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POUŽITÍ PÍSNÍ A ŘÍKANEK JAKO POMŮCKY STUDENTŮM S VÁZÁNÍM SLOV

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Thesis

USING SONGS AND RHYMES TO HELP LEARNERS OF ENGLISH WITH CONNECTED SPEECH

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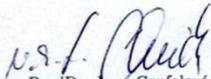
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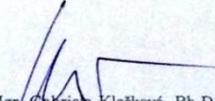
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ABSTRACT

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This thesis deals with connected speech in English and how it can be improved when using songs and rhymes. In the theoretical background chapter, the term connected speech is described and individual aspects of connected speech are explained. This chapter also deals with the possible ways and reasons of using songs and rhymes in English lessons. The second part of the thesis describes the classroom research carried out at the ZŠ J.K. Tyla elementary school in Písek. Its results are presented in graphs and tables and commented upon. Finally, implications for teachers, limitations of the research which had occurred and possible suggestions for further research are discussed.

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I.   INTRODUCTION

Probably everyone, who has ever tried to teach English at Czech elementary schools had noticed, that pupils´ speech sometimes does sound perfect. They often have problems with rhythm, stress and intonation. I had experienced monotonous speech, where it was really difficult to distinguish the end of a sentence and, consequently, hold my attention for the text.

I had chosen the topic of this thesis because I wanted to know, if it is possible to improve pupils´ speech. I decided to use songs and rhymes during English lessons in order to examine if the pupils´ speech would improve.

Practising individual aspects of connected speech like rhythm, stress or intonation do not cause great problems, but when these aspects are put together to form connected speech, problems could arise. The individual aspects of connected speech should be included in order to have a natural and fluent speech. The aspects of connected speech are rhythm, assimilation, elision, linking and intonation. These aspects of connected speech themselves are relatively exacting topics, but they could be introduced through songs and rhymes.

In the first part of the 'Theoretical background chapter', the term connected speech is introduced by means of various definitions, followed by the description of the individual aspects of connected speech. The second part deals with the issues of using songs and rhymes as a help for pupils with connected speech. Other reasons, why to use songs and rhymes during the lessons, are described as well. Further on, various ways of using songs and rhymes to practice are described.

In the next chapter 'Methods', the research procedure and its criterions, together with the chosen rhymes and songs, are described. In the following chapter 'Results and commentaries', the outcomes are introduced by means of figures and tables. The second part of this chapter constitutes commentaries to the results and course of the carried out research. The subsequent chapter concentrates on possible implications for the teachers, which had arisen from the research. Limitations of the research and also suggestions for further research are mentioned. In the final part of the thesis, 'Conclusion', the main ideas are summarized.

II.   THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The theoretical background chapter serves as an explanation of the terms and ideas on the connected speech and its teaching. First, the term connected speech is introduced and explained. For better understanding the reader goes through the individual aspects which form the connected speech. After the individual aspects comes the second section of the theoretical background and those are the reasons why to use songs and rhymes while teaching and learning connected speech. As we know, it is not easy to learn and understand the main principles of connected speech and mainly application of the rules. The usage of songs and rhymes could help students to speak more fluently.

Connected Speech

First, the term connected speech should be introduced. Many students studying English language at the university encounter this term. They are taught that it is important to know the basic rules of it. Sometimes it can happen that even if learners do not know the rules and principles of connected speech, they use them. And this principle about the rules is connected not only to the university students, but also to the primary or secondary level students. But what is connected speech? According to BBC Learning English:

Fluent speech flows with a rhythm and the words bump into each other. To make speech flow smoothly the way we pronounce the end and beginning of some words can change depending on the sounds at the beginning of some words at the beginning and end of those words. These changes are described as features of connected speech. ("Connected Speech")

Crystal (2003) in his work said that connected speech is "a continuous sequence of sounds forming utterances or conversation in spoken language" (p. 96). Roach (2009) did not give a clear definition of connected speech, but he emphasized that it is "useful to bear in mind the difference between the way humans speak and what would be found in "mechanical speech"" (p.107). Roach described this term in connection with scientists who "tried to develop machines that produced speech from a vocabulary of pre – recorded words; the machines were designed to form these words together to form sentences" (p. 107). From the definitions above we can come to a conclusion that under the term connected speech we can imagine more aspects, which form this concept. This concept

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enables the speakers to speak in a natural and fluent way of speech. The aim of the connected speech should be that "they (learners) can be understood comfortably, without undue effort by the listener, and they can understand comfortably the speech of native and other speakers without undue effort on their own part" (Underhill, 1994, p. 171).

Aspects of connected speech

According to what was written above, we definitely have to go through the aspects of connected speech to understand the basic principles. Roach (2009), stated four main aspects: rhythm, assimilation, elision and linking. All these are commonly used in everyday spoken language, although the speaker, and not only the native one, does not have to have any idea about them. Teachers usually do not teach them directly at the primary or secondary level of schools. However, some of them at least try to show the learners the basic principles of connected speech to develop their awareness of these principles. These are usually rhythm and linking (Roach, 2009, p. 117) and therefore it is really important to concentrate mainly on these ones. But not only the above mentioned aspects are important in order to speak fluently and intelligibly. We have to consider one more phonological aspect which has really an important impact on the fluent speech and that is intonation. These principles help learners while to pronounce the phrases fluently and to speak in a natural way.

Rhythm

Many of us definitely know rhythm from everyday life, as it appears in songs, movements or in natural phenomena, such as Earth rotation around the Sun or tides. Definitions of rhythm can be expressed in many possible ways. One can be that rhythm is a "movement or procedure with uniform or patterned recurrence of a beat, accent, or the like" ("Dictionary.com Unabridged"). According to Roach (2009) rhythm "involves some noticeable event happening at regular intervals of time" (p. 107). Roach (2009) added another important piece of information and that is that speech in English is rhythmical (p. 107). And this fact is really important, because without rhythm the speech is cut up and incoherent.

When we speak about language rhythm, it is important to realize that word stress is integral to the rhythm, because "rhythm is a product of word stress" (Kenworthy, 1987, p. 30). English has the stress – timed rhythm, "which means that stressed beats occur at

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roughly equal intervals of time, regardless of how many syllables there are between each beat" (Brewster, Ellis, Girard, 1992, p. 86). Roach (2009) put forward a fact concerning the occurrence of stressed syllables, which are usually found in comparatively regular intervals. These stressed syllables can or do not have to be divided by unstressed syllable (p. 107). Stress rules in English are not as evident and simple as in Czech. Czech language has stress on the first syllable, whereas in English it depends on the number of syllables in the word. But at a commonplace speech occurs an effect called stress – shift. We can look at the example below taken from Roach´s book (2009) for better understanding of stress – shift.

compact (adjective) /kəm'pækt/ *but* compact disk /'kɑmpækt 'dɪsk/
Westminster /west'mɪnstə/ *but* Westminster Abbey /'westmɪnstər 'æbi/
(p. 109).

According to the example above, we have to realize that stress, eventually rhythm, is connected with the particular context. Another important fact to realize is the particular speech. Different rhythm is at the public speech, where the stress is more considerable. When someone is nervous or ill, the rhythm can be dissimilar and the speech can become monotonous.

Thus what is the importance of rhythm and stress? In compliance with the facts above, English is stressed – timed language and the rhythm is very important to understand the concrete words and sentences. Although "English rhythm is a controversial subject on which widely differing views have been expressed" (Roach, 2009, p. 116), it is an important aspect of speech. Underhill (1994) also emphasized the importance of rhythm along with intonation, when he stated "Intonation and rhythm together help to focus attention on the information structure of a discourse and to indicate 'what goes with what' in an utterance" (p. 59). Rhythm is really important aspect of a speech in English. Therefore it is really useful for the non – native learners to practise it e.g. by repeating utterances, which are significantly rhythmical (Roach, 2009, p. 110).

Assimilation

Assimilation is a natural constituent of speech, even though speakers do not become conscious of it. Assimilation is "the way that sounds belonging to one word can cause change in sounds belonging to neighbouring words" (Roach 2009, p.110). Underhill´s (1994) definition is more precise: "Assimilation occurs when a phoneme changes its quality due to the influence of a neighbouring sound. It changes to become

more like the neighbouring sound, or even identical to it" (p. 60). Roach further continuous that "assimilation is something which varies in extent according to speaking rate and style; it is more likely to be found in rapid, casual speech and less likely in slow, careful speech" (p. 110). With assimilation, the speech can sound more natural and the speaker does not seem overly pedantic. On the one hand, for the students, assimilation can be relatively familiar, owing to songs, movies or TV series, which they nowadays can watch with Czech subtitles. On the other hand, the students usually do not know about the rules and principles, which create this aspect of connected speech.

As in any other grammatical topic, assimilation has several rules which the teacher should respect and try to emphasize them when they appear. These rules are drawn in the examples below.

a) /t/, /d/, /n/ - these consonants in the final position of the word can change into the consonant at the beginning of the following word. They are part of an assimilation of the place of articulation. Typical examples were shown in Roach (2009) "meat pie / miːp paɪ /, good boy / gʊb bɔɪ / or card game / kɑːg geɪm /" (p. 111).

b) /d/ can change to /g/. For better understanding examples are given: "good girl / gʊg gɜːl / or good boy / gʊb gɔɪ /" (Roach, 2009, p. 113).

c) /s/ can change to /ʃ/ and /z/ can change to /ʒ/ then followed by /ʃ/ or /j/. Again for the better understanding, examples taken from Roach (2009): "this shoe / dɪʃ ʃuː/ or those years / ðəʊʒ jɪəz /" (p. 111).

d) /t/ can become to /s/ like in "that side / ðæs saɪd /" (Roach 2009, p. 112).

The last type of assimilation is the assimilation of voice, i.e. from voiced to voiceless consonant, but it is less frequent than the previous ones.

e) /k/ can change to /g/ and /t/ can change to /d/. When is sentence "I like that black dog" (Roach, 2009, p. 112) said slowly and intelligibly, it can be heard like "/aɪ laɪk ðæt blæk dɒg/ (Roach, 2009, p. 112). But when it is said in normal, everyday speech, it can be heard as "/aɪ laɪg ðæd blæg dɒg /" (Roach, 2009, p. 112)

Roach (2009) also emphasized that "consonants that have undergone the assimilation have not disappeared... it is not something that foreign learners need to learn do" (p. 111).

To summarize the assimilation, for the students it is not very simple topic and for teachers it is not easy to introduce and mainly, to explain it. However, owing to the regular practise of the pronunciation of this aspect of connected speech, students can become more familiar with it.

Elision

Elision, like assimilation, is another natural aspect of connected speech (Underhill, 1994, p. 62). Principle of elision can be understood in a relatively simple way: "under certain circumstances sounds disappear.... in certain circumstances a phoneme may be deleted" (Roach, 2009, p. 113) and it is a typical feature of connected speech. Crystal´s (2003) definition is very similar to the Roach´s: "a term (elision) used to refer to the omission of sounds in connected speech. Both consonants and vowels may be affected, and sometimes whole syllables may be elided" (p. 158).

Roach (2009) contributed that elision is typical of rapid, casual speech. He argued that foreign learners do not need to learn how to use it. However, he emphasized the importance of certain awareness of this aspect of connected speech to understand the mutual talk of native speakers, where the expected phonemes by non – native speakers are not pronounced by the native ones (p. 113).

 Some of the examples of elision taken from Roach (2009), which can be seen at learners´ pronunciation, are shown below.

    a) omission of vowel after p, t, k and the aspiration results in these pronunciations, like in " potato / p^{h}ˈteɪtəʊ / or today / t^{h}ˈdeɪ / or perhaps / p^{h}ˈæps /" (p. 114).

    b) omission of /t/ can be seen in " acts /æks/ or scripts /skrɪps/" (p. 114).

    c) omission of final /v/ in "of" constructions before consonants like in "lots of them /lɑts ə ðəm / or waste of money /weɪst ə mʌni/" (p. 114).

    d) contractions can be also regarded as a kind of elision, for example "you / jʊ:/ and you´re / jʊə /, can / kæn / and can´t / kɑ:nt / or do / du:/ and don´t dəʊnt //" (p. 114, p. 115).

Linking

As it was mentioned in the previous section, Roach (2009) stated a term 'mechanical speech' in which "all words would be separate units placed next to each other in sequence; in real connected speech, however, we link words together in number of ways" (Roach, 2009, p. 115). Linking is really important to attain a fluent and smooth flow of English (Brewster, Ellis & Girard, 1992, p. 87). In this aspect of connected speech, the context is truly relevant. The most known case of linking is the phoneme r.

a) linking /r/ like in "here /hɪə/ and here are / hɪər ə / or four /fɔː/ and four eggs /fɔːr egz/" (Roach, 2009, p. 115).

b) intrusive /r/ can be often heard by BBC speakers as in "Formula A /fɔːmjələr eɪ/ or in media event /miːdiər ɪvent/" (Roach, 2009, p. 115).

There exists a special case in this aspect called juncture. This aspect is relatively hard for the foreign learners to understand the particular meaning, better said, to distinguish between the two phrases the correct one. The juncture is compounded from words, which can be relatively easily distinguished when they are pronounced in isolation. Typical examples are "might rain /maɪt reɪn/ versus my train / maɪ treɪn/ or tray lending /treɪ lendɪŋ/ versus trail ending /treɪl endɪŋ/ or keep sticking / kiːp stɪkɪŋ/ versus keeps ticking /kiːps tɪkɪŋ/" (Roach, 2009, p. 116).

In juncture it is really important to concentrate on the context in which words appears and if the boundaries of the words are obvious. Then the juncture is superfluous. Of course, as in any other aspect of connected speech, it depends on the speakers´ pronunciation, mainly the words used and the rapidity of it. Roach (2009) supported this statement by words "... there is a clear difference between the way words are pronounce in isolation and their pronunciation in the context of connected speech" (p. 116).

These junctures can cause problems when understanding the spoken language. Therefore the teacher should emphasize the correct one and also mention the importance of the context.

Intonation

When speaking about English intonation, we have to realize that it is closely interconnected with the English sentence rhythm, which was described above. And just through intonation and rhythm the listener can understand the purpose of the speech and

understand the whole context. It is really important for the speaker to use the appropriate intonation, because if it is not used correctly, the sense of a sentence can utterly change. The problem can arise during the perception, because the understanding of stress in English can differ from nation to nation. Non – native English speakers may feel that their stress in language is stress less stronger and vocal range not as wide as the English one (Taylor, 1993, p.133). In 1992, Brewster, Ellis and Girard pointed out that "some of the most important functions of intonation in English are to help emphasize the most strongly stressed word in a sentence to show the grammatical function of what is being said" (p.87). This statement just supported what has been said above.

If we want to use a definition of an intonation, it is not as easy as in the previous aspects of connected speech. Crystal (2003) stated that "intonation is a term referring to the distinctive use of patterns of pitch or melody" (p. 241). Roach (2009) also mentioned the importance of a pitch, when he stated that "pitch of the voice plays the most important part" (p.119). The pitch is either high or low. But here arises possible problematical part for a listener, who is not perfect in recognizing the intensity of it. So as Roach (2009) said, it is better to relate "to a scale ranging from low to high" (p.119). To grasp the main idea of the speech, it is not necessary to be interested in the whole speaker´s pitch, but the main message is usually intensified by it. Therefore it is useful to introduce to the students the main principles of intonation by using e.g. listening or video examples to see the real situations and then the understanding is much easier for them.

Pitch is closely connected with the tone unit. It means that when there is a falling tone in the sentence, the pitch moves from higher to a lower. On the contrary, the rising tone means that pitch moves from lower to a higher one (Roach, 2009, p. 121). English usually has a typical usage of the tone in the sentence types, which is shown in the examples below:

- declarative   falling
  e.g.: Here is a house.
- WH- question (who, what, why, etc.)   falling
  e.g.: Where´s the pencil?
- yes/no question   rising
  e.g.: Can we come too?
- multiple interrogative   rising then falling
  e.g.: Would you like chocolate, vanilla or strawberry ice-cream?

- imperative   falling

    e.g.: Cut off the bottom.

- exclamation (surprise, anger, etc.)   falling

    e.g.: Look out!

- question tags:

    expecting confirmation   falling

    e.g.: He likes his job, doesn´t he?

    less certain confirmation   rising

    e.g.: Jane recognized you, didn´t she?

    (Underhill, 1994, p. 84; Brewster, Ellis & Girard, 1992, p. 87; Greenbaum & Quirk, 1990, p. 234, 238).

Intonation is one of the most important constituents of the speech. The appropriate use of it makes the speech more fluent, understandable and natural. Therefore it is really important for teachers to dedicate time to dealing with an intonation when teaching English as a foreign language. However, we all know that teaching intonation and mainly understanding its rules by students is not an easy issue for both - teachers as well as for students. This statement is also based on the Underhill´s (1994) proposition: "Unfortunately, analyses of intonation have so far tended to yield descriptions which are too cumbersome for language learners" (p. 59). The import of it still remains, though. The reason why to carry it out is relatively simple. As it was said before, intonation goes together with rhythm, and for the English teaching they can be considered as the most important constituents of an intelligible speech. The suitable use of them makes the speech more familiar and understandable to the listener and also to the speaker.

Using songs and rhymes

It is important to realize that songs, along with rhymes, are inseparable constituents of humans´ lives. This fact can be supported by a statement from Murphey (1992) "For a variety of reasons, songs stick in our minds and become part of us, and lend themselves easily to exploitation in the classroom" (p. 6). Students of all ages usually have some interest in music which can be taken as a positive aspect in its usage in a class. Students are able to learn songs quickly, which fascinates many of us. Another thing is that when we

learn something in a different language than our native one, we usually tend to forget almost everything apart from some songs which we learnt (Murphey, 1992, p.6).

As it was written in the previous section, connected speech is not simple to understand and to carry out for the foreign learners of English. Thus, songs and rhymes can serve as relatively helpful aids in teaching pronunciation. Therefore, the main reasons why to use songs and rhymes in the English language teaching classes will be described in this section.

When using songs in the class, it is important to think about the principles and processes of their application. Songs and rhymes can become a regular part of the beginning or the end of a lesson. In this case, they serve as a kind of a class routine. When the teacher wants to use a song or a rhyme as a teaching aid, he/she cannot come to a class and merely play some music from a CD or a radio player, as it is when a song serves as a background support of the lesson.

Last but not least fact for the teacher, concerning the usage of songs and rhymes, is to realise and consider the pronunciation aims of the lesson which should be reached by the songs or rhymes activities. Murphey (1992) emphasized the importance of the aims established in advance. Teacher should realize that songs alone will not teach the students how to use the language and it does not depend on how unforgettable they are. They can be funny, energizing and enjoyable. Students can sing, recite or only listen to them. But the work with them should be meaningful to make students able to communicate in another language (p.6).

In this chapter the main reasons why to use songs and rhymes along with the principles of their implementation and possibility to teach through them will be discussed.

Why to use songs and rhymes in a lesson?

In an introduction to this part is stated a fact about the importance of songs and rhymes in our lives. Paterson and Willis (2008) mentioned the importance of singing for children while learning and remembering new words and phrases. Through them they can also develop awareness of sounds and structure of the language (p. 7). This relates to a thought on an important function of music in the language classroom, because the environment there can be changed in a minute (Budden, 2008). It is important to realize that songs and rhymes might be important constituents of language classes. Therefore, the general reasons why to use music and songs in an English language teaching are stated

below, together with the reasons for the betterment of pronunciation along with connected speech.

Multiple intelligence theory can be beneficial

It is important to think about the individual kinds of learning styles in general. It was claimed for many times that the ability to understand to the new learned things is complex. But many people can be better at understanding some things than the others. For other people can be easy to understand the basic mathematical pattern, but very difficult to play the musical instrument. For other people, playing the musical instrument is natural, but to go and play football can be problematic ("Multiple Intelligences"). Therefore, in 1983, Dr. Howard Gardner came up with a Multiple Intelligence theory, according to which students learn in different learning styles. His theory is based on nine diverse kinds of intelligence. These individual intelligences mirror "different ways of interacting with the world. Each person has a unique combination, or profile" ("Howard Gardner´s Multiple Intelligences Theory", n.d.). We put among these nine types of intelligence Linguistic, Logical/Mathematical, Musical, Bodily/Kinaesthetic, Spatial, Naturalist, Intrapersonal, Interpersonal and Existential intelligence ("Howard Gardner´s Multiple Intelligences Theory", n.d.). For our hypothesis, the musical intelligence is the most important, because there is the ability to think through music, use it to perceive and identify the sound patterns ("Howard Gardner´s Multiple Intelligences Theory", n.d.). Using songs or rhymes can be an advantage for students, who have dominance of this intelligence and new subject matters can be understood more easily. The number of students, who have the predominance of this kind of intelligence, comprises an inseparable part of all kinds of multiple intelligences and cannot stay aside when thinking of the appropriate way of teaching. For better demonstration of musical intelligence, see Appendix A, where are graphs of the dismantling of individual intelligences. These graphs were borrowed from the *Birmingham Grid for Learning*.

Grammar and vocabulary can be explained through songs or rhymes

Songs and rhymes can sometimes serve as a great teaching aid when new grammar or vocabulary is being introduced or known phenomena are practised. Almost every student of English knows songs as 'Old Macdonald had a farm' or 'Head and Shoulders Knees and Toes' and many more. Through these we learnt new vocabulary and also little about rhythm. The authentic language is present in songs and "rhymes in songs provide

listeners with repetition of similar sounds" (Ebong & Sabaddini, 2006). Paterson and Willis (2008) emphasized the importance of songs during the language teaching, because they help children to focus on the pronunciation, rhythm or stress in the rhymes or songs. The repeated practise of songs and rhymes activities can also provide children with courage to speak individually, because they know what to expect (p. 7).

These ways of teaching, where vocabulary and grammar are explained by using songs and rhymes, cannot be used in every class, because each song and rhyme is different and in each of them function diverse style of teaching. But at least, some activities can be tried out, so that the teacher can see if his/her group of students can work with songs and rhymes. One of the main aims of using rhymes can be considered a fact "to help learners to learn rhymes by heart so that they can say them confidently with suitable pronunciation" (Scrivener, 2005, p. 285).

Different sources of input are carried out through songs and rhymes

Patterson and Willis stated an opinion that while teaching English through music "children will have opportunities to learn language from four different sources of input" (p.9). These inputs are general classroom management and the instructions the teacher gives. There is the language which is used to introduce and get ready for the music activity. The words and phonological features of the rhymes, songs, chants or stories help to introduce and explain the phonological issues. Further development of specific language features and topic themes arising from the activity and wider exploration of cross curricular subjects can be developed (Patterson & Willis, 2008, p. 9). Owing to these inputs children can obtain opportunities to use the language themselves stage by stage (Patterson & Willis, 2008, p. 9). When children start to learn new language, they can be nervous and afraid of what will happen in the lesson. Songs and rhymes can be a good motivation element of language teaching and a natural way of learning.

Music and rhymes can introduce a different cultural and social environment

This reason does not correspond exactly to connected speech, but it is interconnected to education. School is a place, which considerably influences students. In the Czech Republic, the Framework Education Programme emphasizes the role of cross – curricular subjects, which are "thematic areas of current problems of the contemporary world... They represent an important formative element of elementary education" ("Research Institute of Education in Prague - VÚP", 2007, p. 91). Songs and rhymes can

be regarded as a relatively good teaching aid to introduce directly or indirectly the other countries´ attitudes or traditions, which can be compared to those of their native country.

Listening to music can be fun and relaxing

"Music has the potential to change the atmosphere in the classroom. It seems to give energy where there was none, and spark off images when students complain of having nothing to write about" (Murphey, 1992, p. 37). This statement is fairly logical. When the teacher plays a song, students usually start to pay more attention and are curious about what will happen. It is likely that more interest will be expressed when the song is known to students, especially if it is one of their favourite songs. In this case students´ intrinsic motivation can increase and support the learning process.

Listening to music or rhymes can be used in two possible ways. The first is to use songs as a background for students´ work. However, a problem about learning environment to which the students are used to can arise. Some of them can be accustomed to silence while doing exercises, others like the musical background, although they do not have to perceive it. The second is the amusing element of songs, because "songs help to create a nice atmosphere as they don´t feel like typical classroom work; rather they promote the kind of authentic activity which learners engage in outside the lesson" (Simpson, 2013). Almost each of us has tried to sing a song at home, or at least hum its melody. The principle is the same, though the student is not alone in the class. Teacher should not force the students to sing aloud in front of the others if they do not want to do it. Otherwise it can happen that in the future activity with songs without their singing the student does not have to be active and it puts student off song activities.

Wide choice of songs and rhymes

There exist really large amounts of songs sung in English, the same is with rhymes. They can be found on the internet, but for the pronunciation improvement application it would be better to use the focused publications. These publications are usually tried and tested by many users and they can meet the particular pronunciation conditions. One of the authors concentrating on grammar or other thematic songs or rhymes is for example Carolyn Graham, whose activities are also used in this thesis.

To summarize the previous section, there exist many various reasons why to integrate songs and rhymes to language lessons - from the commonly known factors to the

more academic ones. When using music and songs, teacher should always think about the factors mentioned above, mainly about the aim of the lesson and about the particular group of students. Not every group of students is actually suitable for the music use in the lesson and therefore the co–operation of students and teacher can be really demanding. However, according to the topic of this thesis, songs and rhymes could serve as an aid while learning connected speech. When students listen to them, they can later repeat the form they hear and it can become a part of their use of language. That is probably the most important reason why to use them in order to improve students´ connected speech.

It is important for the teacher to become conscious of the possible dangers which can emerge, when he/she teaches a foreign language through songs and rhymes. It should be taken for granted that there is always given purpose in advance for the use of songs or rhymes in the lesson. Murphey (1992) stated some of the typical situations which can teachers encounter, like as students do not take rhymes and song seriously or some students can get too excited while doing the songs or rhymes activities. Some students just want to listen, not to work (p. 8). As in any other language activity, songs and rhymes have their positive and negative sides. But mostly they are considered as a beneficial teaching aid for the language teaching.

How can be connected speech taught through songs and rhymes?

In this part of thesis, approaches to using songs and rhymes while introducing the principles of connected speech at the elementary school will be described. Teachers usually focus on rhythm and intonation, but other aspects can be improved as well. The principles of working with individual aspects of connected speech through songs are mostly based on the same foundations.

For better understanding which songs or rhymes can be used, we can divide them according to Brewster, Ellis and Girard (1992) into four groups. These groups of songs and rhymes can be applied in the language teaching. The first group are action songs and rhymes, which are accompanied with body movements, such as jumping, clapping, stretching and acting out actions ("Action Rhymes for Toddlers and Preschoolers", 2006). Limericks, humorous verses and riddles can be in the second group. These have an advantage of motivating children to think more about the meaning of the rhyme. The third group consisting of traditional songs and rhymes can be completed by the fourth group,

pop songs. These two last groups are usually known by learners (Brewster, Ellis & Girard, 1992, p. 177)

Some of typical activities with songs can be to listen to them and fill in the blanks, where some words are left and students should complete them. Putting phrases into the right sequence is also a relatively popular activity, together with sorting out song or rhymes, which are mixed together (Brewster, Ellis & Girard, 1992, p. 180). These activities can be used for better understanding of individual aspects of connected speech. For the needs of this thesis, some of the more focused activities are described below.

Songs and rhymes focusing on rhythm

To rhythm, together with intonation, are dedicated many activities dealing with songs and rhymes. When students hear the rhythm, it is much easier for them to repeat it, than trying to understand teacher´s explanations how to achieve the appropriate one. They are an "excellent illustration of the way in which stress and rhythm work in English" (Brewster, Ellis & Girard, 1992, p. 87). The selection of songs or rhymes should be always based on the age, level and interests of learners. While adults will probably prefer some sophisticated songs or rhymes which are similar to a real life or literature, teenagers will probably like pop songs and children will commonly appreciate nursery rhymes (Kenworthy, 1987, p. 31).

For teaching rhythm, songs or rhymes can be used in two ways. They can be presented in a written form and without a recording of the particular song or rhyme. In this case, students can for example try to identify the stressed or unstressed items. This way of work is more suitable for more experienced learners, than for beginners. The second way to use songs and rhymes is probably the more typical one. It is the use of recordings of songs, rhymes, limericks or short verses (Kenworthy, 1987, p. 31). There exist more methods how to work with the particular recordings, as singing, underlining, reciting or filling in the missing words.

The main point of using songs or rhymes activities for teaching English rhythm is to show learners that "English doesn´t have a steady, even rhythm" (Kenworthy, 1987, p. 31). The procedure of working with songs and rhymes as a teaching aid, is to begin with the easily understandable and practicable activities and then continue to the more exacting ones. Examples of concrete methods, when using songs and rhymes for teaching and learning connected speech, follow below.

Rhymes accompanied with clapping hands to demonstrate the rhythm. This is one of the most basic ways of demonstrating rhythm. The teacher asks the students to clap the strong beats and then he or she can gradually add more and more syllables between individual claps (Brewster, Ellis & Girard, 1992, p. 86). Any song or rhyme can be usually clapped by hands, so there is no limitation for their usage by this method. Clapping hands can be a main method of learning the rhythm or an accompanying element while singing or reciting. One of the basics rhymes is mentioned below.

ONE		TWO		THREE		FOUR
ONE	and	TWO	and	THREE	and	FOUR
ONE	and a	TWO	and a	THREE	and a	FOUR
ONE	and then a	TWO	and then a	THREE	and then a	FOUR

(Brewster, Ellis & Girard, 1992, p. 87).

The use of action songs and rhymes. Owing to the need of action, they are usually used with young learners. Counting out rhymes, like 'Eeny, meeny, miny, moe', can be also put into this group. The benefit of action rhymes or songs is in the synchronization of movement and rhythm, so the learners can feel the melody and rhythm much better and the teaching process is more effective (Taylor, 1993, p.91). Typical examples of action rhymes and songs can be 'Tommy Thumbs', 'Three red plums' or 'Head and Shoulders' (Taylor, 1993, p.106 – 108).

The use of limericks. Limericks can serve as a great learning aid for getting the rhythm, because "they follow a regular pattern and have predictable openings with there was a ... who... and therefore easy for learners to work with" (Taylor, 1993, p.116). Work with limericks can be either reading them or creating their own ones, which is suitable for more advanced students.

Songs and rhymes focusing on assimilation and elision

Both assimilation and elision are aspects of connected speech, which are relatively hard to teach and also students can have problems with their understanding. According to Underhill (1994) it is not necessary to dedicate an extra time to deal with assimilation and elision. More important is to draw learners´ attention to examples of assimilation or elision, while they meet them in texts or recordings (p. 61 – 62). Learners usually do not

realise that some sounds disappear in the rapid speech (Bowen & Marks, 1992, p. 51). Therefore, the work with songs and rhymes while teaching and learning assimilation is very similar to work with rhythm described above, like completing limericks or repeating the texts.

Songs and rhymes focusing on linking

Songs and rhymes can help learners to practise linking, because they can help not to pronounce the certain sounds in a jerky style (Brewster, Ellis, Girard, 1992, p. 86). In the same manner as assimilation and elision, the most known activities are more or less the same as the ones for rhythm.

The use of action rhymes for linking´s practise. One of the typical action rhymes for the linking practise can be 'Chop, chop, choppity-chop', where are word connections like 'cut of' or 'there is' or 'put in' and linking can be relatively easily and effectively practised in this action rhyme.

Songs and rhymes focusing on intonation

While learning and teaching intonation, there is usually put an emphasis on the perception. Usually there are only tendencies how and where correctly pose the appropriate intonation (Taylor, 1993, p. 133). Songs and rhymes can be very useful aids for its perception and the procedure is again very similar to the rhythm´s activities.

Sing a song, recite a rhyme. This activity is probably the most typical for practising the intonation. Teacher should choose a song or rhyme in which students are interested to ensure their attention and interest (Murphey, 1992, p. 95).

This chapter provided an insight in the basic issues of connected speech, its individual aspects and elementary features from the point of view of an elementary school teaching and learning. Possibilities how and why can be connected speech taught by songs and rhymes are stated and clarified. These options of teaching and learning through songs will be tested in the practical part and the outcomes will be described there.

III.   METHODS

As it was stated in the previous section, songs and rhymes can be used as a useful teaching aid for connected speech improvement. The question of this thesis which was researched is if the connected speech will improve and how while using songs and rhymes in the English lessons. This chapter describes the methods of research where selected rhymes and songs were used for the research purpose.

Research place

The research for this thesis was carried out at the elementary school ZŠ J.K. Tyla in Písek. This school is relatively sought-after by parents in Písek and the English teaching is on a rather good level, which is supported with the 'YLE' international language exam for young learners, which can be carried out there. The research was done during the teaching practice in February 2014. The particular grades, in which I taught English, were also used for the research. These classes were 6th and 7th grade, so the pupils were from 12 to 14 years old. These pupils have had English from their 3rd grade, in other words from the age of nine. The level of the language in individual groups was not equal, because the groups in each year were mixed together from diverse levels of the pupils´ language. In the 6th grade, the total number of pupils was 17 in one language group. At the time of the research the number of students fluctuated. In the 7th grade, the total number of pupils was 23 in one language group. At the time of the research the number of pupils also fluctuated as in the 6th grade. When in the 7th were all 23 pupils, the work was not as easy as it could be supposed. The classroom for the English lessons was very small and it was fairly difficult to have an effective classroom management during the research activities in this grade than in the 6th grade.

Research procedure

The research was not done at one time. In the 6th grade, as well as in the 7th grade, the research procedure was done more times at the beginning of the lesson. The research activities were used as warm – ups. Some activities were done only once, because of the type of the activity and its difficulty. It could not be given more than 15 minutes to the procedure because of the schoolwork which had to be followed.

The first time of doing the activity was for familiarization of students with the aim of the particular activity and introduction of individual aspects of connected speech, which were presented in the particular activity. Aspects were explained in a really simple way so that pupils understood them at least a bit. The aspects were explained as a natural part of speech, which appear when speaking. Pupils got their own copies of rhymes´ and songs´ texts, see appendix B, E, G and H. Pupils were told by me what to focus on. They listened to me or an audio recording. Then the particular tasks were done together, like highlighting the stressed words, indicating an intonation with an arrow or transcription of assimilation and elision. Then the text was read aloud with a focus on the particular aspect of connected speech. Finally, if there was time left, pupils individually or in pairs read the text aloud. Both, pupils´ and teacher´s versions of the activities can be seen in appendix B, C, D, E, F, G and I.

For the second time, the procedure was almost the same, but with a week pause to try if the students remembered what they did in the previous activity. They got the same or different copies of a text, see appendix B, E and I. According to my instructions, they did the same procedure with listening, highlighting and reading as it was for the first time.

For the third time pupils were given different texts copies, see appendix C, D and F. They tried to work with the unknown text. I played the audio recording from a CD, if it was possible, or read aloud only once and the pupils tried to highlight and read the text correctly.

The research procedure was an indirect testing of pronunciation skills of connected speech and with twice same materials due to the pupils´ level of English. I chose this method of testing because of the level of the pupil´s English and relatively demanding activities concentrating on connected speech. From my point of view this method was the most appropriate, because I supposed that the pupils would not be able to do some complicated and exacting tasks, which was finally proved. In the 6th grade activities for rhythm, linking and intonation were done. In the 7th grade were done activities for rhythm, intonation, assimilation and elision.

The aim of the activities was to check whether the students were able to repeatedly highlight and emphasize the particular aspect of connected speech and to read the text or sing the rhyme or song correctly.

Selected songs and rhymes

Individual songs and rhymes were chosen from the books 'Pronunciation in action' by Linda Taylor ('Three red plums' 'There are big waves' 'Head and shoulders', 'Hello there now'), 'Jazz chants' by Carolyn Graham ('Banker´s Wife´s Blues', 'Personal Questions') and 'The Primary English Teacher´s Guide' ('Chop, chop, choppity - chop'). Selection was done according to an occurrence of individual aspects of connected speech, possibility to check up their understanding and level of the pupils´ language skills. Individual titles and description of songs and rhymes are written below.

Criteria

The criteria were drawn up according to the particular activity and also to the level of pupils´ knowledge of English. For each activity were drawn up different criteria according to the frequency of the aspects´ occurrence. The criteria were done before the research according to the hypothesis of the pronunciation improvement and to avoid the suggestibility of potential failure.

Three red plums. See appendix B. In this rhyme, which can be sung as a song, were practised rhythm, word stress and assimilation. Focus was laid on the rhythm. The rhyme was practised in the 6th grade and it was read aloud by the teacher. This rhyme was practised twice. Twelve words were stressed and the criteria were divided into thirds: 0 - 3 correctly highlighted words were determined as 'insufficient' category, 4 – 8 correctly highlighted words were determined as 'sufficient' category, 9 – 12 correctly highlighted words were determined as 'excellent' category. In this part of rhyme were presented 13 stressed words. Due to the comparison with the rhyme 'Three red plums' were counted with only 12 stressed words. The last word 'wall' were not counted to the statistics.

There are big waves. See appendix C. This rhyme was focused on word stress and it was practised in the 6th and 7th grade instead of the 'Three red plums' to check whether the pupils were able to identify the word stress correctly according to the listening. This rhyme was practised once. It was played from the internet. In this rhyme there are overall 25 word stress´ occurrences. Because of the time in the lesson, and particularly due to comparability with 'Three red plums' this rhyme was shortened to 12. Criteria were: 0 – 3 correctly

highlighted words were determined as 'insufficient' category, 4 – 8 correctly highlighted words were determined as 'sufficient' category, 9 – 12 correctly highlighted words were determined as 'excellent' category.

Head and Shoulders. See appendix D. This song is well known by the pupils in the school, where the research was done. The song was used for practising rhythm and stress. It was done in the 6th grade. The song was played from the internet and it was practised once. The criteria were: 0 – 4 correctly highlighted words were determined as 'insufficient' category, 5 – 8 correctly highlighted words were determined as 'sufficient' category, 9 – 12 correctly highlighted words were determined as 'good' category and 13 – 16 correctly highlighted words were determined as 'excellent' category.

Banker´s Wife´s Blues. See appendix E. This jazz chant was focused on intonation and it was practised in the 6th and 7th grade. It was played from the CD. There were five WH – questions. This jazz chant was practised twice. The criterion was set as follows: 0 – 1 correctly recognized intonation as 'insufficient' category, 2 – 3 correctly recognized intonation as 'sufficient' category and 4 – 5 correctly recognized intonation as 'excellent' category.

Personal Questions. See appendix F. This jazz chant was focused on intonation and it was practised in the 6th and 7th grade. The jazz chant was played from the CD. It was used instead of the 'Banker´s Wife´s Blues' to check whether the pupils understood the principles of intonation and it was practised once. The criterion was set as follows: 0 – 1 correctly recognized intonation as 'insufficient' category, 2 – 3 correctly recognized intonation as 'sufficient' category and 4 – 5 correctly recognized intonation as 'excellent' category.

Chop, chop, choppity-chop. See appendix G. This rhyme was focused on linking and it was practised in the 6th grade. There are four cases of linking. Criterions were set mildly, because linking can be problematic for pupils of this age on the elementary schools. This rhyme was practised once. Criteria were: 0 – 2 highlighted linking as 'not registered' category and 3 – 4 highlighted linking as 'registered' category.

Hello there now. See appendix H and I. This rap song was focused on assimilation and elision. It was used only in the 7th grade because of the complexity of the aspect of connected speech. Text of this song was relatively long and again, according to the given time it was shortened. The chosen parts were used twice. Both, the first and the second attempts consisted of two stanzas with nine words to rewrite. Criteria in this activity were set according to the transcription of the text. The criteria in both attempts were: $0 - 3$ correctly chosen and rewritten words as 'insufficient' category, $4 - 6$ correctly chosen and rewritten words as 'sufficient' category and $7 - 9$ correctly chosen and rewritten words as 'excellent' category. In the second attempt the word 'and' was not counted to the total amount of words. Spelling problems were not taken as a mistake, if the word made sense and was clear, which word the pupil meant.

When all the research, based on the rhymes and songs written above, was carried out, I conducted an analysis of the results. The results are presented in the following section of this thesis by the means of diagrams. These diagrams are complemented by concluding commentaries of each activity.

IV.   RESULTS AND COMMENTARIES

In this part of thesis, results of the research, which was described in the previous section, are presented and commented. For better illustration were used tables complemented by bar charts or a pie chart. Depending on the particular activity, the graphs are expressed as a percentage or numbers of pupils. The percentages show proportions of success rate in individual and repeated activities. The specific numbers of students in graphs were used because the activities were done once. Finally, the commentaries of the course and outcomes of particular activities are added.

Results

Three red plums, There are big waves

See appendix B and appendix C. These rhymes were used to practise the rhythm and word stress. The total results can be seen in 'Table 1' below. Rhyme 'Three red plums' was practised twice in both researched grades. As it is noticeable from the 'Table 1', the number of students was not still the same. To make the outcomes from individual grades mutually comparable, it was necessary to convert the particular number of pupils at the time of a research, into the maximum number of pupils. The total number of stressed words in 'Three red plums', which was used for the 1st and 2nd class, was 12. From 'Table 1', 'Graph 1' and 'Graph 2'can be seen that in both grades descended 'insufficient' outcomes between individual classes. The 'sufficient' category was more balanced in the 6th grade than in the 7th grade. The 'excellent' category was growing during both attempts in both grades.

Three red plums (1,2), There are big waves (3)		Students	Insufficient	Sufficient	Excellent
6th grade	1st class	17	4	12	1
	2nd class	14	1	10	3
	3rd class	17	2	11	4
7th grade	1st class	21	1	16	4
	2nd class	18	0	10	8
	3rd class	22	2	10	10

Table 1: Practising word stress in 6th and 7th grade.

In the 3rd class was used rhyme 'There are big waves' with 12 stressed words. It can be seen that in contrary to the previous classes, the 'insufficient' category has slightly increased. The 'sufficient' category was relatively similar the 6th grade. The 'excellent' category had rising tendency in both grades. Mutual comparison of results in both grades can be seen in the 'Graph 1' and 'Graph 2'. Particular figures in percentages for 6th grade in the 'insufficient' category are 24%, 7% and 12%. The results in the 7th grade were different. Particular figures in percentages for the 7th grade are 5%, 0% and 10%. The 'sufficient' category was more extensive in the 6th grade than in the 7th grade. Particular figures in percentages for this category in the 6th grade are 70%, 72% and 64%. Particular figures for this category in the 7th grade are 76%, 56% and 45%. In both grades was seen descending tendency of results in this category. This tendency was more noticeable in the 7th grade, where the differences were bigger than in the 6th grade. The last category in this activity, 'excellent', had rising tendency and it was also more extensive in the 7th grade than in the 6th grade. Particular figures in percentages for this category in the 6th grade are 6%, 21% and 24%. In the 7th grade, there are clearly visible bigger figures in than in the 6th grade. Particular figures in percentages for this category in the 7th grade are 19%, 44% and 45%. Better language level in the 7th grade than in the 6th grade is visible from these bar charts and outcomes.
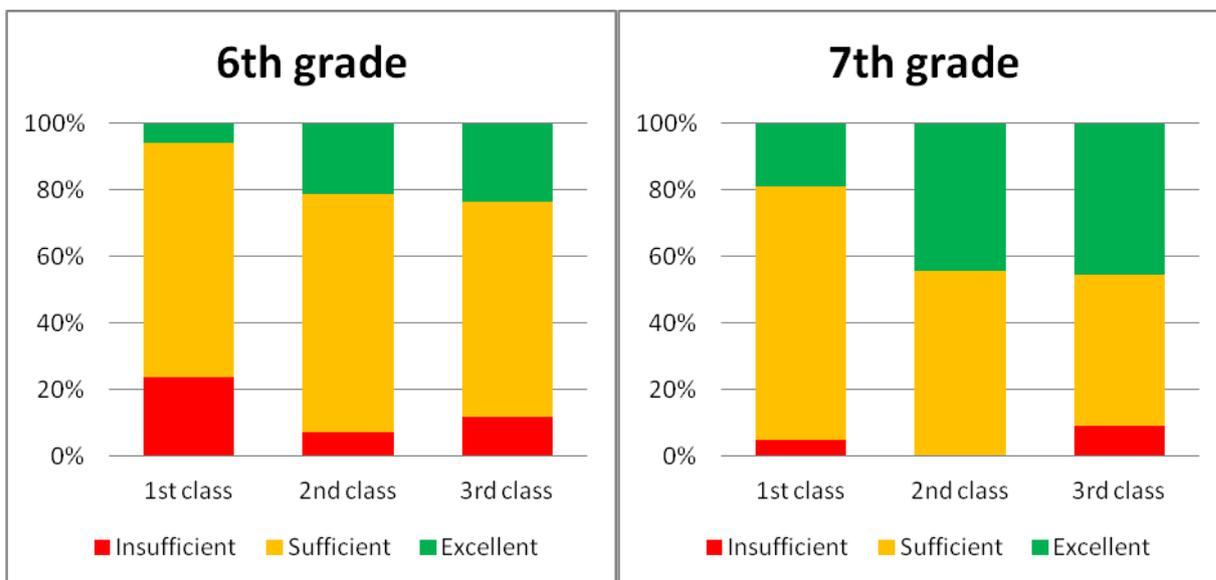
Graph 1: Word stress – 6th grade   **Graph 2: Word stress - 7th grade**

Head and shoulders

See appendix D. This song was concentrated on the word stress again and it was done in the 6th grade. It was done only once, because of the previous practise stated above. The aim of this activity was to check up the outcomes from the previous activity. The total results can be seen in 'Table 2'. The 'insufficient' category was seen in an only case, which can be understood as better understanding of the grammatical phenomena than in the previous classes of the research. In the rest of the categories, the outcomes were relatively balanced. The 'sufficient' category occurred with 5 pupils. The biggest representation of the outcomes was at the 'good' category, where occurred 7 pupils. The last category, 'excellent', was represented by 4 pupils.

Head and shoulders	Students	Insufficient	Sufficient	Good	Excellent
6th grade	17	1	5	7	4

Table 2: Follow – up practise of word stress in 6th grade

'Graph 3', coming out of 'Table 2', illustrates the results of this activity. The data are expressed in real numbers and not in percentages, because the research with this activity was done only once and it is not compared to the other graph.
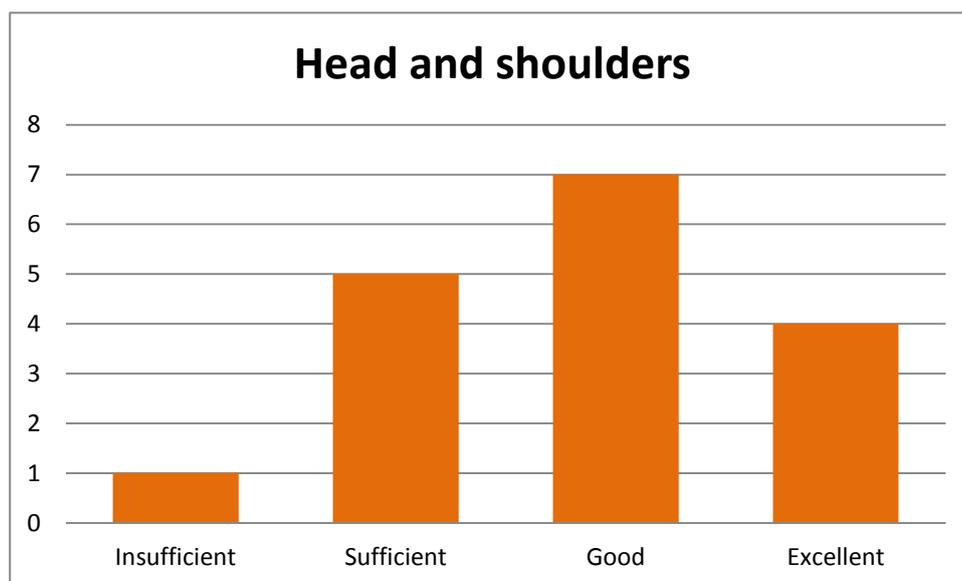
Graph 3: Word stress – follow up practise - 6th grade

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Banker´s Wife´s Blues, Personal Questions

See appendix E and appendix F. These two jazz chants were used to practise intonation. There was the same problem with the number of the students as in the previous activities for word stress, so the convertion of their number was needed again. For the first two classes was used jazz chant 'Banker´s Wife´s Blues'. In this jazz chant occurred five cases of falling intonation. For the third class was used a different jazz chant, 'Personal Questions', where also occurred five cases of intonation, but not of the same category. There were three falling cases and two raising cases of intonation. The final results from all three categories and classes can be seen in 'Table 3'.

Banker´s Wife´s Blues (1,2), Personal Questions (3)		Students	Insufficient	Sufficient	Excellent
6th grade	1st class	15	5	9	1
	2nd class	17	2	10	5
	3rd class	17	4	11	2
7th grade	1st class	19	3	13	3
	2nd class	20	1	15	4
	3rd class	23	5	12	6

Table 3: Practising intonation in 6th and 7th grade

In both grades can be seen that the 'insufficient' category descended. In the 6th grade this category was presented in all classes. The same happened in the 7th grade, but the second class of the research, only 1 pupil occurred in this category. It can be seen that there was a decrease of the number of pupils between the first class and the second class. The increase in this category in the last class of this activity was more noticeable in the 7th grade than in the 6th grade. The 'sufficient' category was more balanced in the 6th grade than in the 7th grade. The differences between the numbers of students in the 6th grade were always one more pupils for each class of the research. In the 7th grade is visible the progress in this category between the second and third class of the research, where relatively visible decline occurred in the number of pupils in this category. Pupils from the 'sufficient' category in the second class shifted to the 'insufficient' category and to the 'excellent' category. The 'excellent' category was more balanced in the 7th grade than in

the 6th grade. This category had an upward tendency in the 7th grade, whereas in the 6th grade, the upward tendency was between the first and the second class. However, the number of students in this category went downward in the last class of this activity.
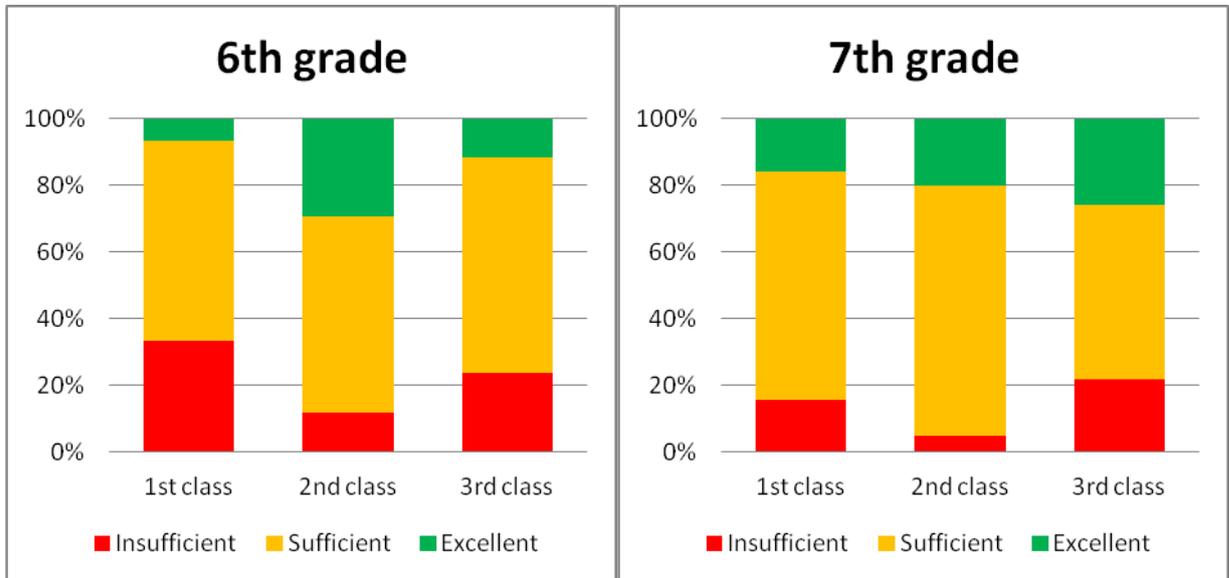
Graph 4: Intonation – 6th grade   **Graph 5: Intonation – 7th grade**

As in the previous mutual comparison, the 7th grade was better in all three categories of this activity. For more evident outcomes, see 'Graph 4' and 'Graph 5'. In these graphs are visible more balanced 'sufficient' and 'excellent' categories in the 7th grade than in the 6th grade. Generally, the insufficient category is more or less decreasing in both classes. Particular percentage figures for the 6th grade are 33%, 13% and 24%. Particular percentage figures for the 7th grade are 16%, 5% and 22%. From these figures can be seen that the differences between individual classes in category were relatively similar. The 'sufficient' category is balanced in all classes in the 6th grade. In the 7th grade is this category balanced in first two classes and in the third class it decreased. Particular percentage figures for 6th grade in the 'sufficient' category are 60%, 58% and 65%. Particular percentage figures for 7th grade in the 'sufficient' category are 68%, 75% and 52%. From these results we see that larger shifts in this category were in the 7th grade. The 'excellent' category is definitely more balanced in the 7th grade than in the 6th grade. Particular percentage figures for the 6th grade are 7%, 29% and 11%. Particular percentage

figures for the 7th grade are 16%, 20% and 26%. From these outcomes can be seen that better level of language and understanding in the 7th grade was proved again.

Chop, chop, choppity – chop

See appendix G. This rhyme was focused on linking and it was practised in the 6th grade. The activity was done only once, because there was not any time left. As it can be seen from the 'Table 4', linking is relatively complicated grammatical phenomena for pupils in the 6th grade. From 17 presented pupils, only 5 of them registered this phenomenon. For better understanding are these outcomes expressed by percentages in 'Graph 6'.

Chop, chop, choppity - chop	Students	Not registered	Registered
6th grade	17	12	5

Table 4: Practising linking – 6th grade
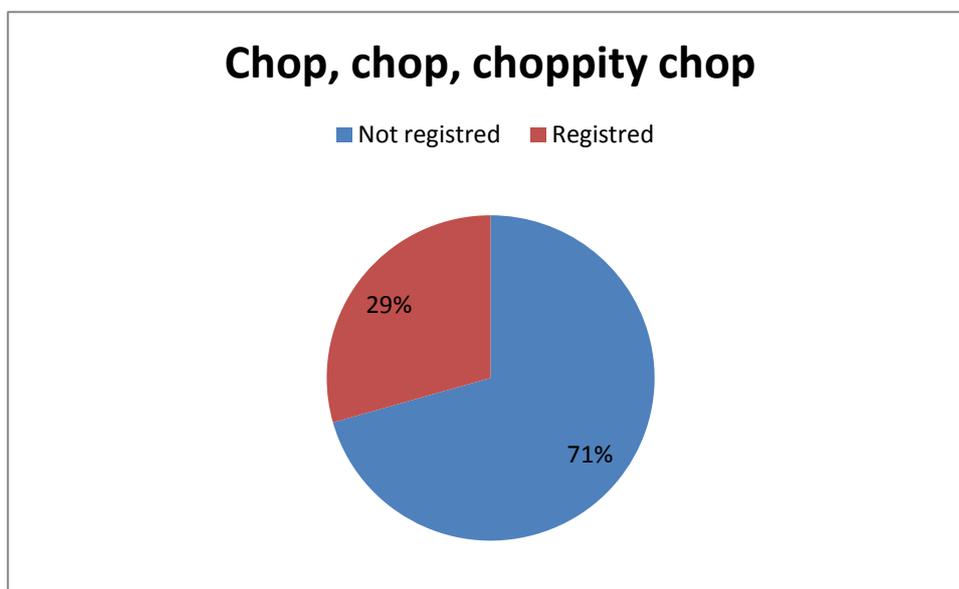
Graph 6: Linking – 6th grade

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The research categories were only two – 'registered' and 'not registered'. Owing to the number of categories was done a diagram, where the results are expressed by percentages. The diagram can be seen in 'Graph 6'. The results are expressed by a ratio of pupils who registered linking to pupils who did not register linking. The ratio of the number of successful and unsuccessful pupils in this activity was well-marked, because 71% of the total number of students occurred in the 'not-registered' category. Only 29% of pupils occurred in the 'registered' category. From this graph is clearly evident, that linking was not really easy aspect of connected speech to understand to the pupils in the 6th grade.

Hello there now

See appendix H and appendix I. This rap activity was focused on relatively complicated aspects of connected speech and these are assimilation and elision. It was done in the 7th grade and it was practised twice. Both attempts had different texts. Probably due to the words, which had to be transcribed, this activity ended up relatively well. Almost all the words, which occurred in this activity, were known to pupils. During both classes were present 22 pupils and as it can be seen from 'Table 5', the numbers in 'insufficient' category descended, whereas the numbers in 'excellent' category increased. In the 'sufficient' category, the numbers were almost identical in both classes.

Hello there now		Students	Insufficient	Sufficient	Excellent
7th grade	1st class	22	4	13	5
	2nd class	22	2	12	8

Table 5: Practising assimilation – 7th grade

Graph 7: Assimilation – 7th grade

Individual classes were compared in this activity. The data from 'Table 5' were transferred and can be seen in 'Graph 7'. There is visible progress in all three categories. The 'insufficient' category descended from 4 to 2 pupils, which is from 18% to 9%. The difference is 10%, so the decrease is 50%. The 'sufficient' category was relatively balanced. In the first class, 13 pupils fitted in this category. During the second class, 12 pupils fitted into this category, so the difference between these two classes is 5%. The most evident change was in the 'excellent' category, where the number of pupils increased from 5 to 8 successful pupils, in other words from 23% to 36%. This is an increase for 13%. All three categories demonstrated an improvement.

Commentaries

As it was stated in the theoretical section, songs and rhymes could serve as helpful teaching aids for learning and teaching aspects of connected speech. This was also the hypothesis for the research of this thesis. The expectation of successful outcomes was more or less confirmed by the research. Generally it can be said that continuous practice could lead to an improvement of individual aspects of connected speech. The results of activities were described above and commentaries to individual activities follow.

Provided time

I had a great opportunity for doing the research, because the teacher at the teaching practice consented to carrying out it during the English lessons. I decided to use the activities as warm up activities to launch the lesson. The usual duration of the activities was approximately 15 minutes. It could not be given more time, because I had to follow the pre – planned lesson preparation. I think that if I had more time left, the results of the research would be slightly different, because of the possibility to practise it more exactly than it was done.

Time of the lessons

The reasons, why were chosen the songs and rhymes mentioned above, were stated earlier. It was confirmed that pupils´ level of language is really important during these activities. What was important was the time of the particular lesson. Pupils in the 6th grade were more active in the morning lessons, which started at 8 o´clock, but it was only once a week. The other lessons were before noon about 11 a.m. Pupils were before lunch and that played also important role in their attention. The same situation with times of the lessons was in the 7th grade. The pupils from this grade were on a skiing course a week before my teaching practise and many of them were still boisterous in the first classes. The time in these classes was dedicated more to calming down the pupils than to describing and concentrating on the particular activities.

It is true that for the overall results the arrangement of the individual lessons did not have a strong effect, but the work at the activities differed. In the morning, the pupils paid more attention and the activities followed fluently and relatively fast. A little worse situation was in the later classes, but this was a fact, which could not be influenced. It is a question, whether the time could really influence the performance, together with the outcomes of the result. From my point of view it could. However, this question could be answered by following research and it remains only a speculation at this time.

Rate of an interest for students

This was relatively problematic part of the research. Before I started the research, I was afraid of the pupils´ reactions to the individual activities. They started to be in a problematic age, when nothing is interesting and important for them, which was partially proved, as their comments "it is boring", "why we have to do it", "what is it good for" etc. On the one hand, these reactions were expected because I knew that it would be hard to engage their attention. On the other hand, the rhymes and songs chosen were appropriate to their age and language level. Vocabulary used there was not complicated, so the pupils could concentrate on the particular aspect of connected speech and were not distracted by hard grammar and vocabulary. It is true that they worked during the activities, so I got all the data which were needed to evaluate the research.

Individual activities

At this part, commentaries to individual activities´ results are added. The number of activities for each class was assigned according to the difficulty of it and also to the pre – planned curriculum.

Three red plums, There are big waves

This activity was done as the first in both grades. 'Three red plums' was an easy rhyme to understand and to highlight the word stress, which was the aim. It was done for the first two classes. In the third class the former rhyme was replaced by a rhyme 'There are big waves'. Interval in the 6th grade between the first and the second class was three days. The interval between the second and the third class was five days. The interval in the 7th grade, between the first and the second class, was two days. The interval between the second and the third class was one week. A decreasing tendency, which was drawn in 'Graph 1' and 'Graph 2', was slightly disrupted in the third class in both grades. The disruption was not very considerable and it can be attributed to a different rhyme and more complicated words in it. The decrease´s principle was the same in both grades. It can be supposed that if there was a continuing practise, the number of answers falling into the 'excellent' category would increase, whereas the 'insufficient' category would decrease and 'sufficient' category would gradually decrease.

After the highlights´ checking, the individual texts were read. The readings are not covered in the official research. The aspects of connected speech were depicted and reading was an additional activity, which could be extended to additional research. These readings were relatively successful, because most of the pupils in both grades emphasized the stressed words and their speech did not sound monotonous as in the previous class.

However, the pupils were not so enthusiastic during these research activities in both grades. It was probably due to the fact that students are not used to work with rhymes. Particularly the pupils in the 7th grade, who were just after a week skiing course, were not as active as they could be. Additionally, these rhymes were unknown for the pupils and it seemed to me that these rhymes were quite unexciting for them. This could also contribute to the fact mentioned above.

Head and Shoulders

This song was done after the previous couple of rhymes and it served as a continuous practise for a word stress. It was done two weeks after the first activity for a word stress in the 6th grade. During this activity, only one pupil ended up in the 'insufficient' category, which can be understood as a positive result. The 'sufficient' category was relatively balanced which can be understood as a relatively good outcome of this research. However, the 'good' category was the most dominant of all categories. Finally, the 'excellent' category can be understood as an average result.

I was quite surprised, how the pupils reacted on this song. I had expected that this song would be boring for them, but it was not. They knew the words of this song from previous years of studying English. Therefore, the activity itself was done fast and pupils´ mood was more positive than in the previous rhymes for rhythm practise. Finally, we made a circle and did the known moves symbolising individual parts of the body, which were mentioned in the song. Almost all pupils were singing, some of them were only reciting. Certainly, not everyone was so enthusiastic. But all of them were active and the word stress was emphasized enough and it did not impress as a monotonous speaking.

From the results and reactions of this activity, it can be claimed, that for following practising of the individual aspects of connected speech it would be beneficial to use songs or rhymes, which are known for pupils.

Banker´s Wife´s Blues, Personal Questions

This activity was done in both grades. 'Banker´s Wife´s Blues' was an easily understandable jazz chant and it was practised for the first two classes. The vocabulary used in this jazz chant was known to pupils in both grades. The grammar used in it was also known to all pupils, so there were not any dangerous parts, which could distract pupils´ attention. The jazz chant 'Personal Questions' was practised in the third class. It was slightly more complicated for the pupils than the previous jazz chant. There were two types of intonation and an unknown word phrase in this jazz chant, which had to be translated at the bottom of the worksheet. In the 6th grade, the interval between the first and the second class were six days and between the second and the third class were two days. In the 7th grade, the interval between the first and the second class were five days and between the second and the third class were three days. As it was said above, the 7th grade was better in this activity. At more detailed looking at the individual outcomes, drawn in 'Graph 4' and 'Graph 5', we can conclude that the language level was better in the 7th grade than in the 6th grade. The shifts were more noticeable in the 6th grade, which showed slightly worse language level than their older schoolmates. This difference could be expected. However, the real difference in their grammatical knowledge was not very noticeable as it could be. The days´ intervals were similar in both grades, so the research´s conditions were mutually comparable. The most significant category was, as in the word stress´ practise, the 'sufficient' category. From the outcomes we can assume that in the 7th grade there would be probably more noticeable increasing tendency of the 'excellent' category. There was a gradual decrease of the 'sufficient' category and vanishing or, at least, considerable fall of the 'insufficient' category. In the 6th grade, there would probably be similar procedure as was described above with the 7th grade. However, the movement would be perhaps slower than in the 7th grade.

For the first time of working with these rhymes, pupils were relatively motivated in both classes, because it was different work from what they were used to do. They were not used to deal with an intonation very much. During the second classes, the mood in grades varied. The pupils in the 6th grade were more positive than the pupils from the 7th grade. However, the pupils from the 7th grade were more active in the negative point of view. That means that their activity and attention was dedicated to the disturbing rather than to the intonation. This situation probably happened due to the age of pupils, where the older ones dare to be more impertinent than the younger ones. Unlike the second class, the third

one was such as the first class. This situation could happen because of the different text than in the previous two classes.

Chop, chop, choppity – chop

Although this rhyme was very simple, the aspect of connected speech, which was practised through it, was not as easy as it could be supposed. It was practised once in the 6th grade. This activity was done as the last one, which might have been a reason for the pupils´ lost of interest to this activity and their rather negative attitude to it than in the previous cases. Although the pupils did not know, what exactly they would do, they were relatively passive from the very beginning of this activity. The outcomes of this activity were rather negative than positive. Factors, which could influence this outcome, could be difficult character of this activity, because the pupils heard about linking for the first time, language level of the pupils in this class or, as was said above, the order of this activity. From my point of view, this aspect of connected speech needs to be more practised than it was done. After that, the outcomes could end up more balanced or rather in the positive percentage figures.

Hello there now

This rap activity was done as the last part of the research in the 7th grade. Although the aspects of connected speech – assimilation and elision, which were practised there, were not very simple and pupils met them for the first time, the results were relatively surprising for me. I did not explain the theory very extensively, because the aspects are difficult themselves. I expected more significant 'insufficient' category than it finally was. From all the activities, this one was the most successful. Pupils were really keen on it and active. From my point of view it was because of the kind of the activity. The pupils are used to listening of this kind of music. They slightly realised the changes in the words´ pronunciation. Finally, they tried to express this rap and it was really enjoyable for them. From their personal reactions after the lesson I can conclude that the activities based on the music they know would be more successful than the more traditional songs and rhymes used in schoolbooks. The rap 'Hello there now' from the research could serve as a very good example that the songs and rhymes for an improvement of pupils´ speech could work. This activity was in a manner, which is close to the pupils´ style.

The hypothesis of this thesis was that after using songs and rhymes during teaching and learning English, the pupils´ connected speech would overall improve. The hypothesis was confirmed by the research described above. However, the process of regular using songs and rhymes for learning and teaching the aspects of connected speech would be relatively lengthy. It was affirmed that after the research, minor improvement of pupils´ speech was visible. The teacher, who officially taught the classes, was surprised with the results of the research. She did not expect the results, as they finally came out. She expected not so positive conclusion, but more average or below-average outcomes. The pupils´ partially positive attitude was also surprising for her. However, some pupils´ behaviour was expectedly disappointing for her.

It is a question, whether the teachers at the elementary schools, where the research was done, would have the time to do these extra activities in general. The contemporary Czech curriculum is really full and there is usually no time left to do the additional activities, although the teachers would like to do them. However, we should realize that connected speech is a natural part of the English spoken language. When the pupils would learn the basic principles and practise them enough, their speech will sound much better and natural. My experience was that pupils´ speech was more likely monotone before the practice. Sometimes it was difficult to identify the end of a sentence and to distinguish, whether the sentence was interrogative or declarative, was really superhuman ability.

This part of thesis summarized the main findings of the research. It clarified the individual outcomes of the research and explained them. The description throughout the course of the research was added. The particular implications for teachers, the limitations which I have encountered during my research and the possible proposal for further research will be described in the following part of this thesis.

V.   IMPLICATIONS

In the first section of this part, implications for teachers based on the research described above are stated. Secondly, it discusses the limitations of the research, which emerged when carrying it in the school. The weaknesses and problems when the research´s data were gathered are mentioned. Lastly, the suggestions for further research are described.

Implications for teaching

As it can be seen from the research, the pupils´ English speech was improved after the particular activities focused on the individual aspects of connected speech. The results have proved that after regular practice, there is a possibility to brighten up the pupils´ speaking abilities.

Regarding the individual aspects of connected speech, the teachers should revise or learn the basic principles of them. This procedure would definitely help to improve the teaching and learning process of pupils´ speech. The activities, which were used in the research, were not complicated to be carried out. Therefore it would not take much time to prepare them and do them during the English teaching. The activities were beneficial for both sides, for pupils as for the teachers. This statement could be generalized. The pupils could experience a different learning process and not the common learning routine. The teachers can motivate students to use the language in a different way that they are used to. Finally, this unaffected way of teaching and learning would improve their speaking skills. Songs and rhymes can accompany the traditional way of teaching English with schoolbooks.

Before choosing the individual songs and rhymes, the teachers should carefully analyse their pupils´ abilities as for the language purposes, as for the learning and working capabilities. Very important is to choose the song or rhyme regarding the age of pupils. As it can be seen from the relatively positive results, shorter and simpler songs and rhymes are more suitable at the elementary school. The pupils´ are used to do the schoolbooks´ activities, which are short and predominantly concentrated on a particular grammatical phenomenon. Therefore the activities, which were used in the research, were moreover suitable kind for practicing the aspects of connected speech and could represent a kind of songs and rhymes which could be used for practicing the connected speech.

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It is true that the aspects of connected speech do not comprise a part of a curriculum at the elementary schools. It is rather logical. The aspects of connected speech are complicated grammatical phenomena for pupils at elementary schools and the teachers there are often glad that their pupils manage to understand the grammatical basis regarding tenses, pronouns and prepositions. I have experienced that the English teachers at the school, where the research was carried out, were not very familiar mainly with assimilation and elision. Their argument was that there is no time left to properly concentrate on the pupils´ speaking, because they have to cover the curriculum. I do not think that the situation in other elementary schools in the Czech Republic differs much from the situation I have seen. Owing to this fact it should be relatively useful, if the elementary English teachers have some basis at least about the intonation and word stress principles.

In this field of English language is not done very much at Czech elementary schools. The teachers can think that there is usually no time left to do these additional activities. Another reason, why the activities for aspects of connected speech do not occur very often can be that teachers can assume that their pupils would not comprehend the rules of these aspects. However, I have experienced that some of the done activities were really enjoyable for the pupils. It follows that there exists a possibility that if the teachers had tried to do the activities focused on the aspects of connected speech, the pupils would be more enthusiastic than they are now.

The research carried out in the classes showed that it is possible to improve the pupils´ speech. It was also important to show the pupils how can English speech sound and that it is not monotonous. The activities could help the pupils to understand common speech which they can encounter. I understand that there exists a curriculum which had to be followed. However, from my point of view it is at least worthy of trying it. If the pupils had more practise of songs and rhymes, they would become accustomed to them. If the teacher brought a jazz chant, rhyme or song once a week, the pupils would listen to it at least and through the listening, the songs and rhymes will be in pupils´ minds. Contemporary Czech children are accustomed to songs, rhymes and films in English from the TV or the internet. Therefore, these classroom activities exploiting songs and rhymes can serve as an intermediate stage for the pupils´ speech betterment.

In addition, there exist a great number of sources for activities. Once the teachers prepare the activities, they can be used over and over again. In the course of time, the activities can become a regular part of English lessons and the pupils´ speech could improve. Together with this relates a fact that pupils´ ability to understand spoken English

could be better. Finally it should be mentioned that if the songs and rhymes were used from the beginnings of the language teaching and learning, the pupils would be used to them. It could be probably useful to begin with songs and rhymes regularly and with simple activities.

Limitations of the research

The research had some particular limitations. The provided time for the activities has to be mentioned as the first. On the one hand, the teacher was willing to give me some extra time for my research during the lessons and I was really pleased that she gave me this opportunity. The sample for the research was comprised from average pupils´ groups at the elementary school ZŠ J.K. Tyla Písek. On the other hand, more provided time would be definitely better than it actually was. The topic of the research is rather for a long – term research, than for the short – term, which was done. It is not possible to come to a classroom, introduce a difficult topic and expect that pupils would immediately comprehend it and start to use it effectively. I would be naive to expect that the pupils´ speech would promptly improve and sound more natural after short time of practise. The outcomes of the research were relatively positive. However, from my point of view, the provided time could influence the results.

The second limitation of this research was that it was the number of the pupils in individual grades. Different situation would probably happen if the research was carried out in more classes of the 6th grade and 7th grade and more participants would be involved. The sample for the research would not be so limited and there would be a wider basis for the final outcomes.

Thirdly, the language level of the pupils could slightly influence the results. Perhaps with older and more advanced learners of English the results would be better. The pupils should speak at a good level and afterwards the individual aspects of connected speech could be properly practised. Although the outcomes of the research were not very bad, they would be probably different with the pupils of different language level.

Suggestions for Further Research

The first possibility of further research would concern its length, which means that it should be a long – term research. In my opinion, the duration of the research should be at least a half term, i.e. five months. If this condition was fulfilled, the pupils would become accustomed to the course of the lessons. The provided time, which would be much longer than it was in the performed research, would ensure a wider range of activities and possibilities of practising particular aspects of connected speech.

The second possibility of further research concerns the number of classes. Let´s assume that the teacher decided to take the long – term research focused on the aspects of connected speech. The teacher should involve two or more grades in one year for the research, for instance 7.A and 7.B, alternatively 7.C. The pupils´ level would be on a comparable level. With the first class, the teacher would work with no changes, which means that no activities focused on the aspects of connected speech would be used. With the second class, the teacher would work differently. The activities like songs, rhymes or jazz chants for betterment the pupils´ connected speech would be used regularly, at least once a week. At the end of the time period, the teacher would evaluate the findings. The hypothesis should be that certain difference between these two classes would emerge. Mainly in better connected speech understanding and also pupils´ speech should improve. Of course, it could happen that no noticeable contrast would emerge between these two researched classes. But if we base the hypothesis on the results of the outcomes of this thesis, there should be certain difference.

This chapter provided a view of the possible implications for the elementary English language teachers in the Czech Republic. These implications were based on the results of the research, which was performed because of this thesis. The limitations of this research were stated and ideas concerning the further research were mentioned.

VI.   CONCLUSION

This thesis was focused on the connected speech. As it was described in the theoretical part, there exist more aspects which comprise connected speech. These aspects have their own rules and principles. When they are correctly used altogether, the speech sounds continuous and natural. It could be seen that every aspect is somehow difficult for teachers, as well as for the pupils. It is also important to realize that these aspects form an important part in the speech.

As the first aspect of connected speech was described rhythm. It is a natural part of speech in any language. Word stress is also important, because English is a stressed –timed language. Both rhythm and stress are one of the most important aspects of connected speech. They could be appropriately introduced through songs and rhymes, so that the pupils are able to understand them. Assimilation and elision can be very often noticed at English native speakers´ speech. However, they can be often unaware of using them. When the native speaker speaks quickly, many sounds can become a different sound or disappear. For the elementary school requirements, these two aspects are not so important. Linking is another aspect of connected speech. Songs and rhymes could be useful for learning and teaching linking. The pupils should be able to use linking owing to the expected A2 level of their language, which should be reached in the final grade at elementary school. It can be assumed, that the pupils would not know the definition of it, but it is important that they would be able to use it correctly. As the last aspect of connected speech was introduced intonation. It is one of the most important constituents of speech. The pupils at elementary school should practice the intonation more, because it should be adequately used in order to have a natural sounding speech.

There exist a range of reasons why and also many ways of using songs and rhymes for teaching and learning connected speech. There also exist more ways of using songs and rhymes when teaching and learning the aspects of connected speech. Action rhymes could be useful for all age groups and most of the aspects of connected speech. Clapping hands could be useful particularly for beginners when teaching and learning rhythm.

The results obtained in the classroom research showed that it is possible to improve the pupils´ speech. The pupils were able to use the principles of aspects of the connected speech according to what they had heard in the song or the rhymes. Although it is not possible to expect immediate improvement after few attempts, there is a chance that after a longer and regular practice of the activities focused on the aspects of connected speech, the

aspects could become a natural and unaware constituent of pupils´ speech. After that their speech would sound natural and not monotonous. Their ability to understand spoken English is also likely to improve. The results of the research had indicated that pupils´ connected speech could improve after using songs and rhymes in the English lessons.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Graphs of the multiple intelligences theory dismantling, according to age.

Average results for males and females, aged 12 - 14, living in all countries.
(1,788,900 records found)

Average results for males and females, aged 11 or under, living in all countries.
(1,279,940 records found)
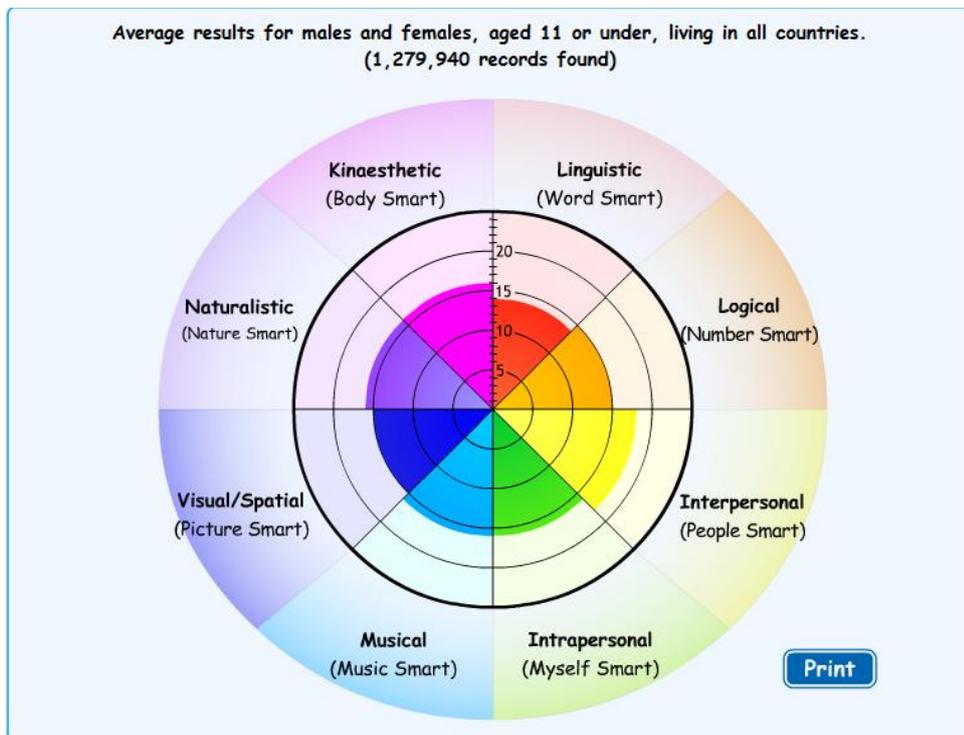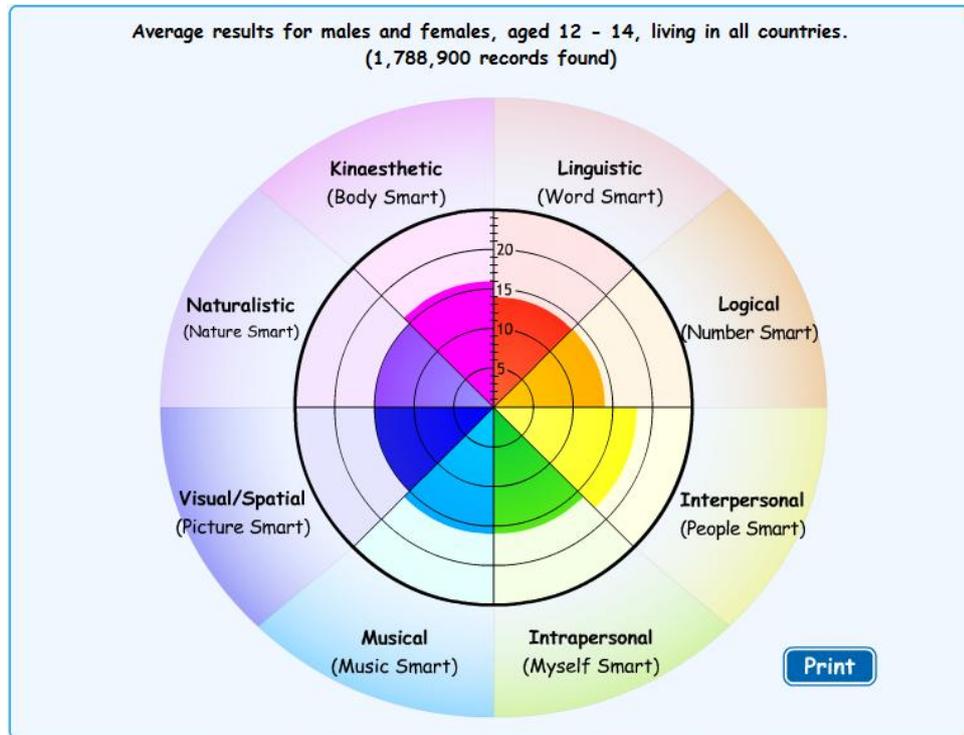
Appendix B: Three Red Plums

Pupils´ Worksheet

Look at the text of the rhyme below. You will listen to it and then highlight or underline the words, which will be stressed – the ones, which you will hear in the clearest way.

Podívej se na text verše. Poslechneš si ho a poté zvýrazníš nebo podtrhneš ta slova, kterou budou zdůrazněná – ta, která uslyšíš nejzřetelněji.

THREE RED PLUMS

Three red plums on the

old plum tree

One for you and

one for me and

one for the boy who

picks them

plum = švestka
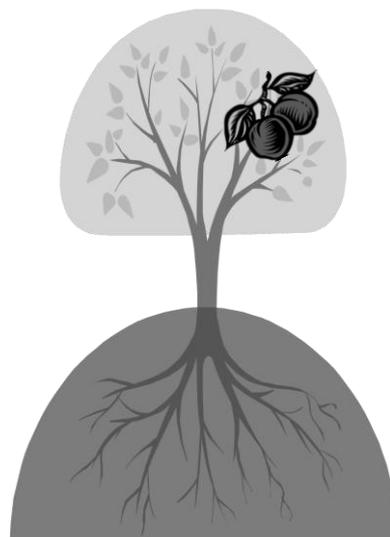
Activity Plan

First, pupils read the text. Then read the text twice with an emphasis on the stressed words. First listening – pupils only listen and follow the text. Second listening – pupils highlight the stressed words. After the second listening, check their answers. Finally the pupils read the text.

Answer key

THREE RED PLUMS

<u>Three</u> red <u>plums</u> on the
<u>old</u> plum <u>tree</u>

<u>One</u> for <u>you</u> and
<u>one</u> for <u>me</u> and
<u>one</u> for the <u>boy</u> who
<u>picks</u> <u>them</u>

Appendix C

Pupils´ worksheet

Look at the text of the rhyme below. You will listen to it and then highlight or underline the words, which will be stressed – the ones, which you will hear in the clearest way.

Podívej se na text verše. Poslechneš si ho a poté zvýrazníš nebo podtrhneš ta slova, kterou

budou zdůrazněná – ta, která uslyšíš nejzřetelněji.

THERE ARE BIG WAVES by ELEANOR FARJEON

There are big waves and

little waves.

Green waves and blue.

Waves you can jump over.

Waves you dive through.

Waves that rise up like a

great water wall.

Wave = vlna, jump over = přeskočit, dive through = ponořit se, rise up = zvednout se

Activity Plan
First, pupils read the text. Then play a transcription from the internet twice. First listening – pupils only listen and follow the text. Second listening – pupils highlight the stressed words. After the second listening, check their answers. Finally, pupils read the text.

Answer Key

THERE ARE BIG WAVES by ELEANOR FARJEON

There are <u>big</u> waves and
<u>little</u> waves.
<u>Green</u> waves and <u>blue</u>.
<u>Waves</u> you can <u>jump</u> over.
<u>Waves</u> you <u>dive</u> through.

<u>Waves</u> that rise <u>up</u> like a
<u>great</u> water wall.

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Appendix D

Pupils´ Worksheet

Look at the text of the rhyme below. You will listen to it and then highlight or underline the words, which will be stressed – the ones, which you will hear in the clearest way.

Podívej se na text verše. Poslechneš si ho a poté zvýrazníš nebo podtrhneš ta slova, kterou budou zdůrazněná – ta, která uslyšíš nejzřetelněji.

Head and Shoulders

Head and shoulders, knees

and toes, knees and toes

Head and shoulders, knees

and toes, knees and toes

and eyes and ears and

mouth and nose,

Head and shoulders, knees

and toes, knees and toes.

Activity Plan
First, pupils read the text. Then play a transcription from the internet twice. First listening – pupils only listen and follow the text. Second listening – pupils highlight the stressed words. After the second listening, check their answers. Finally, pupils read the text.

Answer Key

Head and Shoulders

<u>Head</u> and <u>shoulders</u>, knees

and <u>toes</u>, knees and <u>toes</u>

<u>Head</u> and <u>shoulders</u>, knees

and <u>toes</u>, knees and <u>toes</u>

and <u>eyes</u> and <u>ears</u> and

<u>mouth</u> and <u>nose</u>,

<u>Head</u> and <u>shoulders</u>, knees

and <u>toes</u>, knees and <u>toes</u>.

Appendix E

Pupil´s Worksheet
Look at the text of the rhyme below. You will listen to it and then indicate with an arrow an intonation of the question – does the voice go up or down? Put the arrow behind the question.

Podívej se na text verše. Poslechneš si ho a poté pomocí šipky naznačíš intonaci otázky – jde hlas nahoru nebo dolů? Šipku umísti za otázku.

Banker´s Wife´s Blues
Where does he live?
    He lives near the bank.

Where does he work?
    He works in the bank.

When does he work?
    He works all day
    and he works all night
    at the bank, at the bank,
    at the great big bank.

Where does he study?
    He studies at the bank.

Where does he sleep?
    He sleeps at the bank.

Activity Plan

First, pupils read the text. Then play a transcription from the CD twice. First listening – pupils only listen and follow the text. Second listening – pupils indicate an intonation with an arrow. After the second listening, check their answers. Finally, pupils read the text.

Answer Key

Banker´s Wife´s Blues
Where does he live? ↘
    He lives near the bank.

Where does he work? ↘
    He works in the bank.

When does he work? ↘
    He works all day
    and he works all night

at the bank, at the bank,
at the great big bank.

Where does he study?
He studies at the bank.

Where does he sleep?
He sleeps at the bank.

Pupils´ Worksheet
Look at the text of the rhyme below. You will listen to it and then indicate with an arrow
an intonation of the question – does the voice go up or down? Put the arrow behind the
question – question mark.

Podívej se na text verše. Poslechneš si ho a poté pomocí šipky naznačíš intonaci otázky –
jde hlas nahoru nebo dolů? Šipku umísti za otázku – otazník.

Personal Questions
Where were you born?
    I´d rather not say.

Where are you from?
    I´d rather not say.

How tall are you?
    I´d rather not say.

Did you have a good time?
Did you see a good concert?
    I´d rather not say.

I´d rather not say – raději bych to neříkal

Activity Plan

First, pupils read the text. Then play a transcription from the CD twice. First listening –
pupils only listen and follow the text. Second listening – pupils indicate an intonation with
an arrow. After the second listening, check their answers. Finally, pupils read the text.

Activity Key

Personal Questions
Where were you born? ↘
    I´d rather not say.

Where are you from? ↘
    I´d rather not say.

How tall are you?   ↘
    I´d rather not say.

Did you have a good time? ↗
Did you see a good concert? ↗
I´d rather not say.

Appendix G

Pupils´ Worksheet
Look at the text of the rhyme below. You will listen to it and then indicate with a small arc under the certain pairs of words linking – Which words are linked together – you pronounce them "together"?

Podívej se na text verše. Poslechneš si ho a poté malého obloučku pod danými dvojicemi slov naznačíš vázání slov – která slova se na sebe v řeči „vážou" – vyslovuješ je „dohromady"?

CHOP, CHOP, CHOPPITY – CHOP
Cut off the bottom,

And cut off the top.

What there is left we will

Put in the pot:

Chop, chop, choppity – chop.

Cut off – uříznout, bottom – spodek, top – vršek, left – zbývající, pot – hrnec

Activity Plan

First, pupils look at the text. Then I will read it with an emphasis on linking. First listening – pupils only listen and follow the text. Second listening – pupils indicate linking with an arc. After the second listening, check their answers. Finally, pupils read the text. At the end, repeat the basic rules of linking, which can be seen in this example: consonant – vowel, vowel – vowel.

Answer Key

CHOP, CHOP, CHOPPITY – CHOP
Cut off the bottom,
And cut off the top.
What there is left we will
Put in the pot:
Chop, chop, choppity – chop.

Pupils´ Worksheet

Look at the text of the rap below. Try to read the text for yourself and then try to rewrite the words or word phrases, which you think are written incorrectly. Rewrite the words or word phrases so they will look like a typical English text e.g. from your student´s book. The mistake does not have to be in each line!

Podívej se na text rapu. Zkus si ho přečíst a potom se pokus přepsat ta slova nebo slovní spojení, která ti připadají napsaná špatně. Přepiš slova či slovní spojení tak, aby vypadaly, jako slova v textu, jako znáš například z učebnice. Chyba nemusí být v každém řádku!

The rap: Hello there now

Congratchalations! ....

That´s really great. ....

Hey, why don´tcha ....

Come out an´ celebrate? ....

I´ve gotta go too – ....

It´s nearly noon. ....

We´ll have a lotta fun. ....

I´ll see ya soon. ....
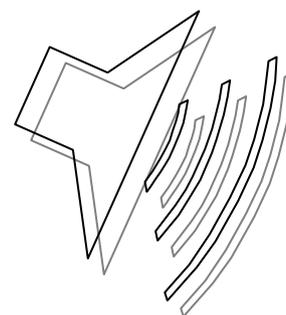
Activity Plan

First, pupils read the text. Then they will try to rewrite the words, which pupils think are incorrectly written. After they are finished, go through the text and write the words in the blackboard, so the pupils can check whether they were right or not. Finally, try to read the text in both versions and if there are some words pupils do not know, explain them.

Answer Key

Congratulations!
That´s really great.
Hey, why **don´t you**
Come out **and** celebrate?

I´ve **got to** go too –
It´s nearly noon.
We´ll have a **lot of** fun.
I´ll see **you** soon.

Appendix I

Pupils´ Worksheet

Look at the text of the rap below. Try to read the text for yourself and then try to rewrite the words or word phrases, which you think are written incorrectly. Rewrite the words or word phrases so they will look like a typical English text e.g. from your student´s book. The mistake does not have to be in each line!

Podívej se na text rapu. Zkus si ho přečíst a potom se pokus přepsat ta slova nebo slovní spojení, která ti připadají napsaná špatně. Přepiš slova či slovní spojení tak, aby vypadaly, jako slova v textu, jako znáš například z učebnice. Chyba nemusí být v každém řádku!

The rap: Hello there now

Terrific idea! ....

Let´s hit the town. ....

Dja know that new place? ....

The Rose ´n´ Crown? ....

Yeah – see ya there ....

Bout half past eight. ....

Gotta get back now, ...

Don´t wanna be late. ....
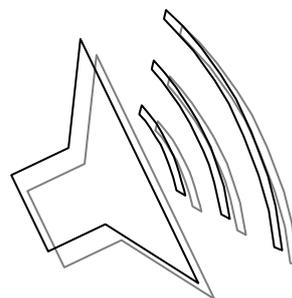
Activity Plan

First, pupils read the text. Then they will try to rewrite the words, which pupils think are incorrectly written. After they are finished, go through the text and write the words in the blackboard, so the pupils can check whether they were right or not. Finally, try to read the text in both versions and if there are some words pupils do not know, explain them.

Answer Key

Terrific idea!

Let´s hit the town.

Do you know that new place –

The Rose and Crown?

Yeah – see **you** there

About half past eight.

I´ve got to get back now.

Don´t **want to** be late.

SHRNUTÍ

Diplomová práce se zabývá použitím písní a říkanek jako pomůcky studentům s vázáním slov a zlepšováním jejich mluveného projevu. Představuje základní aspekty, které tvoří přirozený mluvený projev v anglickém jazyce. Zabývá se důvody a možnostmi, jak je možné využít písně a říkanky během hodin anglického jazyka. Praktická část práce zahrnuje popis grafů a tabulek jednotlivých aktivit, které byly zařazeny do průzkumu. Zároveň podrobně popisuje průběh a výsledky jednotlivých aktivit. V závěru práce jsou diskutovány možné dopady vycházející z průzkumu pro učitele, omezení daného průzkumu a zároveň možnosti pro průzkum následující.