (see Figure 10) shows, that 62 % of students (13 students) state that they like reading, and only 10 % of students (2 students) gave negative answer. 29 % of students (6 students) said that their attraction to reading depends on the situation. This means that to attract these 6 students, the teacher has to think of interesting tasks and texts to provide the opportunity also for these students to enjoy the reading process in the English language classroom.

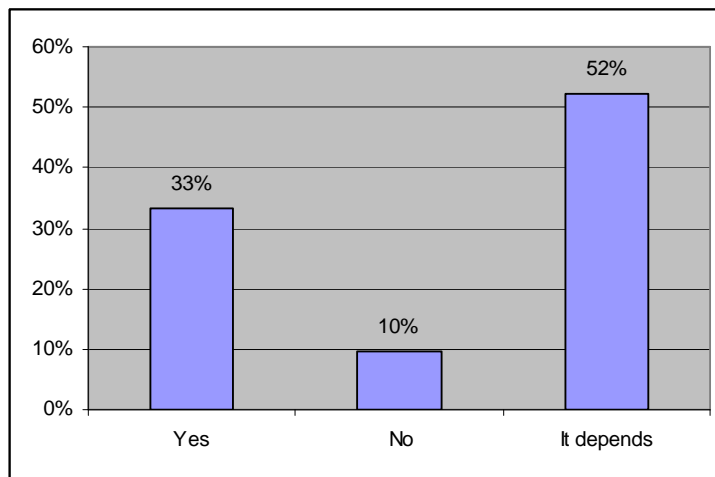


Figure 10. Do you like reading?

Figure 11 shows the most popular places where students like to read and in this question there was more than one answer possible. Home is the most popular answer (95 %, 20 students), and it can be explained with a fact that students feel comfortable there. They can read in their own reading pace, a posture they feel comfortable and enjoy the book. Reading in the Internet (62 %, 13 students) and in nature (48 %, 10 students) are also very popular answers. Then come public transport (33 %, 7 students) and café (24 %, 5 students), where students can laze or spend the time efficiently while, for example, waiting for their bus-stop in the public transport. School and library was a popular place among 10 % of students (2 students). 1 student (5 %) chose the answer “other” and added that it does not matter what kind of place it is, but the silence and the possibility to concentrate is essential.

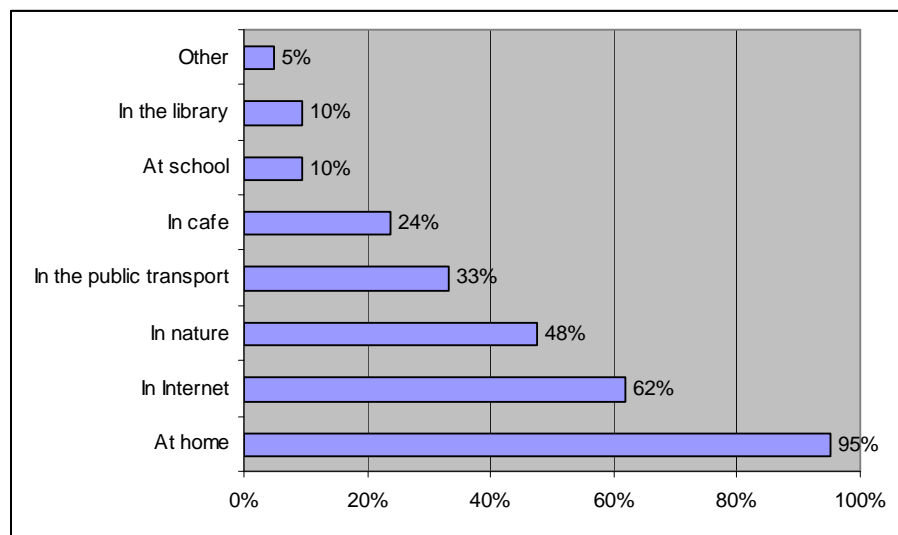


Figure 11. Where do you like to read?

All in all, the results show that students like to read, but the problem is that they prefer reading on their own, at home or in nature, rather in the classroom during the learning process because in the classroom they seem to treat the reading not as a relaxing activity but as learning. This makes the author of the Diploma Paper think that teachers should practice more home reading partly done in the classroom to show the students that they should not be afraid of making mistakes. And to avoid the students' dislike about the reading in the class, evaluation should be excluded and more praise and encouragement used, and maybe even more relaxed atmosphere created, for example, in spring it could be done outside the school.

When looking back at the students' responses about the reading tasks, it seems that one of the ways how to attract students' attention could be an interesting title, as well as some reviews given about the story or book read in the classroom before the real text/book.

4.2. DESCRIPTION OF READING ACTIVITIES

After the distributing and collecting the results of the pre-questionnaire to find out students attitude to reading, the *next step* was working out the criteria for the selection of the tasks, which are based on the study of the literature about the development of reading skills, age peculiarities, the possibilities to increase students' interest and motivation during the reading and learning process, as well as the results of the pre-questionnaire. Certain criteria were compiled:

- The text should raise students' curiosity;
- The tasks should be challenging, but at the same time it should not discourage students with its difficulty;
- The tasks should have a gap of knowledge / experience;
- The tasks should be selected according to students' interests;
- The tasks should be varied;

The same groups from the pre-questioning were chosen for the Case study, but in order to get more objective results, the author of the Diploma Paper decided to reveal and analyze the results separately for each group, and then compare them.

During the case study, different texts and tasks were chosen in order to raise students' interest in reading. After each text read and the task done, both students and

teacher had to complete the feedback (Appendix 2 – Students’ feedback, Appendix 3 – Teacher’s feedback). The task students had to comment on in the feedback was specified by the teacher, as there, according to the theory about the development of the reading skills, should be pre-, while- and post-reading tasks, and only one task according to the selected criteria above was chosen for students’ evaluation.

First reading activity

Story: *Hannah* (two parts) – 2 lessons (80 min) (Appendix 5)

Summary of the story: *I part* – the scene takes place in the beginning of the 20th century. The girl Hannah is getting ready for the party. She describes who is going to be there, putting focus on two men – one (Ralph Wellings) is the man she is in love, but he is not very popular in her society because of his beliefs and behavior, while the second man (Thomas Smithson) a laughing object of everybody and Hannah is ready to tolerate his presence if only she can see Ralph. *II part* – The scene takes place after many years, when Hannah is very old. She wakes up one day and dreams about that party when she was young. She is disturbed by her daughter who comes in and asks her to sign the pension form and when she does it, her daughter is angry, because Hannah again has sign as Hannah Wellings and daughter keeps telling her that she is Hannah Smithson.

The type of the activity: Writing Hannah’s diary entry for the night after the party;

The aim: to develop free writing skills;

If compared these two groups with a help of Teacher’s feedback (Appendix 3), the manner how students read the text differed a lot. If the Group 1 read the text very noisily (chatting, not paying attention to the text and doing their side things), then Group 2 read it in complete silence, without taking their eyes away from it. For Group 1, new vocabulary was insignificant, while Group 2 asked whether their classmates or teacher about the words they did not understand. Therefore, when making conclusions about how interesting seemed the text for them (based on Question 1, Appendix 3), for Group 1 it seemed boring, while for Group 2 – very interesting.

There were differences also in the completion of the task. If Group 2 asked questions in order to see that they do it correctly and did the task as it was asked, and some even adding something more to it, then some people in Group 1 did not do it at all, while the rest of the students from the Group 1 did the task as it was asked and similarly to Group 2, asked questions during it. When analyzing how interesting seemed the task for

both groups (based on Question 4, Appendix 3), such conclusions were made – for both Groups the task (writing diary entry) seemed average.

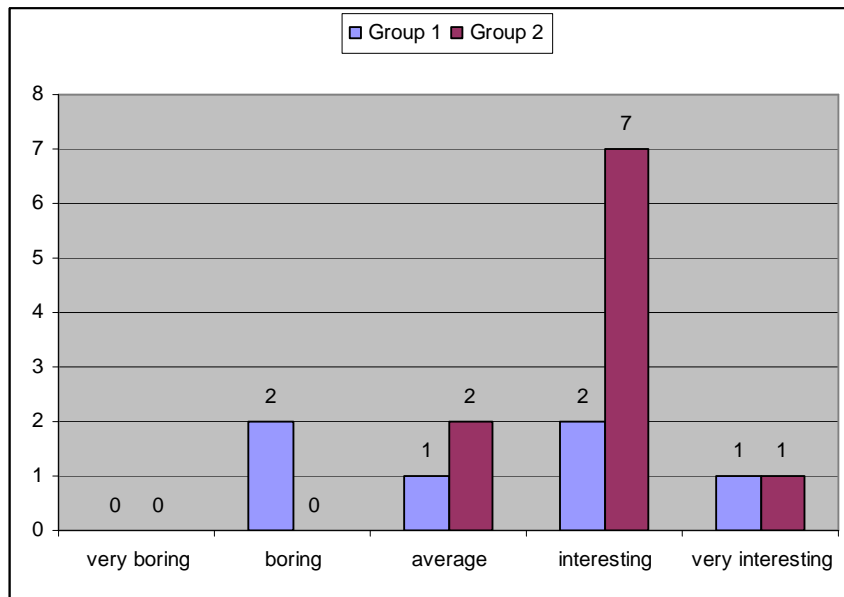


Figure 12. How interesting was the text?

In Figure 12 is seen how interesting seemed the text for both groups. For one student from Group 1 the text was average and for one - very interesting. Two students find the text about “Hannah” boring and two - interesting. This could be explained by the fact, which is also mentioned in the teacher’s feedback that in Group 1 some students were really reading the text and also doing the task, while some chose not to pay attention to it.

Interesting text seems for the majority of Group 2, then average for 2 students and very interesting, the same as in Group 1, for one student. The reason for it they mentioned the topicality of the story, the historical timelines (as quite big amount of students stated that they like historical stories – Figure 9) and the reason that the story was quite unusual.

In both groups no one answered that the text was boring.

The same as the story, also the task for the majority of the Group 2 seemed interesting (*Figure 14*). One of the comments expressed in the students’ feedback was that they liked the task because it allows them to express opinion and emotions like in a real diary entry.

For the Group 1 it seemed basically average, and at the same time very controversial opinions were stated – for one student it seemed very boring, while for the other – very interesting. It means that people who like creative writing, would also like the

task, while those who do not, would agree to this one student, who stated that the task was boring (Group 2) or very boring (Group 1). The minority of the Group 2 stated that writing the diary entry is of average interest for them or, for one person, - very interesting.

Meanwhile, if we compare the interest about the text (Figure 12) in Group 1, the interest in the task is much higher than about the text, while in Group 2 it basically does not change.

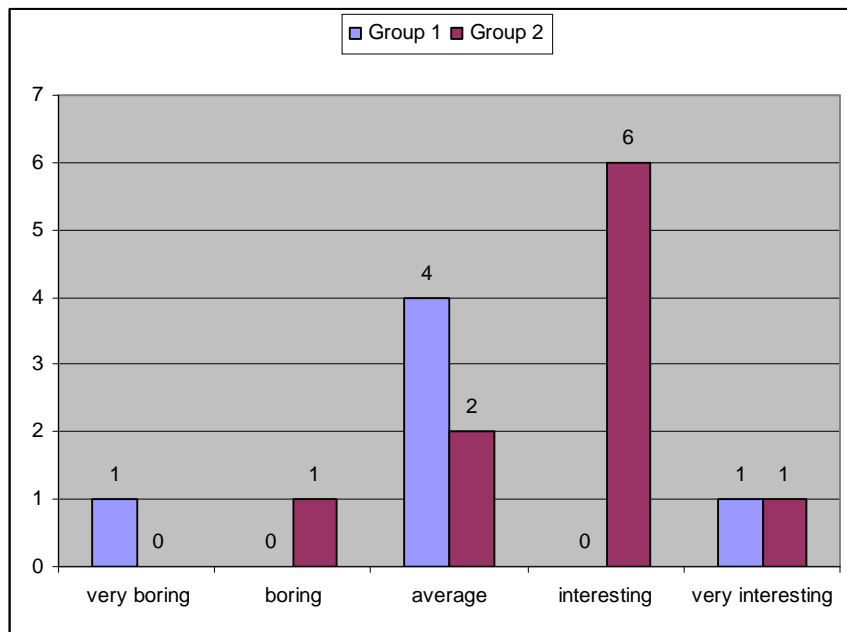


Figure 13. How interesting was the task?

Conclusions: The results show that for Group 2 creative tasks seems more interesting than for Group 1. To compare how the observations made by the author of the Diploma Paper and the students, it seems that the moment of surprise about the unpredictable ending of the story and the style of the text, was something new for them, that is why it could be said, that the text and the task for both groups seemed more interesting than boring.

Second reading activity

The Article: *School uniforms* – 1 lesson (40 min) (Appendix 6)

Summary of the story: it is an article taken from the Internet – general information about the school uniforms in Britain and the comments/opinions made by different people about this topic.

The type of the activity: a debate for/against school uniforms

The aim of the activity:

- to develop students' ability to take different positions;
- to develop analytical thinking;
- to formulate the opinions based on arguments;

The reason for choosing this topic was the fact that at that time in the school there was a discussion going on – to have school uniforms or not, and this was a very topical question for students.

(Appendix 3) Group 1 read the article as fast as they could and there was a little bit of noise in the class and they wanted this lesson faster to finish as they haven't had anything for lunch, while Group 2 read it in complete silence and very carefully, and asked questions about the text, for example, is this authentic text, and having read it, started to express their opinions. The new vocabulary also was treated differently – if Group 2 could figure out the meaning on their own when I asked about some new words, then Group 1 only asked questions about the unknown words or some even did not care about them, which, at the same time meant, that they did not want to work or think efficiently.

According to observations made, it seemed that the text for Group 1 did not raise any special interest, while for Group 2 it was very interesting. This could be also explained with a fact that clothing for girls is more important and there are five boys and seven girls in Group 1 while in Group 2 – ten girls and one boy.

When they heard about the task and the instructions for the debate were explained, at the beginning both groups seemed confused but then they all one by one were called out by roles and on the PowerPoint presentation the teacher again quickly explained the structure, everything seemed clearer to them and they started to think the arguments for their position. The majority of Group 1 at the beginning did not seem very interested in the task, but when the debate started, they got more eager to rebuttal their opponent's arguments. Also in Group 2 some students did not seem interested in the task, but later the enthusiasm which was coming from other students influenced also them and they started to participate in the group work more actively. At the same time, in both Group 1 and Group 2 there were people who relied only on their group mates and did not do anything to complete the task.

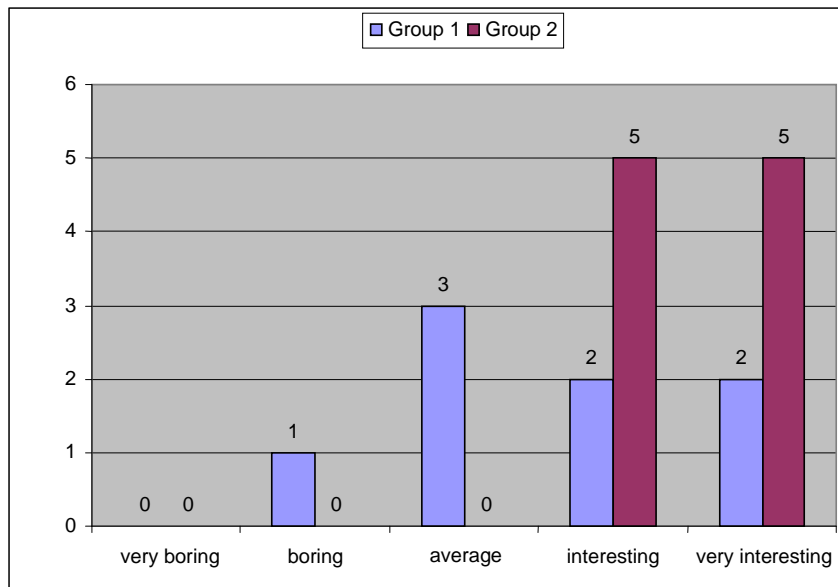


Figure 14. How interesting was the text?

According to Figure 14, for the majority of the Group 1 the text seemed of average interest. Interesting and very interesting the text seemed for 5 students of Group 2, while in Group 1 – only for two people. One person from Group 1 stated that the text was boring, while no one from Group 2 answered that it was very boring, boring or average. Students’ opinions matches with the teacher’s observations made.

The debate almost for all students was something new. An answer to the question, how interesting was the task is seen in the Figure 15. Both Group 1 (5 students) and Group 2 (8 students) answered that they liked the debate very much. For 2 people from Group 1 and for 1 people from Group 2 the task was interesting, while fro the rest of the students it seemed average. This could be explained with a fact, that not all students had equal possibilities to participate, for example, judges were allowed to speak only in the end of the task, and also the openers of the topic for both groups expressed not more than two sentences. At the same time, if they wanted, they could participate actively during the time were they had to think the rebuttal arguments.

Students’ comments about the task were: Hilarious! But I wanted to speak more!; It was fun to judge!; It was not really a team’s work.

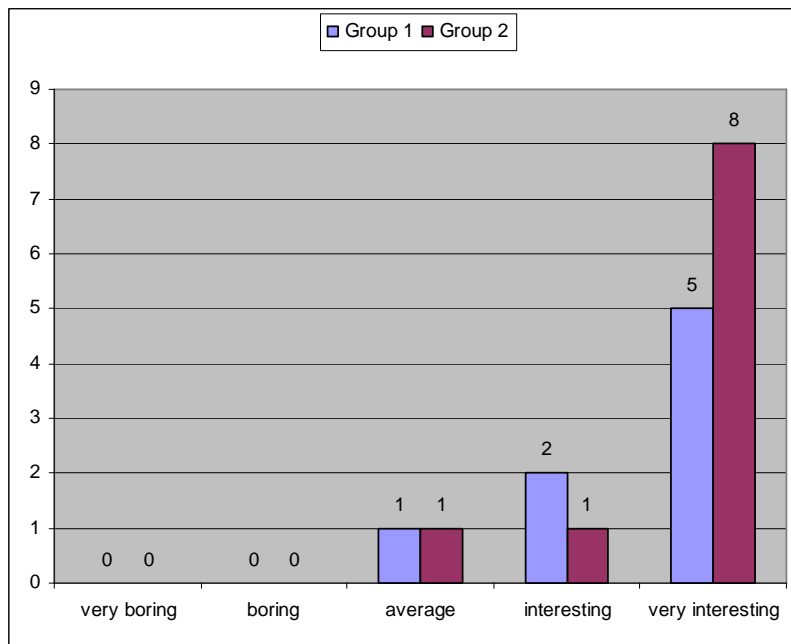


Figure 16. How interesting was the task?

Conclusions: Judging from these observations made, for both groups the task seemed interesting or very interesting. In fact, some of the students from Group 2 in the end of the lesson admitted that with a help of this debate they have changed their opinion and now treats this topic differently, as well as they were sorry that lesson ended so fast. Both results matches with the teacher’s observations, that the largest part of the students seemed very enthusiastic about the task or text, while some of the students relied on the group mates or were very passive. The task for both groups next time could be improved by the role of the evaluator and observer in a one person to make sure that everybody invests similar effort.

The third reading activity

Anecdote: *The Laziest Man Alive* (20 - 30 min) (Appendix 7)

Summary: The idea of an anecdote is that there is a competition announced and the person who thinks is the laziest can win 1 million dollars. A wife a letter describing her husband and he gets a prize. When the judges arrive in his house to give him the check, he is sleeping in the grass in the front of the house and they can not get him awake. After some time he mutters to judges that they have to turn his left side up a little and put the check in the pocket.

The type of the activity: the “spending maze”;

The aim of the activity: to develop speaking skills (agreement, disagreement, suggestions, negotiations, arguments)

Description of the task: The students must be arranged in the groups (not more than 4 people in a group) and teacher announces that they all have won 1 million dollars and now their task is to spend the money wisely. Deal the first card to the groups and ask them to read it. After that teacher explains that in each card they will receive, there will be a situation described and several choices what they can do in the certain situation. In groups they have to read the situation and choices carefully and discuss these choices in the groups. After that they tell the teacher which choice they preferred and why. Each choice allows getting the next card (different card for the certain choice). And the group, who gets the last card, will get a prize. The teacher should also add that there are several ways how to get to the end. If they are lower level students, vocabulary from the cards could be discussed before students start the activity. (Appendix 8)

As the text was very short, Group 1 read the text very noisily and as fast as they can (Appendix 3), and the only person who was reading it slowly was the one who was appointed to read it aloud. At the same time, also in Group 2 was a little noise heard but it was not so disturbing. It can be explained that the lesson has just started and students were not ready to start the lesson. The unknown words all students from both groups asked the teacher, this means that in spite of the fact that they were rather noisily, they still kept up with what was going on in the classroom. According to observations, the text for both groups seemed boring.

When the author of the Diploma Paper told about the task, some students from Group 1 seemed not interested in it, but when they heard that it is possible to get the prize in the end, their attitude changed and they encouraged their group mates. Both groups asked questions before they started doing the task to make sure they understood the instructions and, in the end, did the task as it was asked.

According to the Figure 16, students have answered that the text mostly seemed for them very interesting – in Group 1 for 5 people and in Group 2 – for 4 people. Interesting it seemed for three students from both groups, average – for two students from both groups and boring – for 1 student from both groups. No one has stated that the text was very boring. This means that in spite of the noise in the classroom, they still like the sense of humour (in Figure 8 – 71 % of students have answered that they like to read humor). When

writing comments about the text, students mentioned the excitement about the text and the fact that it was very short.

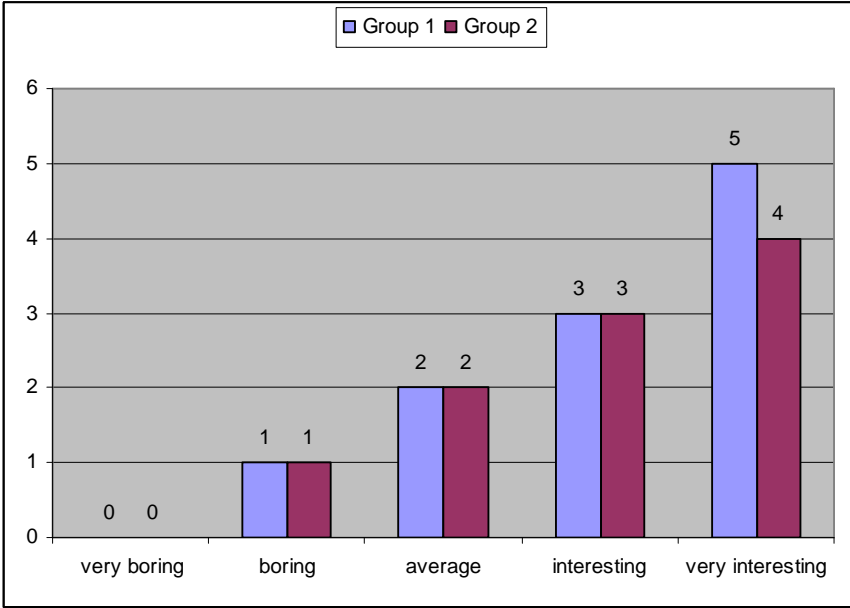


Figure 16. How interesting was the text?

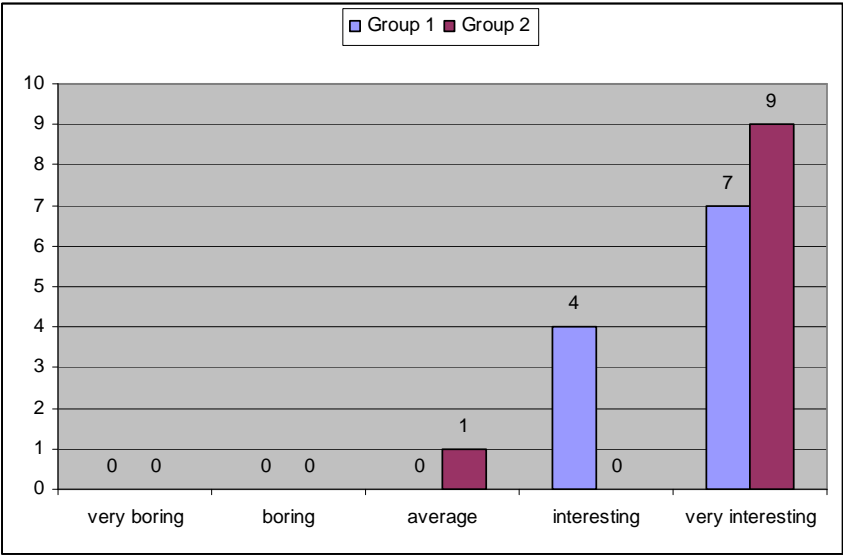


Figure 17. How interesting was the task?

In Figure 17 students have marked how they liked the task. For almost all students from Group 2 the task of making choices seemed for very interesting. And only one person from Group 2 admitted that it was of the average interest. In Group 1, for 7 students the task was very interesting and for the rest of the students (4 people) from Group 1, it was

interesting. The comments from the Group 1 were as follows: it was interesting, something new, lots of options, while in Group 2 the factor why they liked the task was the winning.

Conclusions: Although the author of the Diploma Paper made the conclusions that the task seemed boring for them, the results of students feedback was a surprise, as during the students' work, they did not seem enjoying the text and the task. The author of the Diploma Paper assumes that such attitude could result of the influence of the majority of the students as the role of the authority between adolescence can be very important, for example, if somebody does not want to do the task, also the other student, considering him/her an authority, does not do it. But when they can express their opinion individually, attitude and point of view changes. At the same time, the author of the Diploma Paper thinks that the thing which made students to be motivated was the prize, as they did the task very formally and the discussions were made only by the leaders and the most talkative people in the group.

The fourth reading activity

The text: *Criss-Cross Lovers* (40 minutes) (Appendix 8)

Materials/Preparation: computers with a connection to the Internet

Summary: Two people, who love each other, are living in different countries – the boy in Australia and the girl – in Britain. One day the boy decides to propose the girl and goes to see her to Britain. At the same time, also girl misses the boy so much that also she gets in the plane and flies to Australia. They each gets to their beloved ones home, but nobody is there and they feel upset about it, as they think that something is wrong. But in the end they get know about what has happened, and only laugh about it, and the boy asked the girl to marry him on the phone.

The type of the activity: decide upon the honeymoon (holidays) taking into consideration certain factors:

- They have only 250 euros for both;
- In their honeymoon they must visit at least one cultural event and one entertainment;
- They must stay at least one night in a hotel/motel/camping, etc;
- The plane ticket is not counted in the total, as they start their honeymoon with 250 euros from that place student choose;

The aim of the activity:

- to develop analytical thinking;
- to practice making decisions when there is a limitation;

- to get acquainted with the culture/information about different countries;
- to adapt the activity to real life situation;

While reading the text, students from Group 1 make a small noise, while Group 2 reads the text in a complete silence. (Appendix 3) Whether of the topic (relationships, love) or the quiz done, they all leave impression that they are interested in the text. And the noise Group 1 makes, can be explained with the continuing discussion about the quiz.

When the task is announced – finding the place for Ian’s and Amy’s honeymoon, Group 1 seems not very enthusiastic about it, but, during the monitoring, the author of the Diploma Paper saw that the students really get interested about it and tried to discuss the choices with the teacher, as well as asked for help. Boys from the Group 1 quickly did the task as it was asked and later, not bothering others, played the card game in the computer. While the girls tried to add something more, finding the names of the restaurants and different activities to see and do in the chosen place. Similarly to girls from Group 1, also Group 2 was very enthusiastic and creative about the task and added their own ideas to it, for example, a trip to the nearest town, etc.

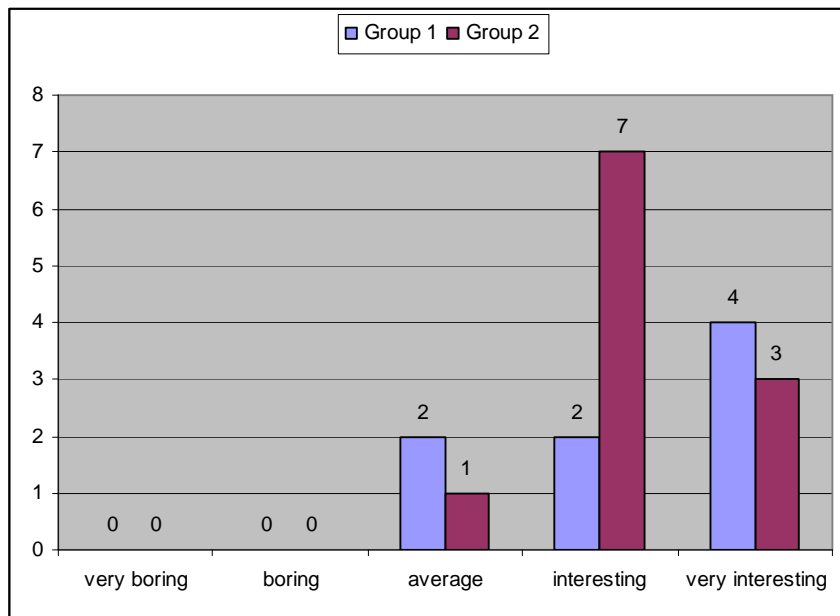


Figure 19. How interesting was the text?

Very interesting the text seemed for 4 students from the group 1 and 3 students from Group 2. (Figure 19) It was interesting for 7 students from Group 2 and 2 students from Group 1. And for the minority of Group 1 (2 people) and Group 2 (1 person) the text

about Criss-Cross Lovers seemed average. These results matches with teacher's observations, as all in all students were reading the text without a noise and doing side things. The comments from Group 1 were that some of them did not like the task because it was about a couple who did not live together and were separated because of work, while others admitted that the text did not raise their interest because they were sleepy.

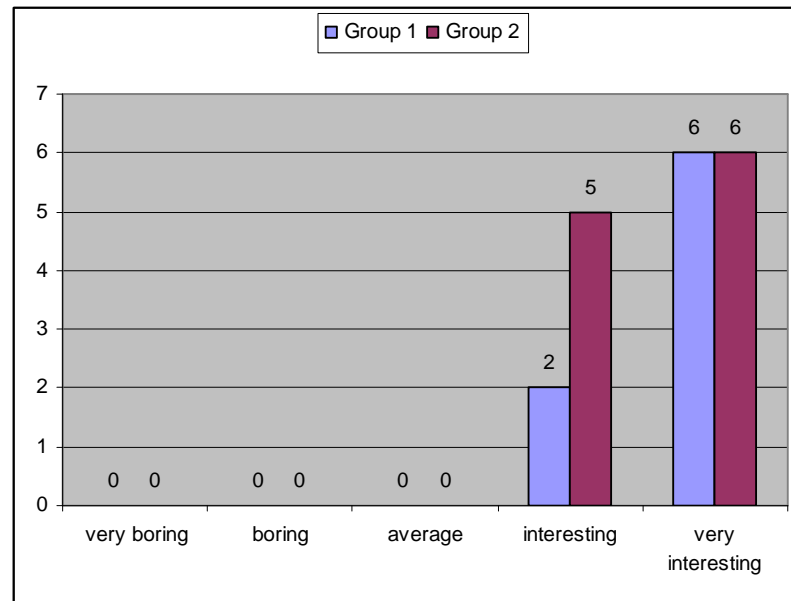


Figure 20. How interesting was the task?

As the author of the Diploma Paper suggested (Figure 20), the task of planning a honeymoon seemed very interesting for majority of students (6 students from Group 1, 6 students from Group 2). Interesting it was for 5 students from Group 2 and 2 students from Group 1. The reasons why students liked the task, group 1 mentioned that it gave them a possibility to calculate their expenses as in a real life and that it was something different as done before. One person also added that this task was better than learning grammar. Meanwhile one person from Group 2 suggested that he wanted to do something more.

Conclusions: The task, according to the results, has been very successful among both groups. The author of the Diploma Paper is pleasantly surprised that the majority of Group 1, which in the beginning of the Case study was described as a difficult group to work with because of misbehaving and the preference to do their own things rather than study, has showed very much interest in this task. This could be because explained with the fact, that computers were involved in the language learning and the topicality of the topic (traveling). Still in future it means that this task needs improvement, as one student in his

feedback wrote that he wanted to do something more. To summarize the results from the feedbacks, the author of the Diploma Paper considers the task very successful and very interesting for students, as, first of all, it was connected with modern technologies, secondly, it was rather topical, as they also like traveling and this was a new experience for them planning the trip as they want, not only using the ideas which are suggested by tourist agencies, as well as, students learned that also with limited resources it is possible to plan a good entertainment.

The fifth reading activity

Fairy-tale: *Ivan and the Sealskin* (40 min)

Summary: the fairy tale is about the man named Ivan, who while wandering along the sea-side hears weird sounds coming from the cave. Two times he comes there and does not pay attention to them, while in the third time he goes to the cave and finds sealskin. He takes it with him and puts it in the trunk. The next day he goes there and finds a girl, and takes her to his home, where she becomes his wife. They have children but the girl constantly keeps looking at the sea and seems missing something. One day Ivan's wife stays at home, while Ivan and the children go to the church. His wife opens the trunk, takes out the sealskin and disappears. When Ivan comes home, he finds neither the wife nor the sealskin. Later a seal is seen in the sea looking at Ivan's children playing, but nobody knows where is the wife and if the seal is her.

The type of the activity: prediction table

The aim of the activity: to develop imagination and creative thinking using the evidence from the text/story;

The procedure of the reading activity: The fairy tale must be cut into four parts. The teacher distributes the introduction of the story. Students silently read it. Then teacher explains the task. In pairs students receive a prediction table and the aim of it is, that after each part of the story read, they have to fill in the table, telling, what will happen in the next part of the story, what evidence do they have for their prediction, and, after receiving the next part, they write in the last column, what really happened in that part. And so it continues until they have predicted the story three times

Both groups read the parts of the text with a little noise and ask questions, especially, after reading the first and the second part, as they want to make sure if they are doing the task correctly. There is a noise in the class, as students seemed rather confused

about the task, as well as the difficulty of the text, as it was a challenge for them. Group 1 basically tries to read the text as fast as they can to get the following part of the text, while Group 2 reads it very carefully and pays lot of attention to unknown words, asking them to classmates or teacher, or finding them in the dictionary. Also some students from Group 1 asks about new vocabulary from the text, which could influence their predictions, while other students do not care about it and do the task as fast as they can. That is why the author of the Diploma paper came to conclusions hat for Group 1 the text was boring and for Group 2 – average, because the attentiveness could be interpreted by the difficulty of the text.

The task in both groups is done as it was asked, as they ask questions to see they do it correctly, and in Group 1 those people who do it faster than others, start doing their side things. At the same time in Group 2 there are students who seem very enthusiastic about the task, and, while monitoring, the author of the Diploma Paper saw that they use different ideas in the prediction to make it more interesting.

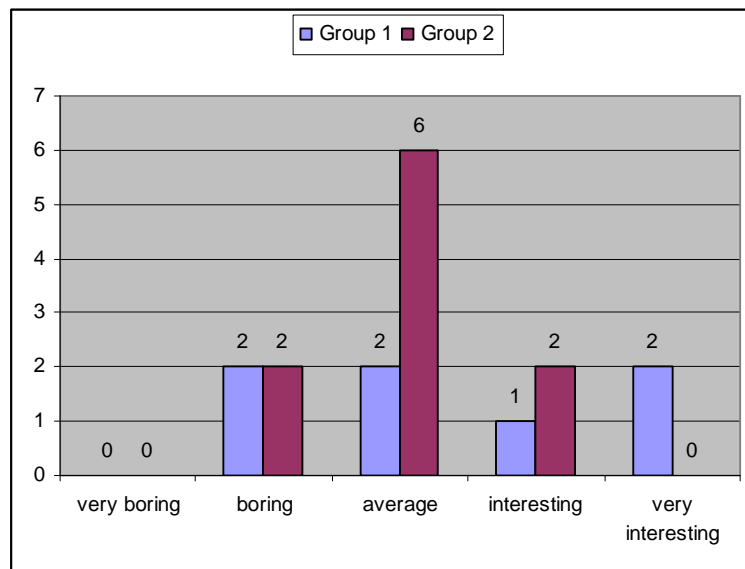


Figure 20. How interesting was the text?

When answering to the question how interesting was the text for them (see Figure 20), the majority from the Group 2 (6 people) answered that it was average. Two students from Group 2 said that it was boring, while the other two students stated that it was interesting. The opinion of the Group 1 was very different. Two students said that the text was boring, two – average, and two – very interesting. And only one student admitted that

it was just interesting. In their comments students wrote that they did not like the text because it was very predictable or unreal and that is why boring.

If compared interest in the task and the text, the Group 2 is more interested in the task than in text, while in Group 1, basically, it does not change. In Figure 21 is seen that only for one person from Group 1 the task seemed very interesting. For seven people from Group 2 and 1 people from Group 1 the task seemed interesting. The prediction table did not seem interesting for 5 people – three from Group 1 and two from Group 2, while boring it was two people from Group 1 and 1 person from Group 2. As already stated in the analysis of the Teacher’s observation chart above, which matches with students’ comments about the task, they liked it because they could use their fantasy to complete it and it was very creative and fun while making predictions.

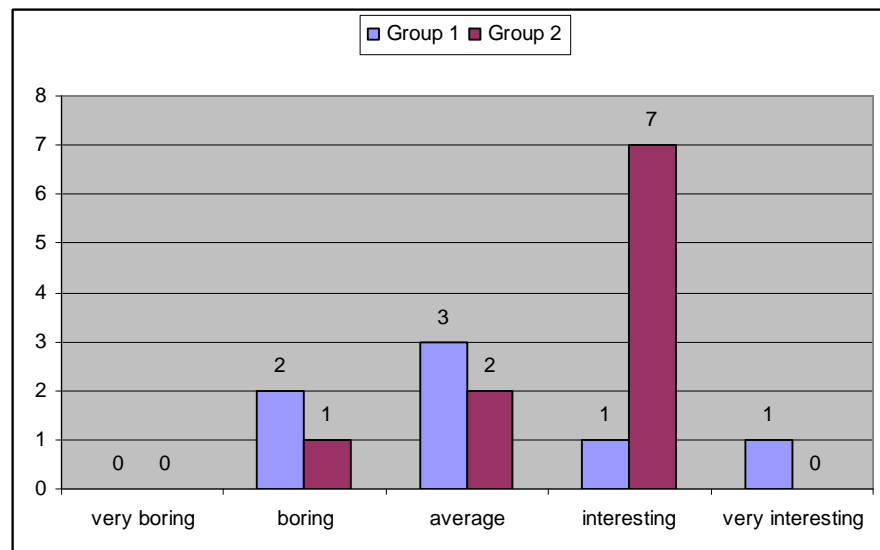


Figure 21. How interesting was the task?

Conclusions: The author of the Diploma paper thinks that the difficulty of the text and the unusual task was an obstacle, why some of the students did not enjoy the task. For those people who like to do creative tasks (similarly to writing a diary entry after reading the story “Hannah”, Figure 13), this activity will seem interesting enough. At the same time, the author of the Diploma paper wants to add, that students in their feedback also had to answer if they have understood the instructions of the task and five people out of 17 (both groups), stated that they understood the instructions partly, which also could have influenced the performance and the interest rate of the task.

The sixth reading activity

The article: *Horoscopes* (40 min) (Appendix 10)

Materials/Preparation: Computer with a connection to the Internet

Summary: John is having a birthday and there are five different horoscopes from the different newspapers and magazines taken for the day of his birthday.

The type of the activity: find similarities and differences in the horoscopes from the different sources;

The aim of the activity: to analyze the information/comparing horoscopes;

Both groups read the text nosily. If the Group one makes a lot of noise, then Group 2 has a smaller one. They do not seem interested in the topic and in the text, and teacher has to make remarks to those who misbehave, and during the discussion and the comparing of the topics mentioned in the horoscopes, encourage students to speak and to even point out things which they have to focus on, to get them talking. When the task is being set, Group 2 seems more enthusiastic and it looks like that the task they like better than the text. In Group 1 some students asks guiding questions to make sure they have understood the task and starts completing it. All students do the task as it was asked, while some of the students do it in last minutes, as they complain that it is very difficult to find the similarities in the horoscopes.

In the Figure 22 is seen students' interest rate in the text about John's birthday horoscopes. The results are unexpected for the author of the Diploma Paper, as they show that the majority of students (Group 1 – 4 students, Group 2 – 5 students) really liked the text. For three people from Group 1 and 2 people from Group 2 the text was interesting and only for one person from the Group 1 it seemed boring. Answer "average" was chosen by 2 people from Group 1 and 1 person from Group 2. One reason why one student did not like the text was mentioned the fact that John horoscope sign was Leo, but the person was Aquarius.

It means that even not showing the appropriate attention to the text and the discussion, the way how this topic is presented seemed interesting and very interesting for them.

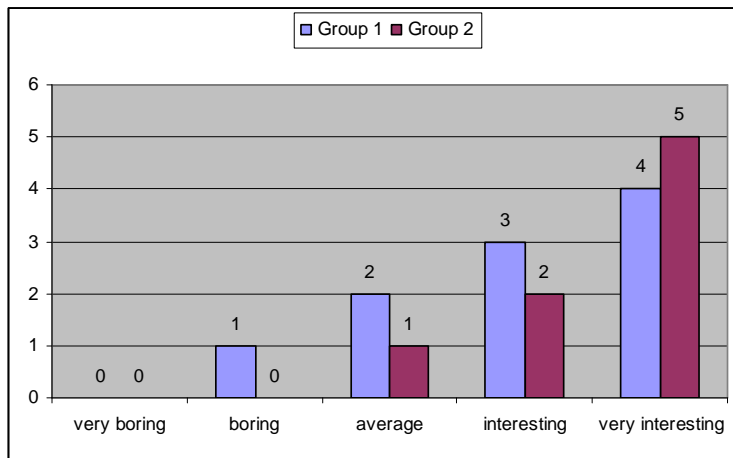


Figure 22. How interesting was the text?

In Figure 23, six students from Group 2 and three students from Group 1 have stated that they liked the task very much. For 4 students from Group 1 the task was interesting. The same number of students (two) from both groups said that the tasks for them were average, and one student from Group 1 added that it was boring. Students commented the task as being funny. Some also added that if the horoscopes were better, they would like the task.

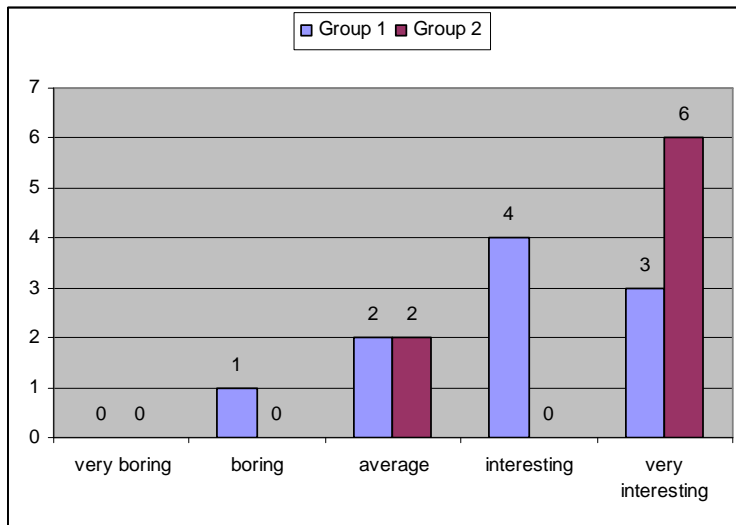


Figure 24. How interesting was the task?

Conclusions: For both groups the interest rate in the text and in the task does not change dramatically. The explanation for this could be curiosity about the topic. As students admitted that they do not believe in them, it does not mean that they do not like to read them, especially, the proof for this is student's comment that he would have liked the task, if the horoscopes were more positive. That is why the author of the Diploma Paper thinks

that the text for them seemed boring, while the task should be at least of average interest, as it was connected with students.

The seventh reading activity

The text: *Party time* (40 min) (Appendix 11), (Appendix 12)

Materials/Preparation: A4 blank papers according to the number of students

Summary: the text is about different popular party games in Britain.

The type of the activity: the story game

The aim of the activity:

- to bring a fun element in the classroom;
- to practice the topic in the real life;

The procedure of the activity: The idea of the game is to write the story. Story starts with a sentence “It was the evening before the party”. Then students write their own sentence in this context and the last word in this sentence is rewritten in the next line, and the paper is folded so that the written sentence is not seen. The next student who receives the paper writes the sentence connected with a topic “It was the evening before the party”, involving the word which was written by the previous student.

Students from both groups read the text with a little noise as they while reading discuss the games mentioned in the text. As the author of the Diploma Paper sees that, after each game read, students are asked to express their opinions loudly. They also read the text very carefully and seem very interested in it. Vocabulary is easy, so there are no problems in understanding the text.

When teacher explains the rules of the game, students look very enthusiastic about it, as in every day life in school, the games are not played so often. Some of the students from Group 1 seem not so interested in the game, but when it is started, everybody enjoys it, as they are eager to pass the paper to the next student and to think of an interesting sentence to write. All students do the task as it was asked, and some of them ask for teachers’ help when making the sentences, for example, some words they can not remember.

According to students’ reflections gathered in the Figure 24, it can be seen that shows that for Group 2 the text about Party games seemed very interesting. For Group 1, the text seemed interesting (for 4 people), very interesting (for 2 people) and average (for one person). Some of the students from group 2 wrote in comments that they enjoyed the text as it reminded them of the childhood.

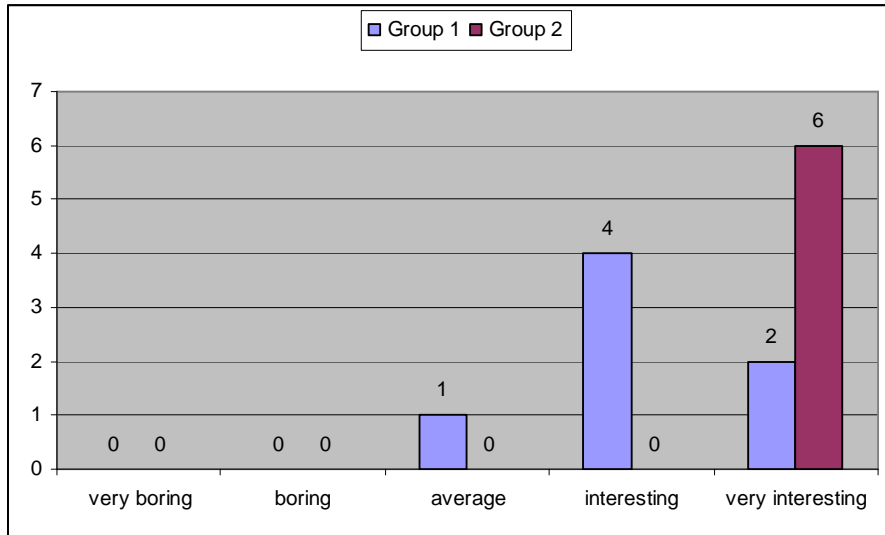


Figure 24. How interesting was the text?

The task (Figure 25), similarly to the text, seemed very interesting among 7 students (for 2 students from the Group 1 and for 5 students from the Group 2). Interesting it was for 3 students from the Group 1 and for 1 student from the Group 2, while average it seemed only for Group 1 (2 students). The comments about the task were also very positive – some mentioned that it was very interesting activity and some – that it was totally funny to read the stories in the end of the activity.

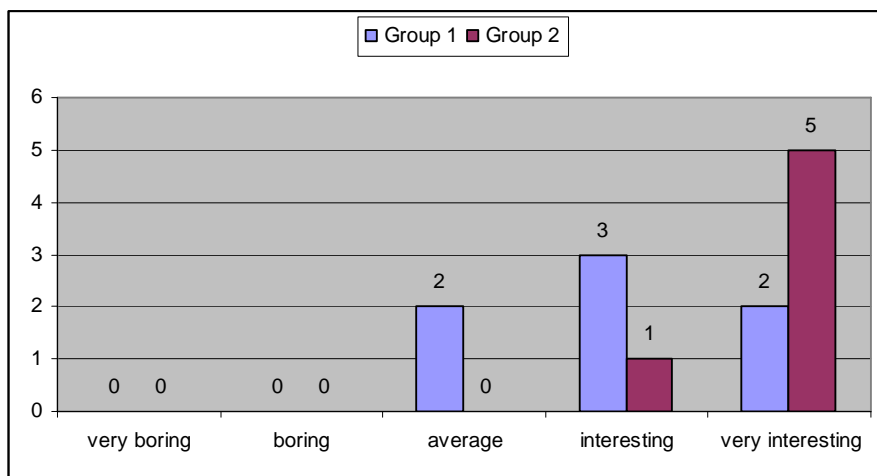


Figure 25. How interesting was the task?

Conclusions: It can be said that this activity and task was also very successful among the majority of students. The task proved that creativity combined with humor can be very amusing and attracting. Furthermore, they all participated in this activity, and forgot about the side things, that is why the author of the Diploma paper concludes that both the text and the task for them seemed interesting, as the topic is very popular among students, and maybe some of the ideas read or done in the class, they can apply in their parties.

If all the activities are been compared, the most successful activity has been “*Planning a Honeymoon*” (Topic: Criss-cross Lovers), as it was described from the students’ point of view as “interesting” or “very interesting”. As the author of the Diploma paper mentioned, it was the first activity where computers were involved and the activity, where the main guidelines were given, but students could choose to add something more or not. It left an impression that traveling is very topical issue, as nowadays it has become very popular among youths, especially, if the aim of the traveling is an entertainment they gain from it. Moreover, the task was very much connected to real life as it was connected with money and expenses.

The rest popular activities, which were rated from “average” to “very interesting” were *Debate* (Topic: School uniforms), *You have won a Million* (Topic: Money) and *Party game* (Topic: Party time). All these activities are group works and involve the communication and the expression of the opinion, as, already stated in the study of the literature about adolescence, expression and communication is very popular and important factor not only in the learning process but also in the real life for students.

In conclusion, all the activities were varied. They also matched with the students’ interest and were rather topical. Nevertheless, the activities made students’ curious and some of them were even challenging and made students to invest some effort to complete them. As well as in all the activities students could add something more, as only main guidelines of completion of the task were given.

4.3. POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

To see how students’ attitude has changed during the case study, there was a post-questionnaire designed (Appendix 4). Post-questionnaire consisted of four questions which focused on the reading process in the classroom, as well as the Case study and the further work with the development of reading skills. Only twelve students from both Groups

participated in the post-questionnaire, as it was the last day before the spring holidays and it was the last lesson that is why only six students from Group 1 and 6 students from Group 2 came to the English lesson.

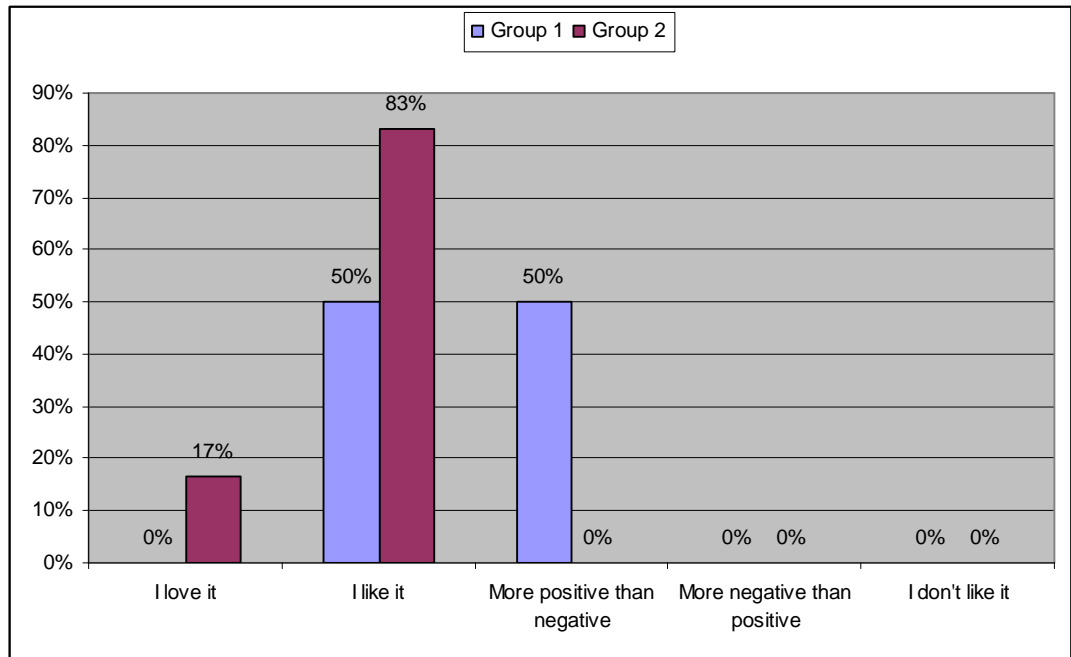


Figure 26. What is your attitude to reading in the English language classes?

In Figure 26 are seen students' responses to the reading in the English language classes. 17 % of students from Group 2 stated that they enjoy the reading during the English language classes very much, and the rest of them (83 %) stated that they like it. It is seen that in Group 1 students' opinions have split. 50 % of students say that they like the reading in the English lessons, while the rest of them are in doubt, saying that they treat the reading process more positive than negative. The results of Figure 27 explain the behaviour of the Group 1 during the Case study, as some of them were enjoying the process of reading, while the rest of them whether did their side tings or were misbehaving, or at times, also focused on what is happening in the classroom.

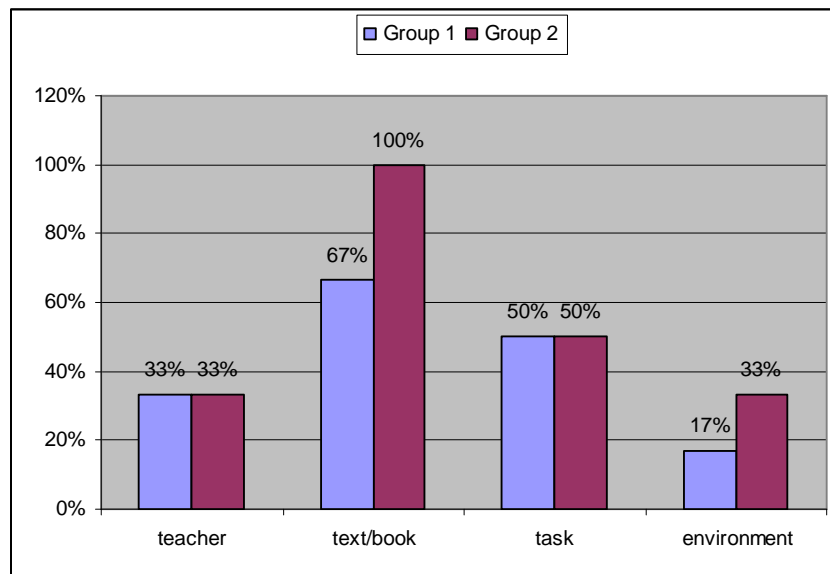


Figure 27. Which are the factors that influence students' interest in reading in the language classroom?

When asked to answer question about the factors which influence students' motivation and interest to read in the classroom, students could choose more than one option. This question was important to ask to see what makes them to read. In Figure 27 is seen, that in their opinion (Group 1 – 67 %, Group 2 – 100 %), the most important factor for raising students' interest in reading is a text or a book. At the same time, the case study proved that despite of a boring text, the tasks, which students ranked only as the second important factor (for both groups – 50 % of students), can make the reading lesson interesting. For example, the text about School uniforms (Appendix 6) was evaluated as being boring for 1 person and for 3 – average (Figure 14), while evaluating the debate, only two people said that it was average (Figure 16). Similar opinions were expressed about the text about “Criss-cross Lovers”, as three people stated that the text was average (Figure 18), but when evaluating the task – designing a Honeymoon trip for the young couple, none of the students ranked it lower than “Interesting” (Figure 19). That is why the level of interest in the task is higher than in the text.

33 % from both groups have evaluated the role of the teacher as the third main factor which could influence the interest in the reading. At the same time for Group 2 (33%) the environment also plays an important role, which means that according to the Figure 11, where students answered where do they like to read, the similar – non-threatening, comfortable atmosphere, maybe with a music played in the background and a

cup of tea in front of the students, should be created also in the classroom. While in the Group 1 it was important for the minority of the students – only for 17 %.

When answering Question 4 (Appendix 4), which was the text and the task they remember the most, Group 2 answered that the text about the Party time (55 % of the students) and the reason they mentioned was the fact that it was one of the last texts and tasks they did. Similar number of students (15 %) remembered the anecdote “The Laziest Man Alive” and the task – “You won a Million”, as the task seemed very interesting for them, the article about Uniforms and the debate, which gave a possibility to express their opinion, as well as the story about “Hannah”, as it was about love.

Among the text and tasks which better stayed in mind for Group 1, were mentioned the text about Uniforms and the debate (35 %), because there was an opportunity to talk much, the story “Hannah” (35 %), as it was about historical times and there was a young girl and love involved, and the text “Party Time” (30 %), as it was something unusual and new.

To compare both groups, the texts and tasks they liked, are similar, while at the same time, the text about “Hannah” was not rated so high (Figure 12, 13) as the others. And the reason why students remember this story so well could be the unordinary way of the story (in two parts) and the unexpected ending. While for the rest of the texts and tasks the reason were already mentioned by the author of the Diploma Paper, as they were rated the highest among the students – the reading activity gave the opportunity to express the opinion, the activity was entertaining and unordinary.

The question if students in the further study process would like to read additional texts and books was essential, as it shows whether the case study was successful or not and whether the author of the Diploma paper has reached the aim and raised the interest in the reading process in the language classroom. In Figure 28 is seen that the case study was very successful in the Group 2, as the majority (83 %) would like to continue the work with the texts, doing interesting, creative and varied tasks. As the supporting argument for that they mentioned that the teacher can make or prepare more interesting tasks than in the course books, and the process of reading becomes more fun. The rest of the students from Group 2 chose the answer “more yes than no, which means that they hesitate but still reading seems to be an activity which they would like to choose to do in the English language lesson.

In Group 1 the majority of the students (50 %) similarly to the smallest part of the Group 2, still hesitate, while 33 % of them would like to continue reading additional texts/books during the study process. At the same time, 17 % of the students from Group 1 treat the further reading process in the lesson more negative than positive. It means that to make these students change their opinion to assured “yes” the author of the Diploma Paper must work more on the texts and tasks presented in the class and to find the way how to get these students interested in the learning and reading process.

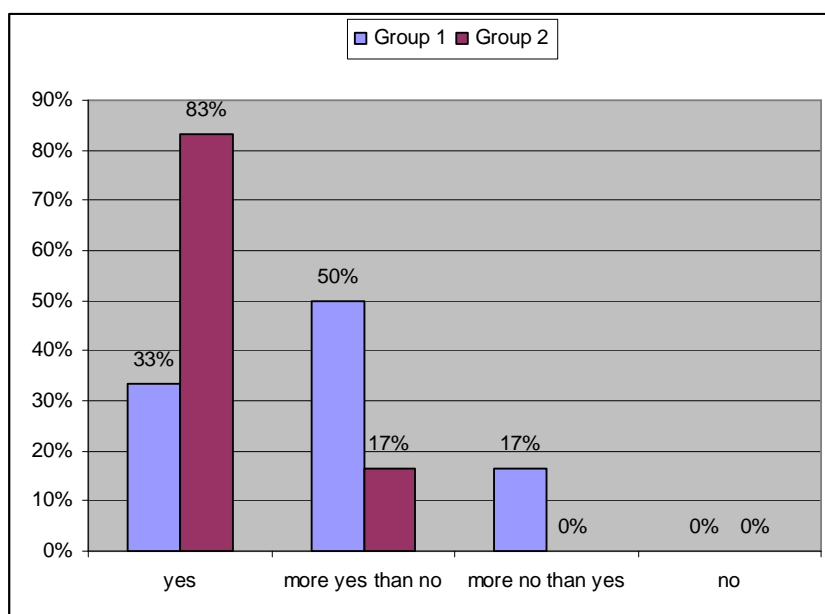


Figure 28. Would you like to read additional texts/books in the English language lesson?

In conclusion, it seems that the author of the Diploma paper has completed her aim, as students are eager to continue the work with the texts and would like to continue to read not only at home, but also in the classroom. To have successful reading tasks in the future, the author of the Diploma paper should take into consideration three main factors which were often mentioned by the students in the feedback – variety or unusualness, entertainment and communication. Furthermore, the feedback about the tasks has been sometimes very different and now it gives a possibility to improve them, as well as to continue the collection of the feedback not only about the reading tasks done in the lesson, but also about other tasks to see what do students need or lack in the learning process.

CONCLUSION

The aim of the Diploma paper was to raise students' interest about the reading process in the English language classes with a help of reading activities. To reach the aim, the author of the Diploma Paper used the Case study as a research method and designed pre-questionnaire to find out students' opinion about reading. The author of the Diploma paper found out that most of the students from Form 10 read almost every day of the week in the mother tongue, while several times a week – in English, which are very good results, as they show that students outside the classroom are also motivated to read. For the majority of students the main features of the competent reader are the understanding of the text he/she is reading, expression and pronunciation of the reading text. The results also show that students do not treat their selves as competent readers, and the teacher should take this fact into consideration, when having a reading lesson and to occasionally focus on the features students thinks are important to possess to be competent readers to raise their self-esteem and the interest or likeness in reading.

Students pointed out that the most popular reading materials which are read outside the classroom are magazines, letters or emails, and song lyrics. Their favourite types of reading material are humor, history and adventure, and the features they focus on, when choosing a book, are the title, recommendation or review/annotation. Despite of the fact that students like to spend their free-time with modern technologies, 61 % of students still admitted that they like reading and only 10 % of students stated that they do not. This made the author of the Diploma paper question, whether the results of this question would be similar, if the question was asked about the books of literature and not about reading in general.

When asked about students' favourite place to read, the majority of them answered that they like reading at home. This fact is also important to take into consideration and be exploited by teacher thus, maybe, making the reading of the literature more comfortable, for example, in spring it could be done outside the classroom, or arrange the lesson in the school library to have more appropriate atmosphere.

The case study also showed that students prefer the tasks, which are entertaining, unusual and communicative. They should also vary, as making similar tasks every day, would discourage students of completing them.

The results of the post-questionnaire which was carried out to see how has students' attitude changed after the reading material and the activities presented in the English language classroom by the author of the Diploma Paper, showed that students'

attitude to reading in the English language classroom is positive and most of them would like to continue reading additional reading materials also in future and despite the fact, that as one of the most important factor which influence students' willingness to read they named the text or task, the author of the Diploma Paper still thinks that also the tasks can raise the level of interest in students, as it can be seen in the students' responses in the feedback when they had to evaluate their interest level in the task and the interest level of the text, which in some cases, really showed that they more liked the reading activity than the text.

In conclusion the author of the Diploma Paper wants to add, that the case study is found to be successful, as if the reading material and task matches students' interest and needs, they enjoy the process of reading and, furthermore, the reading lesson.

The implications for the author of the Diploma Paper for the further work would be the improvement or adaptation of the reading activities to reach better results, to take into consideration students' preferences about the features of the competent reader and the reading material they would like to read in the English language classroom, as well as to use students' feedback not only after the reading classes, but also in the end of all lessons, which gives students an opportunity to be involved in the study process and to raise their interest and motivate them to participate in the lesson.

THESIS

- The reading process must be a communication between the text and the author of a text, and the reader to raise students interest in the reading process and to understand why they are reading or doing certain activity;
- The main characteristics of adolescence are willingness to communicate, as the communication with the people around them is a part of their development and learning, the raise of their self-esteem, the desire of being treated as adults, curiosity and the opinion that their problems are unique. Considering these factors in the teaching process, the teacher can create a successful environment in the classroom and raise students' motivation;
- While the teacher thinks how to develop reading skills for teenagers, a variety in the methods adapted to learners needs and appraisal should be a part of the lesson to motivate students to participate in the activity/lesson;
- As there are many reasons for reading a text – for getting an information, for pleasure, for communication purposes, for comprehension, for the source of the information, for a part of another activity, etc, the teacher should occasionally use all of these reasons and do not only concentrate on the one of them;
- To have a successful reading class teacher should consider also the criterion for selecting the texts – relevance and exploitability, the level of curiosity which is raised by the text, the gap of knowledge in the reading activity, the learners' needs and interest, as well as the variety.
- The results of the pre-questionnaire showed that students like to read, but they prefer reading on their own rather than being guided in the classroom, as they like the relaxed environment and the most popular reading material are magazines, newspapers and e-mails;
- The case study showed that to have a successful reading class for the early stage of adolescent, the teacher should consider three factors: variety in tasks, the possibility to communicate and the fun element in the lesson;
- The results of the post-questionnaire showed that the case study has been successful and students would like to continue reading additional materials in the classroom. They also stated that the factor, which raises their interest in the reading process, is the text or book.

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