

**Západočeská univerzita v Plzni
Fakulta pedagogická
Katedra anglického jazyka**

**Diplomová práce
ČTENÁŘSKÉ PREFERENCE ODLIŠNÝCH
GENERACÍ**

Bc. Štěpánka Kouřilová

Plzeň 2014

**University of West Bohemia
Faculty of Education
Department of English**

**Thesis
READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT
GENERATIONS**

Bc. Štěpánka Kouřilová

Plzeň 2014

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

V Plzni dne 2014

.....

Bc. Štěpánka Kouřilová

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to gratefully acknowledge the supervision and help of Mgr. Libuše Lišková, M.A. She recommended me a suitable literature and other useful sources, continuously commented on the written text and gave me valuable suggestions for the improvement of the thesis. I would also like to thank the teachers and librarians who have always been willing to help me with my research.

ABSTRACT

Kouřilová, Štěpánka. The University of West Bohemia. April, 2014. Reading preferences among different generations. Supervisor: Mgr. Libuše Lišková, M.A.

The diploma thesis deals with the reading preferences of contemporary children, examines the affection of IT to their reading habits. The thesis acquaints with the surveys concerning children's and teenagers' reading habits and preferences, made within the last decade, and summarizes their results. The practical part of the thesis is dedicated to the research. The author's own research focuses on the analysis of the Czech children's reading preferences by librarians' statistics and questionnaires given to children themselves. The research part is concluded by the school reading experiment. The objectives, conditions and stages of both researches are thoroughly described and the results of the survey are summarized and commented from different points of view.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I INTRODUCTION.....	1
II THEORETICAL BACKGROUND	3
Children’s literature in English speaking countries.....	3
Children’s Reading Habits in English speaking countries	5
Children’s literature in the Czech Republic	7
Reading habits of the Czech children	8
The era of fantasy literature.....	10
The connection between books and movies	16
III METHODS	18
The author’s own research – Interview	18
The author’s own research – Questionnaires.....	19
The author’s own research – Experiment.....	20
IV RESULTS AND COMMENTARIES.....	23
Reading preferences according to public libraries	23
Reading preferences according to the questionnaires.....	25
Graph 1: A number of books read per a student.....	25
Commentary on the results concerning the quantity of books	26
Graph 2: Reading preferences of the pupils in sixth classes	27
Commentary on the results concerning the reading preferences of the sixth classes..	27
Graph 3: Reading preferences of the pupils in seventh classes.....	29
Commentary on the results concerning the reading preferences of the seventh classes	29
Graph 4: Reading preferences of the pupils in eighth classes	31
Commentary on the results concerning the reading preferences of the eighth classes	31
Graph 5: Reading preferences of the pupils in ninth classes.....	33
Commentary on the results concerning the reading preferences of the ninth classes .	33
Results and commentaries on the experiment	35
V IMPLICATIONS.....	37
Pedagogical Implications.....	37
Limitations of the Research.....	38
Suggestions for Further Research.....	39
VI CONCLUSION	40

LIST OF GRAPHS

Graph 1: A number of books read per student

Graph 2: Reading preferences of the pupils in sixth classes

Graph 3: Reading preferences of the pupils in seventh classes

Graph 4: Reading preferences of the pupils in eighth classes

Graph 5: Reading preferences of the pupils in ninth classes

I INTRODUCTION

From the very beginnings of our lives, we are subjected to many stories. Some of them are narrated, some of them read. But all of them have very specific aim to fulfil. The storytelling prepares us, humans to different, sometimes very difficult situations in our lives; therefore it is vital not to omit all these stories, tales and fairy tales in children's lives as well, because it develops their imagination, sense of justice, humour and also it prepares them for many adventures they will face in the future.

As for me, I was a very curious and all-time questioning child. I have always wanted to know as much as possible about everything, which led inter alia to the natural attraction to books, all of them, to be correct. Thus, my parents started to teach me to read, because not only I have been very curious, I also needed to know how to do everything by myself. And that is how my story with the books began, when I was only five years old. I believe I am not the only one; the books are the integral parts of many people's lives.

However the world has slightly changed; the contemporary children are living online lives. They watch TV shows and movies online, they even read book transcriptions online and it seems that we, adults are still trying to find our way through all the available IT gadgets. There is one thing that we have forgotten, it is the world changing, not the children; the children just have different hobbies and interests than we used to have and this is the fact we should concentrate on, the fact we should consider while we are publishing the books for children, while we are teaching children, because the right way to succeed is to know their personalities and respect them without trying to change their point of views and opinions, without trying to understand them.

This is basically the reason I have decided for the thesis dedicated to survey of contemporary children's reading habits and preferences in comparison to the reading preferences and habits of previous generations as I wanted to know the difference between their interests and the interests of the previous generations together with the influence IT may have on the contemporary generation. All these facts are to be examined through the research conducted in libraries and elementary schools.

The main objective of the diploma thesis is to examine and analyse the contemporary Czech children's reading habit and preferences. The theoretical part of the thesis consists of detailed information about reading habits and preferences of the

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

contemporary Czech children as well as the habits and preferences of the children from the English speaking countries. The theoretical part is focused primarily on the surveys and research conducted in The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and The United States of America, sourcing from the latest research examining the children's reading habits and preferences via special software. With regard to the present best-selling books the analysis of the children's and adolescents' reading preferences according to psychologists and literary experts is presented. The following pages are dedicated to the connection between film adaptations and books presenting the undeniable influence these have on each other and also on the readers, examining the connection between non-readers and the film adaptations.

The practical part of the thesis provides the detailed analysis of the carried out research, thoroughly examines and discusses its questions and objectives considering the different stages of the research and the conditions the research was conducted in. The research primarily explores whether the contemporary Czech children read or not, and if they do what books are they reading and how many books they have read. Secondly what kinds of books do they prefer and what kinds of books they do not want to read together with their favourite characters and the film adaptations they have seen. And thirdly the research examines whether it is possible to motivate the children and the teenagers with authentic materials so much they will find the whole book attractive again. In the next chapter the results are presented in five graphs depicting both the books the children and the adolescents prefer and also the number of books they have read, together with the supplementary commentaries and further explanations necessary for understanding the results. The whole thesis culminates with the last chapter where the implications for teaching and the most important information dedicated to teachers are emphasized in conjunction with the problems, limitations and other issues connected to the research study. Some possible improvements and solutions of the problems mentioned are presented along with the potential extensions of the further research study dealing with the topic of reading preferences.

II THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In this chapter the contemporary situation of children's reading preferences and habits in English speaking countries and also in the Czech Republic are presented, together with the information about the present best-sellers and the factors needed to be taken into consideration while searching for possible causes for the fantasy phenomenon. At the end the influence the film adaptations have to the related books is described with supporting evidence.

Children's literature in English speaking countries

It is a well-known fact, a burden of our age that children do not read much. This statement can be seen as the ultimate ugly truth about the contemporary children. The reality seems a little different. The young audience does read. Children and teenagers simply prefer the different range of "materials" i.e. non-reading books. They read magazines, comics, blogs and other websites, thus their selection of books is limited by these sources. Simply they do not find the books as attractive as blogs which seem more present-related to them. This is caused partly by the technology expansion, partly by the different hobbies and interests in contrast to the previous generations of readers. Davila and Patrick (2010) describe the young generation as:

They are living in a world where they are growing up simultaneously playing video games, texting their friends, living within the social networking, and getting all the new information from the Internet, which is the most powerful media according to children's opinion in these days (Davila and Patrick, 2010, p. 199).

The fact that Internet dominates nowadays mass media has been confirmed by the majority of students not only in English speaking countries. Children are not interested in TV or newspapers, in contrast to the previous generations; they prefer to spend their free time more likely with their clever mobile phones and computers where there are no commercials, and where they can communicate with friends via social networks. They consider Internet as their ultimate source of the information they need and want to know. This generation is simply very different from the previous ones, influenced by and exposed to the IT from the very beginnings of their lives. Despite, or perhaps because of all the IT

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

gadgets they often claim they feel lonely and sometimes wish to spend more free time outside.

The problem of children's non-reading, however, may be more complex than it seems and it is not possible to mark the Internet as the ultimate destroyer of their interest in books. Books are being published as e-books, with adults thinking this is the only right way to draw the children's attention by bringing them books through the media they understand and work with. In light of these trends it is obvious the adult perspectives about what makes an appealing read for kids may need to evolve. Thus, this review of the literature highlights the dichotomy between *authorized* reading materials and *actual* reading materials preferred by children. The adults write the books for children, the adults in schools choose the readings, the adults choose the books to be published, and the adults illustrate the books. But does the vision of children really fulfil their expectations? The main purpose of books is varying from entertainment to education; hence the grown-up element is sought-after while considering the educational aspect of books. (Davila and Patrick, 2010)

Yet the books for children are reviewed by the adults without any regards to children's opinion, which may be the core of the misunderstanding. Knowing children's and juvenile literature is without doubt the integral part of being a good publisher/ teacher/ reviewer etc., but it is just a half of the very difficult job, whereas the second half is maybe the trickier one. The knowledge of children's habits, interests, points of view, expectations is the core, which helps adults to understand children's real reading preferences. Children and juvenile readers cannot be influenced by fantastic reviews or prize-winning aspects of books; they austere seek and judge books by different aspects such as mystics, mystery, humour, and adventure etc. Another factor worth to be taken into the consideration is the limitation of sources; children sometimes prefer different genres, but are forced to choose some books which are accessible, without the choice actually reflecting their preferences. Sometimes it is just a virtue of necessity and they would like to read a different kind of books, but are pushed to pick a different author only because he or she is available in the public or school library. The survey which took place in 2004 organized by the literal scientists Strommen and Mates and also Scholastic Kids and Family Reading Report from

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

2008, both in USA, revealed inter alia that the children's preferences are actually limited by the available range of books, which is corresponding with their interests.

For example, in surveying 151 sixth and ninth graders in the vicinity of a major northeastern U.S. city, Strommen and Mates (2004) found that many "non-readers" became ambivalent toward reading between the ages of 9 and 11 because they could no longer find reading material that interested them. (Strommen and Mates, 2004) The results of the Scholastic research from 2008, which surveyed 501 children between the ages of 5 and 17, revealed that 55% of the children agree with the statement: "There aren't enough really good books for boys/girls my age" (Scholastic, 2008, p. 14).

Considering these facts the conclusion can be made that with children growing up without the books they prefer, they can easily become non-readers simply because of the lack of books which draw their interest. Therefore the surveys about the children's and juvenile preferences should have more weight in the compilations of recommended books.

Children's Reading Habits in English speaking countries

The research made by Clark and Foster in 2005 under the patronage of National Literacy Trust was dealing with children's and young people's reading habits and preferences. They questioned 8000 pupils and students in England in order to explain why some of the children choose not to read while others read for pleasure. The key findings have been written in general, but also have been divided into groups by gender and age.

Above all the key findings, the one seems more interesting than others; 80% of respondents stated that it was their mother, who had taught them to read, followed by the teachers and their fathers. It was also their mother who was encouraging them to read more often; whereas a quarter of respondents answered they have never seen their father reading a book. Another surprising fact is that the fifth of pupils has not read at all, while they did not have the feeling they should change it.

For the information concerning USA, the main source was an overall summary 'What Kids Are Reading 2013' (see Appendix C), published by Renaissance Learning, which is according to their own description written on their web-sites 'a world leader in

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

cloud-based assessment, teaching, and learning solutions with over 900 employees and customers in over one-third of U.S. schools and more than 60 countries worldwide' (renaissance learning, n. d.). They have examined overall reading habits and preferences in classes 1-12 for the 2012, while they have had the unique software which quizzes the children about the books they have read and also marks and analyses the books according to their difficulty level.

The results for the classes 5-8 are not as surprising as it may have seemed. The first position of 5 and 6 Grade's list is occupied by the book from Diary of a Wimpy Kid series. As the interesting fact could be stated that books from Diary of a Wimpy Kid series occupy five of top ten positions in both lists; altogether with The Hunger Games series, Gary Paulsen's *Hatchet* and Loise Lowry's "Number the Stars". The 7 Grade list is very much the same, only enriched by S. E. Hinton's *Outsiders* and *Number the Stars* swapped with *The Giver* by the same author. There are no major differences between girls' and boys' preferences. Finally, the top ten positions of 8 Grade list contain some of the classic literature works, such as E. A. Poe's 'The Tell-Tale Heart', a book from *Heroes of Olympus* series written by Rick Riordan, and also a play "Diary of Anne Frank" dramatized by Frances Goodrich. (Farr, 2013, p. 8-24)

After spending a little time searching the Internet, it is possible to find a similar summary, "What Kids Are Reading 2014" (see Appendix D), where 2000 British schools were examined in an independent research, made by Professor Keith Topping, Professor of Educational and Social Research, School of Education, University of Dundee, under the Renaissance Learning. The most alarming revelation of this study is that the group of pupils and students, reading books under their real age came into being. They have had problems with the secondary transfer even with the highly motivating books. Also the unpleasant result of boys' frivolity and inactiveness emerged, as they preferred to choose easier books than they should have chosen.

There occurred the problem connected to dealing with high-ability readers as well as with the struggling one leaving both groups highly under-challenged and underestimated. This finding is related to librarians' and teachers' responsibilities to figure out the better approach. (Topping, 2014, p. 26 - 28)

Children's literature in the Czech Republic

The latest research related to books for children announced the same result as the English ones. Reading as a source of a pleasant free-time activity marked almost 50 % of present young audience which appears to be a positive result; however it still is a drop from the last research focused on children and juvenile reading made in 2003.

Due to the continuing drop in reading for the last twenty years, the unique project "Celé Česko čte dětem" (Every Czech reads to children, n.d.) has been established with only one aim to bring the attention back to books and reading. Some of the latest academic articles suggest reading as the best way of thoughts, logic and other skill development, with the children who have been exposed to literature from their early childhood have better vocabulary and even better mathematical and logic thinking than the children who were not read to. Fairy tales provide a wide range of life situations and usual expressions; therefore it is desirable to read them to children. However, the film adaptations do not have the same effect. Some experts and psychologist presume the well-read pupils are becoming more distant from the others, while the average non-reading children probably absent themselves from the successful development along with the more talented ones. "Every Czech Reads to Kids", originated out of the recognition that, as a society, we must reinforce the deep importance of reading aloud to children both in terms of their emotional development as well as forming the habit of reading, and continuing it into their adult lives. Both researchers and teachers agree that regular reading aloud teaches a child language and thought, develops memory and imagination, enriches knowledge, sharpens moral reasoning, strengthens concentration, defends against the dangers of mass culture, and strengthens self-confidence (Every Czech reads to children, n.d.).

Concerning the genres, the fantasy literature also predominates in reading of the Czech children, with *The Twilight Saga* as the long-term bestseller together with Joan Kathleen Rowling's *Harry Potter* series and Christopher Paolini's *Eragon* series. According to a survey which took place last year with Every Czech reads to children cooperation, children still love *Harry Potter* series, the problem in the Czech Republic is the books are considered the unnecessary luxury, whereas *Harry Potter* series belongs to the most expensive and longer ones. (Every Czech reads to children, 2013) However, as the phenomenon of today's children reading can be seen *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series, the realistic novels written by the American author and cartoonist Jeff Kinney. A series has a

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

form of a journal of the main character, Greg Hefley. *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series is the most popular particularly in the group of 9 – 13 years old children, but older children also like the series and do not deny reading it.

The results of a survey examining *The favourite book of children* in 2012 through three groups (children, librarians, teachers) revealed that the favourite book of the 2012 was the fifth book from *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series, which won the children's category, the survey also pointed out *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* being the most read book of the year, followed by *Inheritance* from the *Eragon* series written by Ch. Paolini.

Reading habits of the Czech children

The most alarming problem connected to reading in general is the fact children consider books as a very time and also mind-demanding activity, whereas watching a movie, TV series or just simply playing a video game is not so difficult; especially with reference to their schedules. Children come home from school usually at three o'clock, sometimes they also have some free-time activities and they just feel overwhelmed with commitments, therefore some passive forms of relaxation are required and desirable.

Therefore, while starting reading at school, a teacher should attract children as much as possible by preparing a discussion about the readers and reading habits in general. Kratochvílová (2010) in her article within the project Reading Literacy advises that it is good to allure pupils' attention pointing out reading is a normal everyday activity they can see everywhere. Pupils or students should at first characterise an average reader; what does he or she read (books, magazines, blogs), when does he or she read, where can be books possibly obtained etc. The probable responses would be that readers visit school and public libraries, where it is possible to borrow books and magazines, they do read almost everywhere when there is time for such activity; pupils could also mention reading habits of their families, about how they read with parents or grandparents and siblings if they have any. Another important fact concerning books and readers is that the readers recommend the books to each other, are talking about the plots and main ideas they caught during reading.

There have been several surveys dealing with the issues of children's reading habits. One of them took place in 2002 and was processed by Gabal Analysis &

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

Consulting, for the exact figures, see Appendix A. The uniqueness of this research lies in the methodology; the questioning has been implemented in the children's homes not schools, with the interviewer talking face-to-face with the readers. Nevertheless, the research arched over the results of 1094 children in the age of 10-14 years, dealing with the frequency of reading, the number of books read, and the popularity of contemporary book titles. Concerning the results related to the purposes of the thesis, there were 7% of children spending several hours a day reading, 21% of children reading at least a couple of minutes every day; all the other children stated they have usually read at least one book per month, not unfrequently even more. Overall the results could be summarized as followed: the majority of children read, the minority, approximately 29% of children did not read at all although there were not many children who could be considered for mature readers, for those who could there were primarily girls, who were capable of reading two or more books per month.

The survey also revealed girls read more than boys, whereas the reading depends on a time, or to be more specific, children read when they are bored. Some of the children do not know whether there is a school library accessible or not, they do not even know where the town library is. On the other hand the Czech homes are perceived as the very good supplied source of classic books and many Czech people are used to visit public libraries as well.

Regarding the sources of children's reading they mainly read magazines (approximately 80% of them). As for the selection of books, children without any considerable differences made by age mainly chose these which correspond with their interests alias books read for fun; the second place took the ones from school-required reading. And again girls were the ones reading more books in general. However, the important problem of reading habits contained the negative effect of school-required reading. Some children have felt demotivated for their own reading because of the inappropriate book selection which did not correspond with their own preferences. On the other hand these have in the most cases been the involuntary readers who were not willing to read anything else except the magazines or web-sites.

The research also examined the genres prevailing in children's preferences, namely in the first group aged 10-11 years the favourite genres were adventures, books about nature, fairy tales and tales. In the next category aged 12-14, the difference between boys'

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

and girls' preferences starts to be very striking, because the girls' interest in love stories originates in this age, while boys are interested in tales and adventures yet. The main issue of genre diversification is that children and teenagers do not distinguish the genres themselves, because they do not think it is important for their reading. The only considerable factor is whether the book is entertaining or not. The experts classify most of the favourite books as fantasy or adventure literature, which brings us to another phenomenon of present literature.

The era of fantasy literature

Let us focus on a common denominator of the present children's and teenagers' preferences. In accordance with the latest research, Scholastic Kids and Family Reading Report from 2008 exploring the reading preferences, the fantasy literature predominates in every country, not just the English speaking ones. The juvenile fantasy is the specific part of children's literature. It has fantasy elements but it is mainly the fantasy intended for readers not yet adults. The protagonists are usually children or teens who have unique abilities, gifts, possessions or even allies that allow them to face powerful adversaries and fight all the obstacles they can meet on their way.

The Scholastic Reading Report (2008) confirming children and teenagers prefer fantasy literature also reflects the present situation. Children and Juvenile readers prefer fantasy literature from various reasons, some of them may be the possibility of having a look into completely different world, with its own laws and peculiarities and heroes they can easily identify with because of the bravery or purity of their characters and behaviour.

This is connected with the rising popularity of book series. Children and teenagers like to buy books in series or at least written by the same author, which might be caused by the familiarity with the background information and characters or the image they already have which makes the story more eligible for them, thus they like to stay with the series or author as long as it is possible or as long as the plot still attracts them, as was already mentioned in some articles in newspapers, for example by Allison Flood in The Guardian.

Illustrating the appeal of fantasy and books from series there are results of BBC's survey of 266 fourth- and fifth-grade British students, who were asked whether there was one book or experience that first interested them in reading. In the answers J. K. Rowling's

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

Harry Potter series, R. L. Stine's *Goosebumps*, and Alvin Schwartz's *Scary Stories*, were most frequently cited (Ujiie & Krashen, 2002).

Mentioning J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter*, this book series has had the unique position among the other fantasy books and series. *Harry Potter* has been a phenomenon of the last decade's teenagers' childhood; it began in 1997 in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and soon spread to all of the English speaking countries, where everyone fell in love with it, children and also adults. *Harry Potter* became the first book series in a very long time which has captured the attention of crowd. The effect of *Harry Potter* was seen everywhere. The next wave came with the movies in 2001, when *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* was released and immediately became a blockbuster. Children wanted to know the story, and therefore parents were obliged to buy them the subsequent books from the series, even though they did not want to read it before seeing the first movie. Newspapers all around the world were full of articles about the miraculous book which has brought the attention of children and teenagers back to reading and to books in general.

As the proof of *Harry Potter* success, there are numbers from BBC's article on *Harry Potter* sales figures telling the series occupies the first five positions in the all-time best-sellers chart with approximately 450 million copies sold, with the number still growing. And there is yet another first position for *Harry Potter*, it is in first day sells of the last book from the series – *Harry Potter and Deathly Hallows* with 15 million copies sold. Among the other books from the chart worth to mention is *Lord of the Rings* by J. R. R. Tolkien with 100 million copies sold. (BBC's *Harry Potter* sale's figures, n. d.) To complete the final data, New York Times article mentioned that *Harry Potter* series occupied the first position of the best-selling lists for more than ten years, until 2008 which was the year after publishing of the series' last book *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. (Garner, 2008)

Another interesting fact connected to the *Harry Potter* phenomenon is that some of *Harry Potter* fan fiction authors have been finally encouraged to write their own fantasy books or even series. They all started to publish their own stories after publishing of the seventh *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* book. This group contains for example controversial Cassandra Clare with *The Mortal Instruments* series which is sometimes

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

recommended to young adult literature readers and teenagers. The series has its own film adaptation which was not positively received by either critics or viewers; fans of the series loved it, though.

The fantasy books are also represented in the UK society Booktrust (cooperates with schools and libraries) which has been promoting books, reading and writing for more than 90 years. In the list of recommended books “100 books children should read before turning fourteen”, There are classic books, such as *Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* written by J.R.R. Tolkien, but also some newer ones, i.e. *Hunger Games* series by Suzanne Collins, *The Graveyard Book* written by Neil Gaiman or dystopic *Maggot Moon* by Sally Gardner.

Concerning the ‘non-fantasy’ books, the list contains *The Curious Incident of The Dog in the Night-time* written by Mark Haddon. The book is according to editor’s note: ‘Seen through the eyes of Christopher, a mathematical genius and Sherlock Holmes fan, who also has Asperger’s syndrome’, which brings us to another phenomenon of the present children’s literature, namely the specific families of contemporary book heroes being very different from their predecessors.

The typical family of a contemporary book hero. In the previous decades and even centuries, children’s and juvenile books had the common denominator – orphans. Kimball (1999) writes that orphanhood symbolizes the isolation humans have from each other and from the society. (Kimball, 1999, p. 559) They were very popular from the very dawn of the children’s literature among both, authors and readers. The main supporting reason for that may be the fact that the orphanhood has rendered many options connected to growing up, one of which could be the option of a clean slate without parents to turn them either to good or evil side, with experiencing many adventures and dangerous situations. They embody the hope that whatever the present situation, it can change for the better (Kimball, 1999, p. 559).

Either there were some severe, mean relatives who caused a lot of troubles, difficulties and injustice, namely it was particularly women - aunts, who were the diabolic architects of disasters. Or the heroes lived in orphanages, where all the cruel aunts were replaced by cruel governesses. Nevertheless, all the main characters have grown up and

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

became better people despite, or perhaps because of all the obstacles and the burden of being an orphan.

The orphans have not gone away, though, they still exist in the present literature for children, for example Harry Potter, Eragon etc. However the orphanhood is not the main pillar of the story, it is more likely the catalyst of the events leading to the main plot as it is possible to look at orphans from two sides. Some cultures see the orphanhood as a burden, which cannot be taken off for the rest of one's life while others believe orphans have to be protected at every cost.

The typical family in contemporary books is very different. The orphans with orphanages are replaced with families more similar to the real ones, although a little bit twisted. The writers simply needed to create new options, whereas present families present a lot of them. There are often divorced or single parents, who are not talking to each other even when it is possible. Simply how the divorce of parents affects not only the adults, but hurts also children, even more than the parents can possibly imagine. There are many uncomfortable situations and obstacles children and teenagers have to fight and deal with.

As the example of books dealing with the theme of divorced parents Anne Fine's *Crummy Mummy and me*, *Goggle-Eyes*, *Alias Madame Doubtfire* could be mentioned. The mother in *Crummy Mummy and me* is a punk, irresponsible lady, who is not capable to take care of the normal everyday things, therefore she and her daughter swapped. This book is particularly good when pointing out children's bad behaviour. The other two books are dealing with the topic of divorce, as well. There is presented how divorce affects children at home, school, problems with step-parents and new partners of their parents, p. e. the mother's new boyfriend Gerald, nicknamed 'Goggle-Eyes'.

As a supporting argument of the abovementioned fact the fantasy and dystopic literature predominating above all the other genres, it is possible to emphasize the difference. The fantasy literature is typical for its supernatural creatures, characters, adventures, and events. The family full of hidden witches, wizards, vampires, or other supernatural creatures is not an exception; furthermore the revelation is not unfrequently a prologue to the actual plot. Normal families, at the first sight, are challenged with

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

something extraordinary, for example, vampires, werewolves or witches in the neighbourhood.

The Psychological aspect of the fantasy literature preference. With the increasing popularity of fantasy literature, the questions about the success begin to arise. What is the main reason of this popularity? Why are the supernatural creatures so attractive? Is there any particular character trait which makes all the witches, vampires, werewolves etc. so desirable and admirable? With the rising number of questions, the psychologists rushed to provide some rational solutions.

Teen readers have always been fascinated and draught to monsters, however, it seems nowadays young adult literature is basically only about the supernatural creatures. The reality of supernatural creatures as soft spots for readers has been the part of literature from its very dawn. Every culture has the very own stories and tales about bloodthirsty creatures whose prays are always humans, in some cultures the vampires are particularly focused on purity-symbolizing children. Dr Bodart in her work *They Suck, They Bite, They Eat, They Kill: The Psychological Meaning of Supernatural Monsters in Young Adult Fiction* (2012) mentioned that vampires could be divided into three well-arranged categories as follows: the modern vampire, created by Ann Rice in The Vampire Chronicles series; the classic vampire created by Bram Stoker; and finally the folkloric vampire as described above. (p. 7)

If we intend to examine the reasons for loving the supernatural creatures, now focused on vampires, we will have to omit the third category, the folkloric vampire, as this group does not have its representative in any of the best-selling books which main characters are supernatural creatures. As a predecessor of the modern vampires, Stoker's *Dracula* can be seen as a true example of the Byronic hero. However, the factor which we have to take into the consideration while focusing on the vampires is that there are major differences in their depicting. The vampires in the adult literature are often described as dangerous, scary and sometimes seductive; on the other hand the ones in the children and juvenile literature are friendlier, as we can see in the *Bunnicula* series by James and Deborah Howe. (Bodart, 2012, p. 8-10)

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

This can bring us to the fact the society does not see anything bad about having interest in vampires, because they permeate the literature from the beginning. Concerning the attractiveness of supernatural creatures itself, based on research, adolescents mark as the four most impressive characteristics particularly power, self-identity, marginality and sexuality (Bodart, 2012, p. 14). Bodart in her book refers to Ericson, who explains this especial attraction to adolescents' self-identity development and definition which is proceeding in this stage of humans' life and if it did not finish, it could affect the rest of their lives. The adolescents simply see the vampires as their exact opposite with their self-confidence, knowing exactly who they are and what they want.

Dr Vranich (2010) in her article about why do people love vampires, writes about the possibility teenagers worship vampires because they embody things every teenager would die for. Although they are alone, vampires are never lonely, which is the feeling almost every human being feels time after time; teenagers are scared of being alone, not to be accepted into the group of schoolmates, into a sport team. Today's children and teenagers are simply scared of being lonely despite the fact they have hundreds of friends via social networks. The second point of admiring supernatural creatures is connected with their power. They do not need to rely on gadgets, bullets or hi-tech outfits; supernatural creatures are powerful on their own with very few things to hurt them. People are essentially very vulnerable; therefore they look up to these anti-heroes with desire to be as strong as the vampires are. Some of the other arguments are that vampires are always good-looking persons, which is, especially for teenagers the crucial personal trait and the last worth to mention fact is the vampires and other supernatural creatures are simply the archetype of "bad boys" or Byronic heroes, who are especially attractive for women of all age, although they also have emotional part of themselves, as can be seen in Twilight series by Stephanie Meyer. (Vranich, 2010)

There are some more articles dealing with the theme of loving supernatural creatures. Concerning the vampires, it is also worth to mention people are fascinated by their immortality. Almost every human being is worried about his or her life to end; people are obsessed with their own mortality and aging, whereas vampires do not suffer either of these qualities. As a teenager, the whole world is very unfriendly place full of unpleasant surprises, therefore they are seeking a completely different world, where the problems of

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

the real one are diminished, and with all the supernatural creatures either not aging at all, or aging slowly (werewolves in many books are looking younger than they really are and have the ability of quick-healing, similar to the one vampires have, for example in the series *Women of the Otherworld* by Kelley Armstrong or werewolves in *Vampire Diaries* series by L. J. Smith).

And as the final argument may be stated the diversity between an average human and average supernatural creature, with vampires, witches, werewolves so different and having the world on their own, with its dark sides and peculiarities that children, teenagers, and even adults must find them attractive.

The connection between books and movies

The affection these two have on each other is undeniable. For better orientation it is better to start mentioning the positive facts about the relationship these two have and their affection to crowd. The film adaptation serves as a transfer of a written work into a motion picture. According to Britannica, the definition of a film adaptation is as follows:

‘A common form of film adaptation is the use of a novel as the basis of a feature film. Other works adapted into films include non-fiction (including journalism), autobiography, comic books, scriptures, plays, historical sources, and even other films. From the earliest days of cinema, in nineteenth-century Europe, adaptation from such diverse resources has been a ubiquitous practice of film-making.’ (Film Adaptation, n.d.)

Thanks to book series and their film siblings, many people wonder what is going to happen next and buy the sequels to know the story before the next movie comes out, as it can be seen within the present best-seller – *The Hunger Games* series, which popularity is rising steeply altogether with the movies because even the children, teenagers and adults who never had an intention to read it were curious about the plot and its outcome, therefore they have bought the book series.

The next positive effect movies have to the audience is that they are capable of bringing the attention back to the classics in literature. For example movies based on Jane Austen’s novels or Bronte sisters novels, seen by men although they would have probably

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

never wanted to read or know the story and the plot. However, after seeing the movie they eventually read the other books with often liking them, although they would never have such intention before. It is also worth to mention some adaptations awake the interest in the book series whereas the books themselves have not been successful after their publishing. As the example can be used nowadays famous series *The Vampire Diaries* written by Lisa Jane Smith, with the first volume published in 1991, but reaching the massive achievement in 2009 when The CW Television Network ordered a television series named *The Vampire Diaries*, based on the series. With the success the television series had L. J. Smith decided to write more books in the series and even very similar one called *The secret circle*, dealing with the theme of witchcraft and equally having the own TV show. The TV series nowadays can be used as the eye-openers; the books are written in very long series we do not have even names for, while the film adaptations have quietly and almost unnoticed become TV shows with many seasons.

Concerning the negatives, the most obvious and the most common one is simply the fact that some people (regardless of age) prefer to watch a movie instead reading the book thinking they will know the story notwithstanding the problem of condensed storyline, often simplified or even changed, because a film adaptation is not obligated to be in accordance with the book till the last word of it. Another disadvantage of a film adaptation is connected with the comprehensiveness of a movie. It is not possible to embrace all of the psychological aspects leading to a character's behaviour and motives in the movie, even though it is divided into two or more parts, as could be seen in the latest adaptation of Tolkien's *Hobbit* or the last Harry Potter book, which became the two-parted movie and still was not complete. The film adaptation can never be equal to the book; it is simply the different media and sometimes it depicts almost unlike story.

III METHODS

In this chapter the procedure and methods applied during the research are presented; as well as the results of two surveys made to complete the thesis. As it has already been stated in the previous chapters, the research part of this diploma thesis examines both the reading preferences and habits of contemporary Czech children, seen from the children's and teenagers' point of view, and also from the librarians'. The research tools are conveyed by the description of an experiment concerning the reading of authentic texts. The research part of this chapter is divided into three sections; the first section is dedicated to the research which took part in the several public libraries, providing the author the information about the contemporary Czech children's most often borrowings, focused mainly on the English-written literature, but also with regard to foreign and Czech literature, as well. Its main purpose was to either to verify or disprove the results written in all the aforementioned science articles and newspapers. The research itself was conducted in the several libraries across the Czech Republic,

The second section of the research part describes the children's own preferences according to the second research tool chosen, namely a questionnaire (see Appendix E), examining the books they have read, their favourite book heroes and also the book they would never read. The results of this part have been processed in the forms of graphs. The last part of this chapter is dedicated to an experiment which took place in the time of the author's teaching practice. Its main purpose was to examine whether it is possible to bring the children's attention through the authentic texts from English written books for children and teenagers to reading in general.

The author's own research – Interview

As it has been already started, the first part of the research consisted of interviewing the librarians in the several Czech libraries, namely in the public libraries of Karlovy Vary, Žatec, Plzeň, and Ostrava. As the primary research tool the interview was chosen, whereas the communication itself was preceded mainly via e-mails. The questions which I wanted answers on were as follows: What books are the most popular for children aged 10-15? Do the children and teenagers also borrow some books for adults? What is the average number of borrowed books to one child or teenager per month? Who borrows

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

books more; boys or girls? I have chosen the questions which corresponded with the results from the latest surveys and academic articles hence I could compare the results with the theoretical assumptions and background information.

The author's own research – Questionnaires

The questionnaires were designed after the first part of the research took place, using its results together with the charts published in the latest research and the lists of recommended books. The questionnaire consisted of 20 book titles which were not sorted alphabetically because I intended children would have to read the whole list in order to find, for example *The Hunger Games trilogy* or *The Chronicles of Narnia*. The last line was dedicated to other books they have read but were not listed. Then the three questions connected to their preferences followed.

The first question was related to the film adaptations because I predicted there would be children or adolescents who did not read any books but they did see the movies. The second question was examining their favourite character and the third question was asking whether there is a book they would never want to read.

Conditions and participants. From the very beginning I wanted to carry out the research concerning the reading preferences in the time of my practical teaching training. The practical teaching training itself took place in February 2014 at the 26th Elementary School in Pilsen. The reason I intended to carry out the research this way have been simple; I wanted to know at least some of the respondents just a little as it was then easier to estimate whether they are lying or not. The questionnaires were given to children attending the 26th Elementary School during their English lessons, whereas the research embraced the pupils of sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth classes, to cover the category of 10-15 years which I marked as the focus group. As the supervising teacher allowed me to dedicate a part of some lessons to the research I could give the questionnaires to the pupils of 6th to 9th classes I taught and the teacher even proposed me the option of giving the questionnaires to the pupils I was not teaching. Thanks to this effort I have been able to examine and analyse the results from a heterogeneous group of children who filled in the questionnaires.

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

As the questionnaires were written in English I had to help the respondents to realize whether they knew the book or not. Therefore I wrote the list of twenty books and their Czech translations on the blackboard, and I was answering their questions related to the questionnaires as they were filling in their answers.

The author's own research – Experiment

The most difficult and demanding task connected to the research was the experiment examining the possibility of catching the children's and the teenagers' attention through the parts of authentic texts. The excerpts from *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, and a classic fairy-tale – 'Three Little Pigs' were used for this purpose (see Appendices F and G). The collateral aim of the experiment was to examine whether the children appreciate the authentic texts more than texts in their textbooks used in the sections dedicated to extensive reading. These seem to be very unpopular; often using some modulated classic texts or the texts with some educational value, whereas children and teenagers find them too complicated and boring.

Conditions and participants. The third part of my research took place in two schools. The first one was the same school and the experiment was carried out by the same conditions as the previous one, i.e. on the 26th Elementary School in Pilsen within the frame of my practical teaching training. The second school was the 13th Elementary School in Pilsen, and the experiment itself took its course within the frame of my first practical teaching training.

The first text I planned to use was the classic fairy tale – 'Three Little Pigs'. I wanted to start with the easier text for many reasons; one of them was the length of the first teaching practice, because it is impossible to consider all the pupils' mental and cognitive skills or their strengths and weaknesses. Nevertheless, I insisted on working with the authentic texts which I was willing to modify only minimally, therefore I had to consider which classes should take part in the experiment very wisely. At the end I decided for the 6th class from the 13th Elementary School. The substantiation is very simple; the 6th class lies on the imaginary edge of childhood. They have become teenagers but they are still very playful and natural like children, thus the probability of them enjoying the fairy-tale is high and their language level should be developed enough to let them understand the story without major difficulties after some pre-reading activities.

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

The class itself was heterogeneous; there were 21 pupils – 10 boys, 11 girls. As the supervising teacher told me the pupils in all classes have problems with reading. They did not want to read aloud, they were very nervous from this kind of activities; I hoped the lesson containing the fairy-tale they know could encourage them for further reading.

The second text I planned to use needed more delicate approach. As I have chosen the excerpt from the first book of *Harry Potter* series, i.e. *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* I needed to make sure the text would not be too difficult for the pupils. This is particularly the reason I picked the 9th class from the 26th Elementary School whose language skills and knowledge should be developed enough to manage the text. The 9th graders' class was also heterogeneous, with 15 pupils – 8 boys and 7 girls. While deciding about picking this particular class I was counting on the fact they would probably know the Czech translation of the book or they have seen the movies at least. Therefore it would be interesting for them to compare the Czech translations to original words.

Preparation of the lesson. Before the main implementation of the reading, I announced to the pupils the next lesson would be special, with no course books or exercise books. I only asked them to bring English-Czech and Czech-English dictionaries as there would probably be some unknown words.

Reading of the classic fairy-tale demanded firstly a copy of the fairy-tale for everyone in the classroom, secondly a worksheet with the questions and vocabulary. The preparation itself was not so difficult, as I knew the number of the students and their language skills. Therefore it was possible for me to modify the tasks so they would be suitable for the children.

Concerning the excerpt from the book, more delicate approach had to be chosen, because in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* some special and newly-invented words have occurred. Therefore I had to prepare worksheets related to the excerpt containing inter alia vocabulary section where I have written the trickiest words and their explanation or translation. Despite this fact, English-Czech and Czech-English dictionaries needed to be available for all the children, even though some schools demand them to bring their own ones to every English lesson. I prepared both the excerpt and the worksheet at home and then I was permitted to photocopy these for the children, as it was necessary to have a copy for everyone.

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

Application in the lesson. We are going to start with the reading of a classic fairy tale. Before the main reading, we discussed the facts we knew about the story itself so we could later compare the differences. Then the reading of the classic fairy-tale story took its turn with the pupils underlining words they did not know for the subsequent work with new vocabulary. Knowing the plot from the Czech version of the fairy-tale proved to be very useful as it was not so difficult for the pupils to guess the meaning of unknown words, also it allowed the children to discuss the appropriate differences between the Czech and English versions. The next step was the dramatization of the fairy tale when all the pupils could take part in and truly enjoyed the English lesson. However it is not always possible and feasible, partly because of the material's nature, partly because of the lesson number limitation.

Concerning the *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* excerpt, we started with the discussion related to their familiarity with the book. Then we proceeded to the main reading part, anticipated by the vocabulary revision. I omitted some names on purpose as one of the post-reading tasks was to link together the original name and its Czech translation.

I intended every pupil in the classroom to read as they all had problems with reading aloud and the excerpt was not very long. Skimming the text before the main reading proved itself well as it encouraged the children in reading aloud because they familiarized with the text and were not so nervous anymore. After the reading part, the pupils were expected to fill the worksheets so we could all check them together in the end and discuss the answers.

IV RESULTS AND COMMENTARIES

This chapter is dedicated to the result and commentaries related to the research conducted in the elementary school and focused on the reading habits and preferences of the contemporary Czech children. According to the author's research, the Czech children read fewer books than they used to in previous years. It all can be proven through the aforementioned facts, findings, and research results children in general read less than they used to before, as it has all been described in previous chapter which paragraphs sourced from the previous surveys, which took part in previous decade, and also from the latest available ones. It is possible the movie-making industry has its hand in it, because they prefer to see the movie instead of reading the story as a book. Probably it is caused by the time-saving reasons. Sometimes they first chose to see the movie, later they read the book, so they could compare. But the opinions considering this as the only right way how to proceed compete with the ones maintaining the opposite view. Some experts stand for the idea of a movie as the attention bringer. The common opinion is to agree, but from my personal experience, some of the children just pretend they have read the book, although they just know the simplified or even different story of the movie, possibly to be proven by simple questions about characters and their motives. All the paediatricians, psychologists and academic experts in their articles claim the reading of books cannot be omitted in the children's growing up and it is especially parents' responsibility to help their children with creating the positive attitude to reading and even good reading habits.

Reading preferences according to public libraries

The research results to be mentioned first are the results from the librarians' interviews. As it has already been mentioned, the research was conducted in the several public libraries exploring the real reading preferences and reading habits of the contemporary Czech children with regard to their visits of the public libraries and their most often borrowings.

As the answers were more or less the same, I decided to present the results altogether. Concerning the first question asking: 'What books are the most popular for children aged 10-15?' the answers were following: The most often borrowing is, without any doubts, J. Kinney's *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series. The book series about Gregory Heffney occupied the first position in every library I asked. The next positions only confirm the unique status the book series have nowadays. It can be proven for example by the popularity of Suzanne Collins' *Hunger Games Trilogy* which ended second or at least third in every library, followed

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

by Rachel Renee Russell's *Dork Diaries*, L. J. Smith's *Vampire Diaries*, Cassandra Clare's *Mortal Instruments*, Rick Riordan's *Percy Jackson* and *The Heroes of Olympus* series, and finally David Walliam's books, i.e. *Gangsta Granny* or *Billionaire Boy*. It is not surprising the fantasy series with romantic aspects are on top, as the answer on my fourth question examining who reads more is simple – girls. Among all these “new” series there are still all-time popular books, such as *Harry Potter* series, *The Lord of The Rings* trilogy, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, or books written by Thomas Brezina, the Austrian author who has been popular for many years now as even I can remember some of his books.

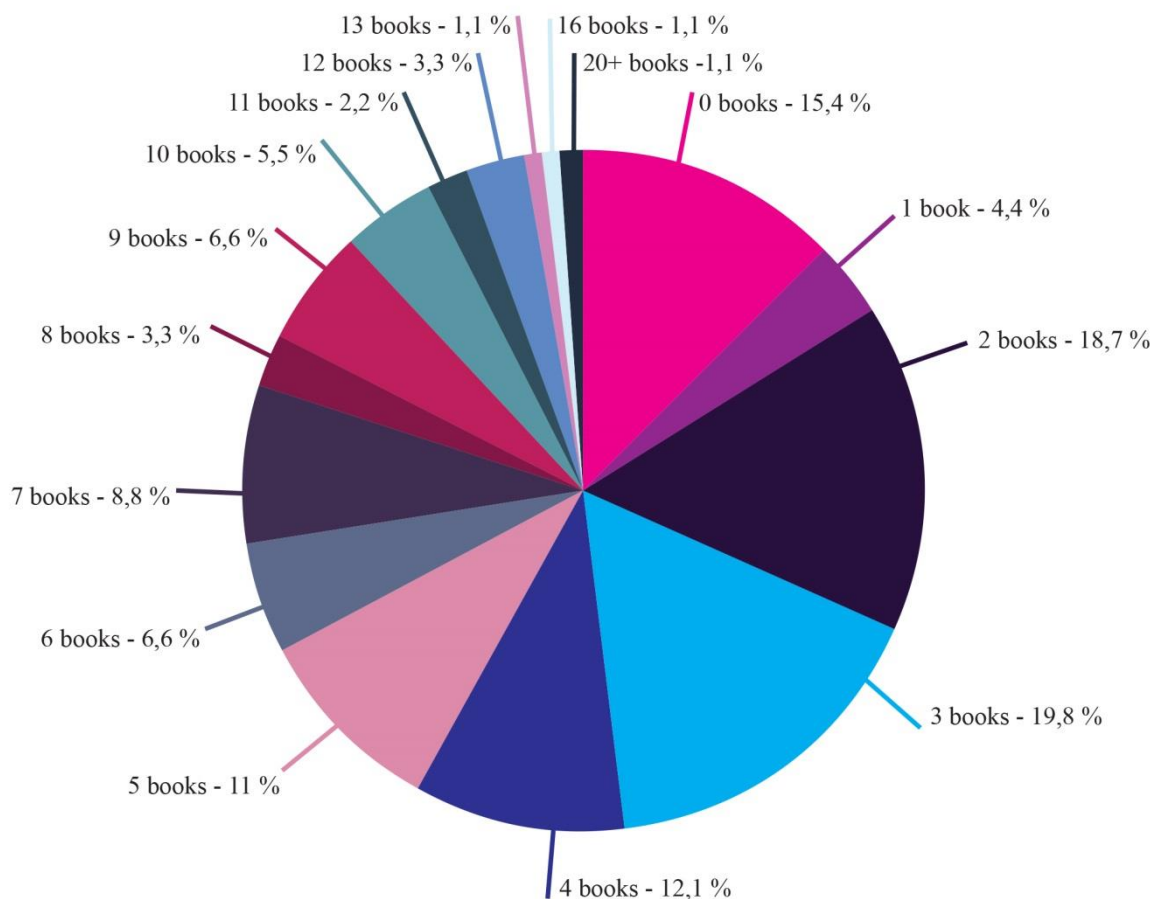
Concerning the non-English books the most borrowed ones are the Czech ones, especially Pavel Šrut's *Lichožrouti*, or *Kosprd a telecí* written by Eva Papoušková. The book *Doctor Proctor's Fart Powder* written by the Norwegian author, Jo Nesbø is also very popular among the children and teenagers aged 10-15, together with *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. This brings us to the school-required reading lists; these represent another huge group of borrowings.

Another question, asking whether the children and teenagers also borrow some books for adults was for some librarians very difficult to answer, as they are not supposed to borrow the books for adults unless it is reasoned by school. Nevertheless, I was told that it was possible with regard to some mature readers aged 14-15, as for example in Pilsen, there was possible for them to visit the department dedicated to young adults' literature. And finally, the results concerning the last question, asking: “What is the average number of borrowed books to one child or teenager per month?” were various and very divergent. To generalize the answers as much as possible, this is very difficult to consider, because the librarians' have stated that every child and teenager who visits their library have many reasons for borrowing. Therefore, they do not have the exact statistics, but according to their observations the children who borrow more books are more mature than others, and the children who later become non-readers are mainly borrowing the books from school-required reading lists.

Reading preferences according to the questionnaires

In this subchapter, the results of the questionnaires are presented in a form of five graphs. The main aim of the research was to examine whether the children and teenagers read books or not, and if they do read, the next question connected to the previous one was what books are they reading. The questionnaire was primarily focused on the books written in English, translated into Czech language, whereas the most famous and the most popular books from children’s and juvenile literature were picked, with the respondents amending the books they did not find in the list. The first graph depicts the general result of a number of the books read per a student. The graph is followed by a commentary on the results it depicts. After the first graph the other four graphs reflecting the reading preferences of the respondents (the pupils of elementary schools), all completed with the commentaries explaining or amending the important findings noticeable from the results.

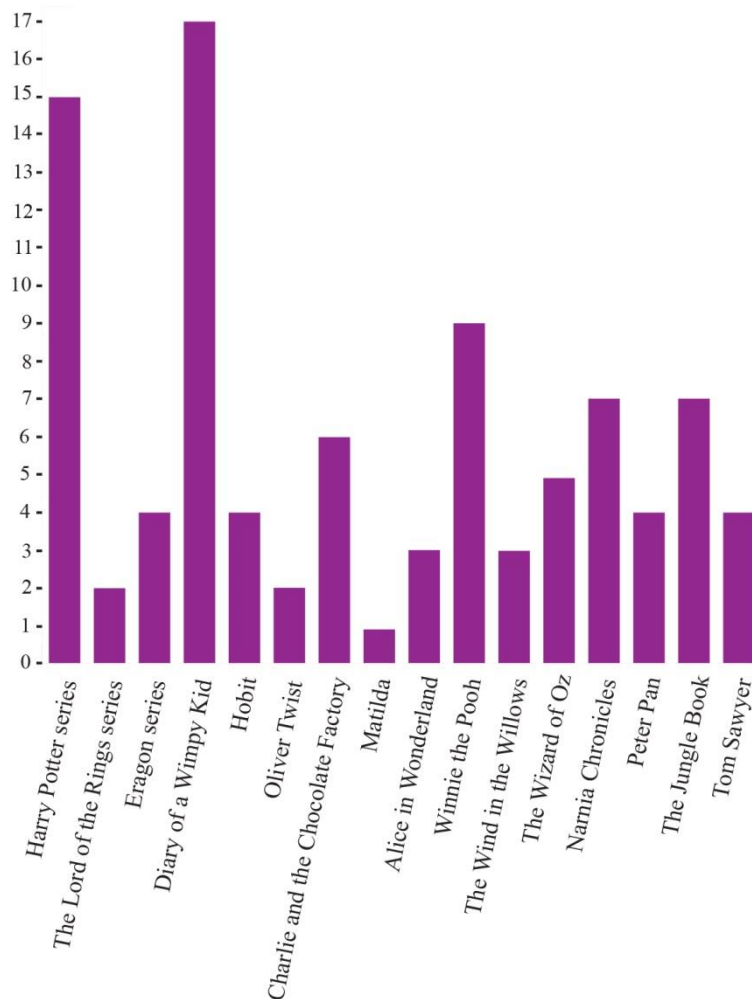
Graph 1: A number of books read per a student



Commentary on the results concerning the quantity of books

The first and also the most obvious fact I have discovered is that the children and teenagers do not read many books in general, but I find it a little bit disappointing they consider comics as books. I was expecting they would lie about the number of books they have read, and they probably did, but despite this consideration the results were unsatisfying, if we were focusing on their quantity. The children simply do not feel the need to read more books which can be seen from the graph, showing that almost one fifth of the respondents have never read a book or they have read only one book in their lives. The fact they lack the need of reading is disturbing, however the problem I find even more disturbing is that they do not see anything wrong with admitting they simply do not read and they are not willing to change it. They also do not feel ashamed of confession they have only read one or two books in their lives. Which brings us to another specific problem of this generation, namely girls read more than boys; they have always read more there is nothing wrong with it at the first glance. However, at the second one, reading a book is not unfrequently considered, especially among boys as something you should be ashamed of, something you should hide from others if you do not want to be considered as a nerd, weird outsider. Nowadays, simply reading is not the most popular hobby a child can have; they do not find it sufficiently attractive. Generally, from what they have admitted, the majority of the children and teenagers belongs to the category of 0-10 books read. On the other hand, as the positive finding can be considered the fact there are almost 10% of children and adolescents who have read more than ten books, with the boy being on the top position with the highest number of books. The objection concerning the number in relation to the school-required reading is regrettably irrelevant, as the pupils and students who do not read prefer to find summaries of the required books online, whereas the summaries available are well-elaborated so they will probably see the film adaptation of a book and then they will find the summary of the book together with its analysis. This brings us to the main aim of the questionnaires which was to explore the reading preferences of the respondents.

Graph 2: Reading preferences of the pupils in sixth classes



Commentary on the results concerning the reading preferences of the sixth classes

The most important and also the most obvious finding in this group was the Czech children, without any evident differences between boys and girls, prefer to read books in series with the main emphasis on the fantasy and adventure literature. The most popular books or rather book series are *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* together with *Harry Potter* which is the result fulfilling the expectations based on the previous surveys, best-selling books lists and latest research. Reading of classic books for children along with the best-sellers can be considered as another positive fact as these books can be regarded as the guarantee of quality reading. Possibly it is connected with these books' accessibility, because a majority of the Czech homes is well-equipped, at least concerning the children's and juvenile literature even though the books are often older, sometimes even inherited from parents.

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

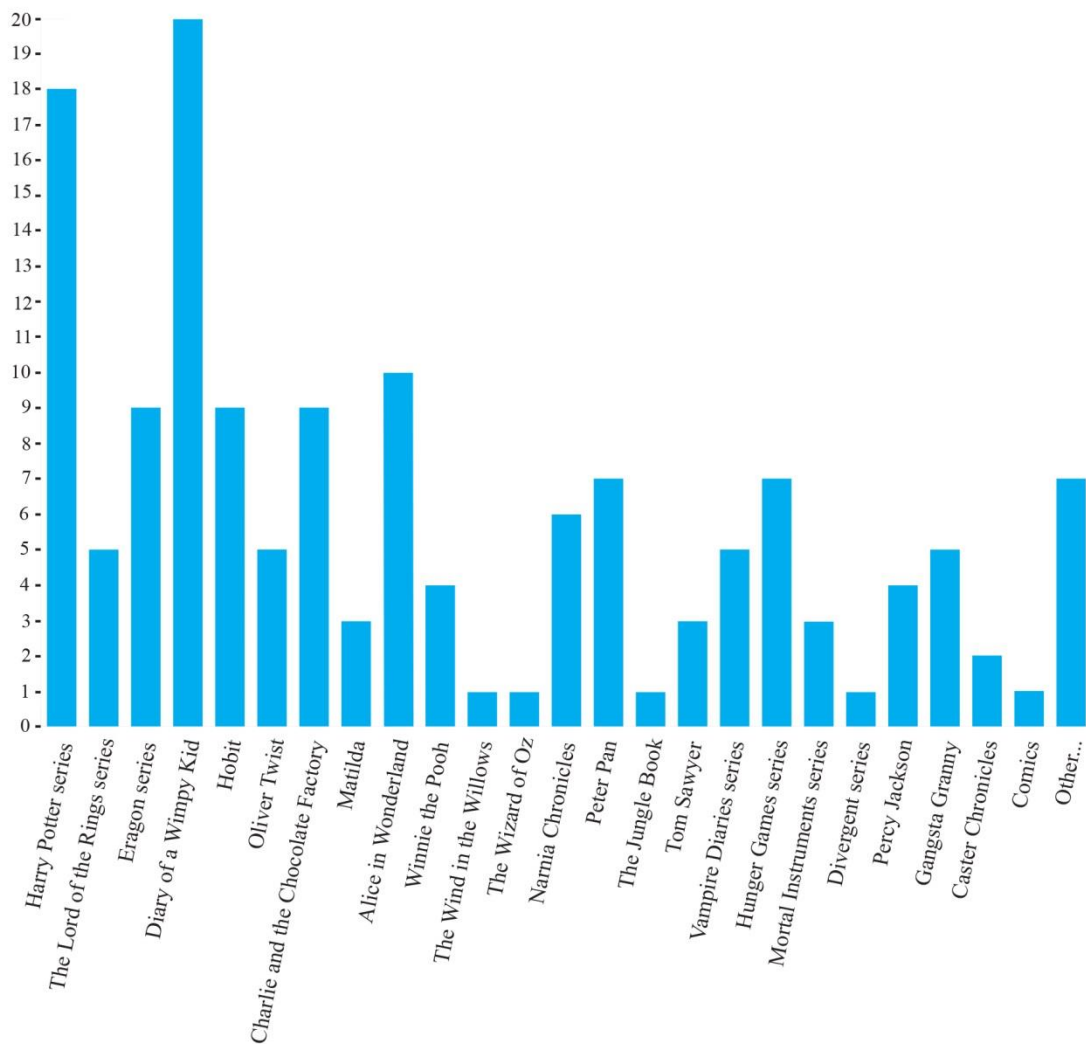
The family appears to be the integral forming factor in relation to the reading habits and preferences of children.

Concerning the favourite book heroes, the answers were as heterogeneous as possible; the most often answer were Gregory Heffley from *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series, Harry Potter together with Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger from *Harry Potter* series, but also Winnie-the-Pooh and Tiger from *Winnie-the-Pooh*. The reasons for the characters' popularity were various; from honesty, bravery or charm to loveliness or sympathy. And as for the books they mentioned as the ones they would have never read *The Lord of the Rings* was mentioned several times reasoned with the length and complexity connected with unintelligibility. However, I think this is partly caused by the indisputable complexity of the book but also partly by the existence of the film adaptation. The same can be applied on the book *Hobbit* which was also mentioned as the book they would not want to read reasoning the decision with visiting of the cinema instead.

Consequently the film adaptations were mostly mentioned by the children who have read lesser books than others. For the concrete numbers, there were two children in the sixth classes who admitted they have never read any book in their lives. Nevertheless, one of them has written he saw several film adaptations of the books presented in the list, therefore he did not feel the need to read the books. Contrariwise, the highest number of books in one questionnaire was ten and the respondent was a girl.

In the end I would like to furnish the information about the quantity of the books enlisted. The questionnaire's list consisted of more books, however with regard to the answers the books which were not mentioned by the children at least once were omitted from the graph because of the clarity.

Graph 3: Reading preferences of the pupils in seventh classes



Commentary on the results concerning the reading preferences of the seventh classes

Similarly to the previous results of sixth classes, the fantasy literature predominates in seventh classes’ preferences as well. The list of books is enriched by more nowadays popular series which is noticeable from the graph. It is obvious the respondents are willing to actively seek the books out, however the seeking is very limited by the current must-read books, i.e. the books their classmates or friends expect them to read. As for the quantity, girls have read more books, but this is the trend actual in all of the questioned classes, and I would dare to say it is also the truth regarding adults that women read more than men. Another interesting finding is that the boys’ and girls’ reading preferences start to vary in the seventh classes as the girls begin to focus on the theme of love in books. This can be simply proven by the rising frequency of *Vampire Diaries*, *Mortal Instruments* or

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

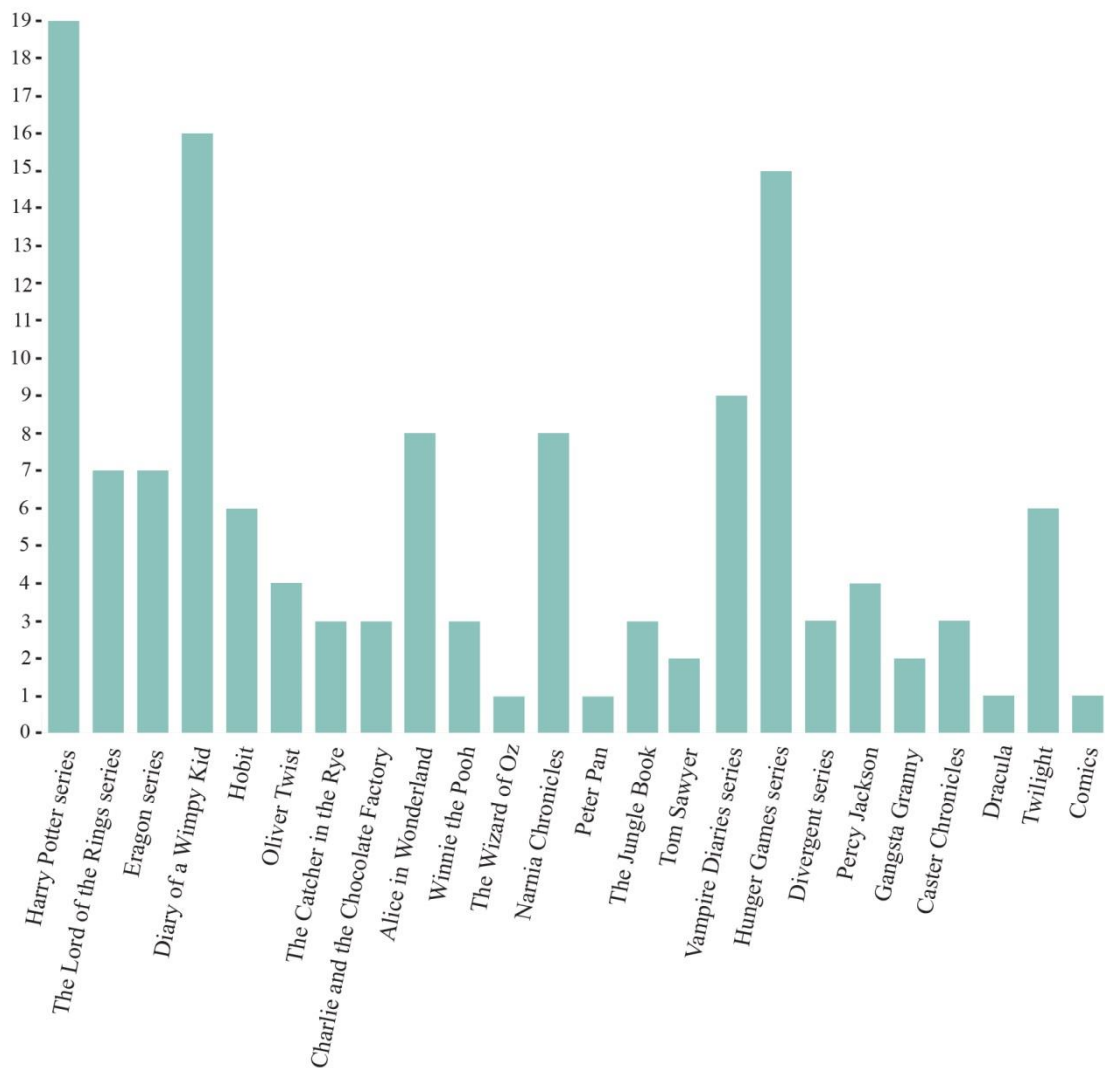
Divergent series mentioning, whereas the mentioners are only girls. If we take a closer look to the boys' preferences, they are staying in the fantasy and adventure literature now enriched with horror and scary aspects which can be seen in the popularity of the dystopic *Hunger Games* and *Divergent* series or fantasy *Peter Jackson* series. It is worth to mention these books and whole series are popular all over the world varying only in the number of the published volumes (depending on translation).

Concerning the most popular books, the results are not surprising. The most often read books are *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series on top of the list, followed by *Harry Potter* series and Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. David Walliams' best-selling *Gangsta Granny* occurred several times, which could be caused by the children's and adolescents' fondness of humour, bad language and exaggeration.

As the favourite characters were named for example: Harry Potter, Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger from *Harry Potter* series again, together with Gregory Heffley from *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series. Among many others there were other main characters from the fantasy series filled in, but also Matilda from Roald Dahl's *Matilda*. The last question of the questionnaire whether there is a book they would never want to read showed up to be either without any answer or with the answer which was sometimes very surprising. The seventh grade's pupils mentioned inter alia *Harry Potter* and *The Lord of the Rings* for their length and accessibility of the film adaptations, but there was also one mention of *The Wind in the Willows* because the main characters were animals the respondent did not like, or a general response considering the books for girls as the ones unworthy reading.

Focusing on the quantity, the highest number of the books read was twelve and the respondent was a girl, again. On the other hand the number of children who have never read a book in their lives has grown to three, all of them were boys with the explanation they rather watch a film adaptation than reading the story in a form of the book.

Graph 4: Reading preferences of the pupils in eighth classes



Commentary on the results concerning the reading preferences of the eighth classes

As the previous two graphs have indicated the respondents from the eighth classes confirmed the leading position of fantasy literature and especially the books concerning the vampires. For me the most striking finding was the popularity of *Vampire Diaries* series, however it is needed to state that this result is particularly the girls' credit together with the filling *The Twilight Saga* in, as it was mentioned for the very first time in the framework of the research. Nevertheless, the children liking of *Vampire Diaries* may be connected with the popularity of the TV show, based on the books, as it is possible to watch the TV series also in the Czech Republic although according to aforementioned the children and the

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

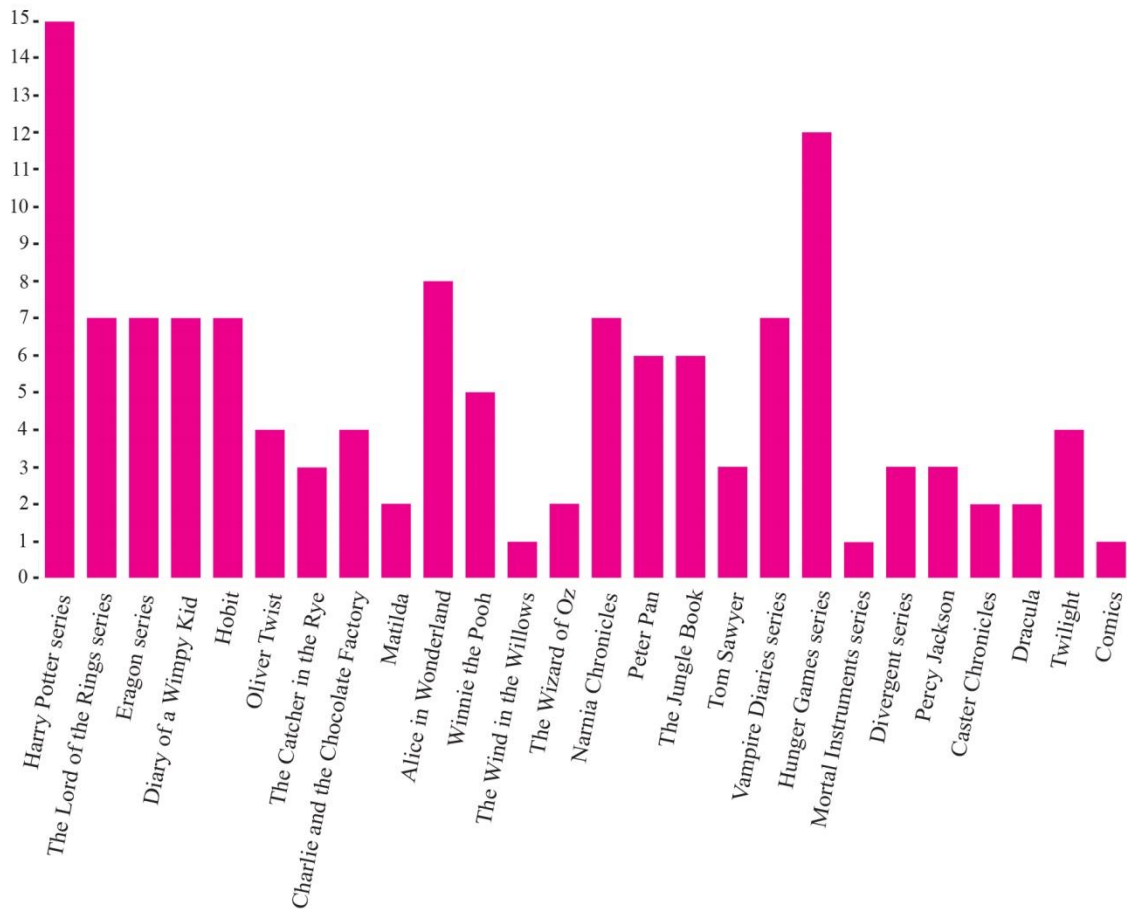
teenagers prefer to watch their favourite shows on the Internet. As I have been told, they sometimes even read the fan-made translations of new volumes which have not been officially published yet. On the other hand the negative finding related to this group was their consideration of comics as books which reflected also in their pick of the favourite characters where they often mentioned comics' superheroes. The reason for these selections is without any doubt the same or almost the same as the reasons for their admiring of other supernatural creatures as explained in the previous part of the thesis.

Concerning the most popular books the first two positions are practically the same as in the sixth and seventh classes, only with *Harry Potter* series occupying the leading position for the first time, followed by *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series and newly by *The Hunger Games* trilogy. The aforementioned *Vampire Diaries* occupied the fourth place most-likely because of the girls' majority in the group of the eighth classes.

The growing tendency of non-reading proved true, thus the eighth classes have had even more non-readers than the previous ones, i.e. four boys and one girl all reasoned practically the same as the respondents from the previous groups videlicet they preferred the film adaptations or they stated that they preferred different genres of books. I think they simply do not like and do not want to read any books at all, which takes us to the books they would never want to read. The most often answer was again *The Lord of the Rings*, followed by books for girls and the books their friend would not recommend them to read.

The favourite characters were the superheroes from comics, as I have already mentioned. Except these there was Katniss Everdeen from *The Hunger Games* for her bravery and honesty, followed by repeated Harry Potter trio, together with Gregory Heffley from *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*.

Graph 5: Reading preferences of the pupils in ninth classes



Commentary on the results concerning the reading preferences of the ninth classes

The last graph, depicting the reading preferences of the ninth classes corresponds with the previous three classes in the ascending quantity of books amending the list, mentioned by the respondents. Among all the books the respondents have written additionally, the one caught my attention more than others. It was the dystopic book *Metro 2033* written by Dmitry Glukhovsky, a Russian writer and journalist. This book has several distinctions; for example a video game based on the book exists and the sequel *Metro 2034* was turned by the author into an art-project (Bio of Dmitry A. Glukhovsky, n.d.). The reason why this particular book was mentioned by three pupils is probably the connection between the book and the video game, but I am not very certain of it, thus I did not know the book was available in the Czech Republic although I have seen it in the bookshops in the UK.

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

Concerning the results, *Harry Potter* series was still on the first position, the second place was not taken by *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series but it belonged to *The Hunger Games* trilogy. If I had to reason why *The Hunger Games* trilogy is so popular, I would presumptively say it may be caused partly by the dystopic theme which has seemed to be very attractive for the children and the teenagers, and partly by the timing, because the premiere of the second book was not so long ago. Nevertheless it is a well-known fact the film adaptations have quite positive influence with regard to their book predecessors. The third place was occupied surprisingly by *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. On the other hand the interest may be triggered thanks to Tim Burton's film adaptation from 2010. The accompanying underachievement of *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series maybe originates in the respondents' belief that they are already supposed to read different kind of books.

In the case of the girls' and boys' differentiation, it was only noticeable in mentioning the vampire romances delegated by *Vampire Diaries* and *The Twilight Saga*, whereas these were only filled into the questionnaires by the girls. The same pattern can be applied considering the favourite book heroes, as the girls prefer to mark as their favourite heroes characters from these romances, for example Elena from *Vampire Diaries*, but also Katniss Everdeen from *The Hunger Games*; whereas the boys' choices are more spreading and varying. Examples of the boys' favourite characters were as follows: Aragorn, Legolas or Frodo from *The Lord of the Rings*, all of them because of their bravery, knowledge or skills, but also Tom Sawyer, Aslan from *The Chronicles of Narnia* or Holden Caulfield, the protagonist of *The Catcher in the Rye*.

This group was specific due to the very low number of books they would never want to read. Nevertheless, the most shocking answer was the one telling the respondent would never read "Romans" meaning he does not like to read novels especially these with some romantic storylines. The answer concerning the novels was not as unique as it may seem. Probably it is connected with the attitude maintained by some of the children and the teenagers that reading is not considered attractive and it is a thing you should not do in public.

Results and commentaries on the experiment

As it was already aforementioned, during my practical teaching trainings I considered implementing of an experiment containing the authentic reading materials such as excerpts from *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* and some of the classic fairy tales, namely 'Three Little Pigs'. The target of this experiment was to examine whether the authentic materials seemed to be more attractive for children, than the stories contained in textbooks like *Project, Challenges, Angličtina pro 2. Stupeň ZŠ a víceletá gymnázia*, within the extensive reading parts. In the framework of these extensive reading chapters, there have been often more or less modulated texts of famous writers or completely fictional stories which purpose varied from illustrating the whole unit to educational element in the textbook.

The discussion about the authentic materials, i. e. 'Three Little Pigs' and *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* preceded the actual reading. Related to the fairy-tale, children were enthused by the possibility of applying their knowledge of the Czech version. *Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* represented more demanding work because although the pupils were familiar with the names of the books not every one of them have read the stories. Therefore it was useful to talk about the facts and the translation of words they knew. Related to the specifics of reading the authentic texts, children have found very interesting and entertaining guessing and finding the Czech equivalents to all the names and designations in the Harry Potter book. As the most satisfying and beneficial aspect of the experiment could be marked the result that some of the children felt actually encouraged to read the whole book, even though they have not intended to read it before. Of course it cannot be collectively generalized because some of the children, especially in higher classes have become the full non-readers and nothing can convince them to start their reading now. Nevertheless, I have found satisfying even the fact I managed to persuade them to read the excerpts within the English lessons without pushing them too much.

However, the experiment itself had few difficulties as abovementioned aversion to reading in general. The first and also the malicious one was the matter of fact that some of the children simply do not want to read, nothing, never and even if they do they are having a problem understand the text. They have felt very demotivated by their previous experience with reading; therefore it was difficult to convince them they had nothing to

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

fear. Another fact needed to be taken into the consideration was the excerpts' length and the level of difficulty, because it was not possible to expect pupils of the sixth grade to be capable of reading on the same basis as pupils of the ninth grade.

V IMPLICATIONS

In this chapter the possible application and relevance of the research results is explored. It provides the most important information for teachers arising from the research; encompasses the limitations, problems and weak points of the research. It also provides the possible extensions and improvements. It addresses the related questions connected to further study of the reading preferences issue.

Pedagogical Implications

The research I carried out helped me discovered the fact that the children are often becoming non-readers due to several factors. One of them is without doubt their family; simply if they do not have an example of reading parents at home they are more predisposed to become non-readers than the children who have been reading books at home, sometimes together with their parents. As the second factor influencing their reading preferences and habits can be marked the books from school-required reading lists. The lists are still the very same as the ones from my childhood, i.e. very pedantic with none or small regard to the children's preferences and interests. The most important finding we, teachers, should take into the consideration is that they are the Internet generation. They are able to find the thorough analyses of books without reading them; they are watching the film adaptations of books online while chatting with their friends and classmates. Therefore it would be worth trying to amend the school-required reading with some more actual books and see if the children are responding positively. I am not suggesting changing the lists completely, because the books recommended by schools are recommended for a reason; however the children are changing and we should at least try to change some things for better as well.

Another research output which surprised me was the fact the children are willing to read various kinds and genres of books and they are also willing to think and discuss about their choices with reasonable arguments. On the other hand they seem to be very lax concerning showing some activity which was possible to find out even from the questionnaires, with their unwillingness to answer in some longer sentences. The children and the teenagers are spoiled by the options and by the manner of having everything at arm's length which is the reason they often do not want to seek some books corresponding with their interests.

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

This is connected with the third part of the research which proved they were enjoying the reading activities and working with the authentic texts, as it motivated them for the language learning as well. Their language skills are also high enough to give them the liberty of filling the gaps and make the unknown text coherent under the condition that the text is appropriately chosen and does not include some difficult grammar or unknown vocabulary. Therefore, if it is possible, the authentic texts should have more space in the language teaching, however the texts are sometimes difficult to implement into the local educational programme.

Limitations of the Research

As the most perceptible limitation of the research can be considered the quantity of respondents concerning both, the libraries as well as the pupils; therefore the results cannot be considered as the general truth applicable for the majority of the children and teenagers.

The other handicap of the research part has been time, thus the proceeding of the information was very time and also mind-demanding for me. I believe the potential further research should be executed by a group of people; therefore they will have an option of more complex and more detailed surveying. The limited amount of time was very stressful since I was not employed as a teacher and the only chance I had was during my practical teaching training. Despite the fact the supervising teachers were always willing to help and to advice, I was permitted to dedicate only one lesson of the teaching practice to the experiment but it was understandable as the main purpose of the practical teaching training is teaching, not researching.

Considering the children, they were very helpful and unhesitating to take part in the research. However, as aforementioned some children were nervous concerning the reading part, because they do not like or want to read anywhere. Some of the children did not want to respond honestly, some of them were too lazy to answer the questions so they only marked the book they have read and differently marked the books they have seen the film adaptations of.

And the last limitation I would like to mention is the importance of careful consideration while picking the excerpts or the fairy-tale, because it was integral to choose the adequate authentic material, corresponding with the pupils' knowledge, language skills and levels as well as their cognitive and mental skills.

Suggestions for Further Research

As aforementioned, reading preferences can be considered as very complex and time-consuming issue, concerning the surveying, therefore for further research I would suggest to assemble a group of people, at least for the data evaluation but preferably for all the stages of the research. Thus, it would be possible to interview the children and discuss their preferences or reasons they did not want to read any books. Exploring the reading preferences of the previous generations and consequential comparison of the results with regard to the previous best-sellers would be also worth researching. Concerning the authentic materials, it would be possible to carry out long-term research, focused on the development of the children's and teenagers' reading habits, examining whether the positive influence of the authentic materials' reading existed.

In the framework of the long-term research it would also be possible to survey whether the preferences were changing suddenly or whether it was more gradual, corresponding with the growing up. Following comparison of the same groups' results within a couple of years would be interesting and enriching in light of their personalities' development.

VI CONCLUSION

Reading preferences among different generations provide an endless number of options concerning the objectives. The author of the thesis decided to examine the current best-sellers and popular books, therefore the research consisting of three parts was carried out. The research focused on the reading preferences of the contemporary Czech children, whereas the first step of the analysis embraced the interview with librarians confirming the fact girls read more than boys and also they borrow more books than boys.

The research results also pointed out the power of advertisement and the influence the children and teenagers have to each other in their groups. Many children responded they would never want to read a book their friend would not recommend them. The children and teenagers are also reading the books which are popular at the moment with the popularity often connected to the film adaptation. The children are willing to read; however, the major problem is that they do not want to seek the books of their interests. They prefer to watch the film adaptations or TV shows based on the books more likely than actually reading the stories.

If we want to focus on their favourite genres, the fantasy and humorous books prevail. The contemporary Czech children and teenagers as well as the English and the American ones prefer to read the books in the series as have been proven also by the results of the research carried out in the framework of the thesis. The research also revealed the reading preferences of boys and girls starts to differentiate approximately in the seventh class which is caused by the girls' focus on the theme of love in the books.

And the final finding concerning the experiment with the authentic materials have revealed the children and teenagers find the books corresponding with their interests attractive, however they are not willing to find them by themselves. They also lack the motivation to read, they even do not want to read at school, they are having problems reading aloud without knowing the text, although the text corresponds with their language level.

At the end it is worth to state the research carried out in the framework of the thesis confirmed the results and findings of all the previous surveys, considering the reading regression, therefore the authentic texts and the work with the text in general should be more integrated into the English Language Teaching (ELT) as it is also a very good way of practicing some grammatical issues, such as new tenses or some specific vocabulary.

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

The integration into ELT should be profitable for the simple reasons of motivating and encouraging the learners for their reading. It is desirable to make reading attractive again as somehow it has become an activity children consider shameful with their friends and classmates often judging them for being a nerd. The engagement of reading into ELT could be very helpful on the way of making it a normal everyday activity again.

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

REFERENCES

- 100 books every child should read before they're 14*(n.d.) Retrieved from <http://www.booktrust.org.uk/news-and-blogs/news/222/>
- Aragay, Mireia, ed. (2005). *Books in Motion: Adaptation, Intertextuality, Authorship*. Rodopi.
- Bernard, R. H. (2006). *Research method in Anthropology*. Retrieved from <http://www.antropocaos.com.ar/Russel-Research-Method-in-Anthropology.pdf>
- BBC. (n.d.). *Harry Potter series to be sold as e-books*. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-13889578>
- Carpenter, H., & Prichard, M. (1984). *The Oxford Companion to children's literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Celé Česko čte dětem* (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.celeceskoctedetem.cz/gb/menu/30/every-czech-reads-to-kids/about-the-project/>
- Čeňková, J. (2006). *Vývoj literatury pro děti a mládež a její žánrové struktury: adaptace mýtů, pohádek a pověstí, autorská pohádka, poezie, próza a komiks pro děti a mládež*. Praha: Portál
- Clark, C. & Foster, A. (2005). *The Children's and Young People Reading Habits and Preferences*. Retrieved from http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/assets/0000/0584/Reading_Connects_Survey_2005_Executive.pdf
- Davila, D. & Patrick, L. (2010). *Asking the Experts: What Children Have to Say about Their Reading Preferences*. Retrieved from <http://ci20910.wikispaces.com/file/view/LA0873Research.pdf>
- Film Adaptation* (n.d.). Retrieved from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Film_adaptation
- Gabal, I. & Václavíková Helšusová, L. (2003). *The role of children's reading in the globalized information society*. Retrieved from http://www.gac.cz/userfiles/File/media/archiv_zprav/GAC_therole_ofchildrens_reading.pdf?langSEO=documents&parentSEO=media&midSEO=archiv_zprav&submidSEO=GAC_therole_ofchildrens_reading.pdf
- Garner, D. (2008) *Ten Years Later, Harry Potter Vanishes From the Best-Seller List* Retrieved from http://artsbeat.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/05/01/ten-years-later-harry-potter-vanishes-from-the-best-seller-list/?_php=true&_type=blogs&_r=0
- Kimball, M.(1999) *From Folktales to Fiction: Orphan Characters in Children's Literature*. Retrieved from https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/bitstream/handle/2142/8216/librarytrendsv47i3p_opt.pdf?sequence=1century

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

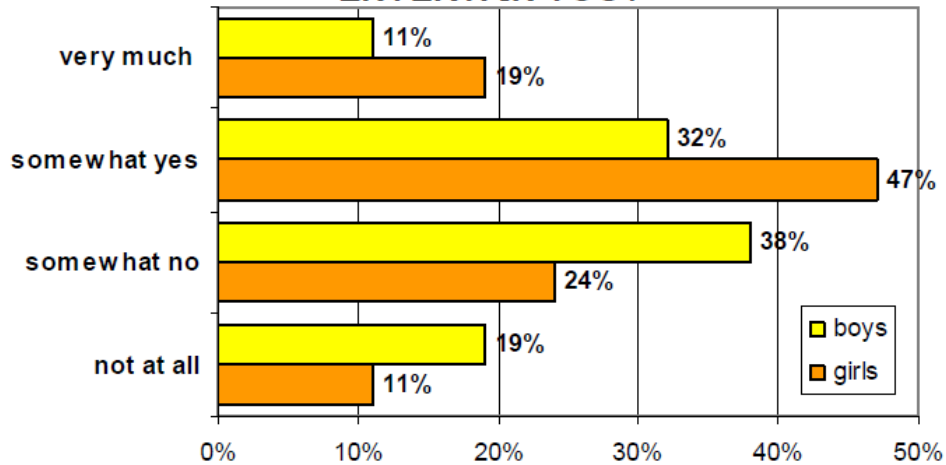
- Kratochvílová, S. (2010) *Všimejme si čtenářských návyků*. Retrieved from <http://www.ctenarska-gramotnost.cz/ctenarska-gramotnost/vsimejme-si-ctenarskych-navyku>
- Mendlesohn, F. & James, E. (2012). *A Short History of Fantasy*. Chicago: Independent Publishers Group
- Naňáková, J. (2011). *Čtenářská gramotnost, čtenářské postoje a návyky žáků základní školy*. Zlín: Univerzita Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně
- Richards Bodart, J. (2012). *They Suck, They Bite, They Eat, They Kill: The Psychological Meaning of Supernatural Monsters in Young Adult Fiction*. Plymouth: Scarecrow Press, Inc.
- Rowling, J.K. (1997). *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. London: Bloomsbury
- Scholastic. (2008). 2008 Scholastic kids and family reading report. Retrieved from <http://www.scholastic.com/aboutscholastic/news/readingreport.htm>.
- The Three Little Pigs* (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://shortstoriesshort.com/story/the-three-little-pigs/>
- Ujiiie, J., & Krashen, S. (2002). *Homerun books and reading enjoyment*. Knowledge Quest
- Vranich, B. (2010). *Why we love vampires: The Psychology Behind the Obsession*. Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/belisa-vranich/why-we-love-vampires-the_b_655674.html
- Výsledky soutěže o nejoblíbenější knihy pro děti "SUK – Čteme všichni"*. (2013). Retrieved from <http://www.czechlit.cz/oceneni-dva/vysledky-souteze-o-nejoblibenejsi-knihy-pro-deti/>

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

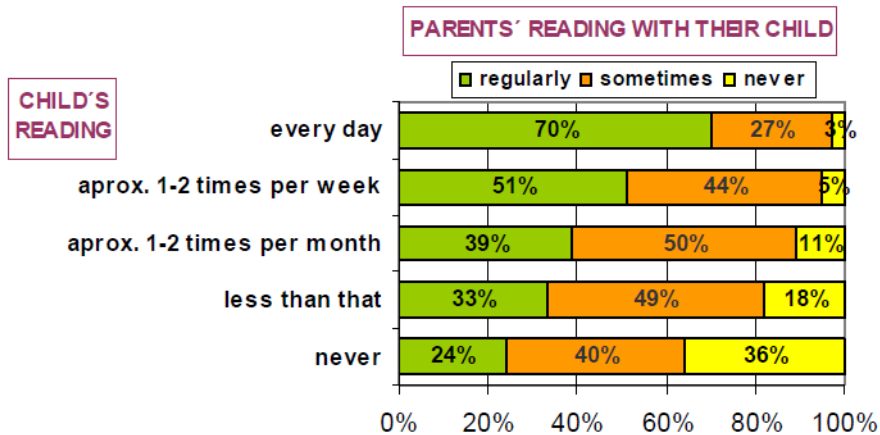
APPENDIX A

BOOKTRUST'S LIST OF BOOKS EVERY CHILD SHOULD READ BEFORE TURNING 14

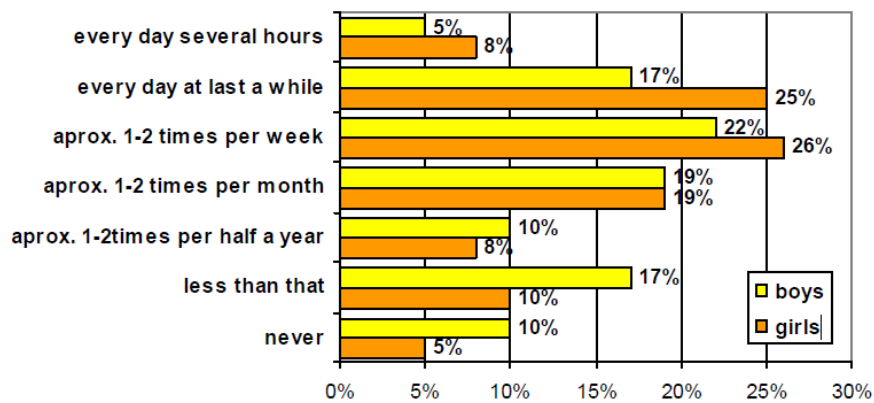
DOES THE READING OF BOOKS ENTERTAIN YOU?



PARENTS' READING WITH CHILDREN IN THEIR EARLY CHILDHOOD ACCORDING TO THE FREQUENCY OF ACTUAL CHILD'S READING



HOW OFTEN DO YOU READ BOOKS IN YOUR FREE TIME?



READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

APPENDIX B

BOOKTRUST'S LIST OF BOOKS EVERY CHILD SHOULD READ BEFORE TURNING 14

1. *The Wolves of Willoughby Chase* by Joan Aiken
2. *Skellig* by David Almond
3. *Carrie's War* by Nina Bawden
4. *Artemis Fowl* by Eoin Colfer
5. *Millions* by Frank Cottrell Boyce
6. *The Witches* by Roald Dahl
7. *Matilda* by Roald Dahl and Quentin Blake
8. *Flour Babies* by Anne Fine
9. *Once* by Morris Gleitzman
10. *The Adventures of Tintin* by Hergé
11. *Journey to the River Sea* by Eva Ibbotson
12. *Stig of the Dump* by Clive King
13. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C S Lewis
14. *Goodnight Mister Tom* by Michelle Magorian
15. *Private Peaceful* by Michael Morpurgo
16. *A Monster Calls* by Patrick Ness
17. *The Borrowers* by Mary Norton
18. *Truckers* by Terry Pratchett
19. *Swallows and Amazons* by Arthur Ransome
20. *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* by J K Rowling
21. *Holes* by Louis Sachar
22. *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry
23. *Ballet Shoes* by Noel Streatfeild
24. *The Hobbit* by J R R Tolkien
25. *The Story of Tracy Beaker* by Jacqueline Wilson
26. *Watership Down* by Richard Adams
27. *Noughts and Crosses* by Malorie Blackman
28. *Forever* by Judy Blume
29. *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* by John Boyne
30. *Junk* by Melvin Burgess
31. *Looking for JJ* by Anne Cassidy
32. *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins
33. *The Graveyard Book* by Neil Gaiman
34. *Maggot Moon* by Sally Gardner
35. *The Owl Service* by Alan Garner
36. *Coram Boy* by Jamila Gavin
37. *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* by Mark Haddon
38. *Stormbreaker* by Anthony Horowitz
39. *The Kite Rider* by Geraldine McCaughrean
40. *The Knife of Never Letting Go* by Patrick Ness
41. *Life: An Exploded Diagram* by Mal Peet
42. *Northern Lights* by Philip Pullman
43. *The Ruby in the Smoke* by Philip Pullman
44. *Witch Child* by Celia Rees
45. *Mortal Engines* by Philip Reeve
46. *Angus, Thongs and Full-Frontal Snogging* by Louise Rennison
47. *How I Live Now* by Meg Rosoff
48. *Revolver* by Marcus Sedgwick

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

49. *I Capture the Castle* by Dodie Smith
50. *The Fellowship of The Ring* by J R R Tolkien

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

APPENDIX C

WHAT KIDS ARE READING 2013 5-8 CLASSES, THE MOST POPULAR BOOKS – USA

5th GRADE

Rank	Title Author
1	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Cabin Fever Jeff Kinney
2	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Ugly Truth Jeff Kinney
3	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days Jeff Kinney
4	The Hunger Games Suzanne Collins
5	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Last Straw Jeff Kinney
6	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Rodrick Rules Jeff Kinney
7	Diary of a Wimpy Kid Jeff Kinney
8	Number the Stars Lois Lowry
9	Hatchet Gary Paulsen
10	Catching Fire Suzanne Collins

6th GRADE

Rank	Title Author
1	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Cabin Fever Jeff Kinney
2	The Hunger Games Suzanne Collins
3	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Ugly Truth Jeff Kinney
4	Catching Fire Suzanne Collins
5	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days Jeff Kinney
6	Hatchet Gary Paulsen
7	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Rodrick Rules Jeff Kinney
8	Diary of a Wimpy Kid Jeff Kinney
9	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Last Straw Jeff Kinney
10	Number the Stars Lois Lowry

7th GRADE

Rank	Title Author and Book Level
1	The Hunger Games Suzanne Collins
2	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Cabin Fever Jeff Kinney
3	Catching Fire Suzanne Collins
4	The Outsiders S.E. Hinton
5	Mockingjay Suzanne Collins
6	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Ugly Truth Jeff Kinney
7	The Giver Lois Lowry
8	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days Jeff Kinney
9	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Rodrick Rules Jeff Kinney
10	Diary of a Wimpy Kid Jeff Kinney

8th GRADE

Rank	Title Author
1	The Hunger Games Suzanne Collins
2	Catching Fire Suzanne Collins
3	The Outsiders S.E. Hinton
4	Mockingjay Suzanne Collins
5	The Giver Lois Lowry
6	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Cabin Fever Jeff Kinney
7	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Ugly Truth Jeff Kinney
8	The Tell-Tale Heart Edgar Allan Poe
9	The Diary of Anne Frank Frances Goodrich
10	The Son of Neptune Rick Riordan

READING PREFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

APPENDIX D

WHAT KIDS ARE READING 2014 5-8 GRADES, THE MOST POPULAR BOOKS – UK

5th CLASS

Rank	Title Author
1	Diary of a Wimpy Kid Jeff Kinney
2	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days Jeff Kinney
3	The Twits Roald Dahl
4	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Rodrick Rules Jeff Kinney
5	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Last Straw Jeff Kinney
6	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Ugly Truth Jeff Kinney
7	George's Marvellous Medicine Roald Dahl
8	Fantastic Mr Fox Roald Dahl
9	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Third Wheel Jeff Kinney
10	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Cabin Fever Jeff Kinney

6th CLASS

Rank	Title Author
1	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days Jeff Kinney
2	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Last Straw Jeff Kinney
3	Diary of a Wimpy Kid Jeff Kinney
4	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Rodrick Rules Jeff Kinney
5	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Ugly Truth Jeff Kinney
6	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Third Wheel Jeff Kinney
7	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Cabin Fever Jeff Kinney
8	The Twits Roald Dahl
9	Gangsta Granny David Walliams
10	Billionaire Boy David Walliams

7th CLASS

Rank	Title Author and Book Level
1	Diary of a Wimpy Kid Jeff Kinney
2	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Rodrick Rules Jeff Kinney
3	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days Jeff Kinney
4	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Last Straw Jeff Kinney
5	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Ugly Truth Jeff Kinney
6	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Cabin Fever Jeff Kinney
7	The Hunger Games Suzanne Collins
8	Diary of the Wimpy Kid: The Third Wheel Jeff Kinney
9	Charlie and the Chocolate Factory Roald Dahl
10	The Twits Roald Dahl

8th CLASS

Rank	Title Author
1	The Hunger Games Suzanne Collins
2	Diary of a Wimpy Kid Jeff Kinney
3	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Rodrick Rules Jeff Kinney
4	The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas John Boyne
5	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days Jeff Kinney
6	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Last Straw Jeff Kinney
7	Holes Louis Sachar
8	The Twits Roald Dahl
9	Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Ugly Truth Jeff Kinney
10	Catching Fire Suzanne Collins

APPENDIX E

Questionnaire – Reading preferences among different generations

1. Please mark the books you have read:
 - Harry Potter series
 - The Lord of the Rings
 - Eragon series
 - Diary of a Wimpy Kid series
 - Hobbit
 - Oliver Twist
 - The Catcher in the Rye
 - Charlie and the Chocolate factory
 - The BFG
 - Matilda
 - Alice's adventures in Wonderland
 - Winnie-the-Pooh
 - Peter the Rabbit
 - The Wind in the Willows
 - The wizard of Oz
 - The Chronicles of Narnia
 - Peter Pan (Peter and Wendy)
 - The Jungle book
 - Tom Sawyer books
 - The Hunger Games trilogy

 - Other.....
2. Have you seen any film adaptation of these books?
3. Who or what was your favourite character, and why?
4. Is there a book you would never want to read, if so, why?

APPENDIX F

HARRY POTTER AND THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE WORKSHEET

Harry smiled weakly. Yes, trying on the hat was a lot better than having to do a spell, but he did wish they could have tried it on without everyone watching. The hat seemed to be asking rather a lot; Harry didn't feel brave or quick-witted or any of it at the moment. If only the hat had mentioned a house for people who felt a bit queasy, that would have been the one for him. Professor McGonagall now stepped forward holding a long roll of parchment.

"When I call your name, you will put on the hat and sit on the stool to be sorted," she said. "Abbott, Hannah!"

A pink-faced girl with blonde pigtails stumbled out of line, put on the hat, which fell right down over her eyes, and sat down. A moments pause — "HUFFLEPUFF!" shouted the hat.

The table on the right cheered and clapped as Hannah went to sit down at the Hufflepuff table. Harry saw the ghost of the Fat Friar waving merrily at her.

"Bones, Susan!"

"HUFFLEPUFF!" shouted the hat again, and Susan scuttled off to sit next to Hannah.

"Boot, Terry!"

"RAVENCLAW!"

The table second from the left clapped this time; several Ravenclaws stood up to shake hands with Terry as he joined them.

"Bulstrode, Millicent" then became a Slytherin. Perhaps it was Harry's imagination, after all he'd heard about Slytherin, but he thought they looked like an unpleasant lot.

He was starting to feel definitely sick now. He remembered being picked for teams during gym at his old school. He had always been last to be chosen, not because he was no good, but because no one wanted Dudley to think they liked him.

"Finch-Fletchley, Justin!"

"HUFFLEPUFF!"

"Granger, Hermione!"

Hermione almost ran to the stool and jammed the hat eagerly on her head.

"GRYFFINDOR!" shouted the hat. Ron groaned.

A horrible thought struck Harry, as horrible thoughts always do when you're very nervous. What if he wasn't chosen at all? What if he just sat there with the hat over his eyes for ages, until Professor McGonagall jerked it off his head and said there had obviously been a mistake and he'd better get back on the train?

When Neville Longbottom, the boy who kept losing his toad, was called, he fell over on his way to the stool. The hat took a long time to decide with Neville. When it finally shouted, "GRYFFINDOR," Neville ran off still wearing it, and had to jog back amid gales of laughter to give it to "MacDougal, Morag."

Malfoy swaggered forward when his name was called and got his wish at once: the hat had barely touched his head when it screamed, "SLYTHERIN!"

Malfoy went to join his friends Crabbe and Goyle, looking pleased with himself.

There weren't many people left now. "Moon" ... , "Nott" ... , "Parkinson" ... , then a pair of twin girls, and then, at last —

"Potter, Harry!"

As Harry stepped forward, whispers suddenly broke out like little hissing fires all over the hall.

"Potter, did she say?"

"The Harry Potter?"

1. NEW VOCABULARY:

Weakly – chabě, slabě

Brave – chrabý, statečný

Quick-witted – důvtipný
Queasy – s pocitem nevolnosti, špatně od žaludku
Parchment – pergamen
Pigtail – copánek
Stumble – klopýtat
Scuttle off – cupítat
Eagerly – dychtivě
Jerk off sth. – strhnout (něco)
Toad – žabák
Pleased with himself – spokojený sám se sebou
Whispers – šeptání, šepot
Hissing fires – syčivé ohníčky

If there are more unknown words, underline them and don't forget to write them into your vocabulary exercise books.

2. HOUSES IN HOGWARTS

A) match the right answers together:

Gryffindor	Havraspár
Hufflepuff	Zmijozel
Slytherin	Nebelvír
Rawenclaw	Mrzimor

B) Who went where?

Hannah Abbott
Justin Finch-Fletchley
Neville Longbottom
Millicent Bulstrode
Susan Bones
Terry Boot
Hermione Granger
Draco Malfoy
Harry Potter

C) What was the hat good for? Why was it important?

APPENDIX G

THREE LITTLE PIGS WORKSHEET

Once upon a time there were three little pigs. One pig built a house of straw while the second pig built his house with sticks. They built their houses very quickly and then sang and danced all day because they were lazy. The third little pig worked hard all day and built his house with bricks.

A big bad wolf saw the two little pigs while they danced and played and thought, "What juicy tender meals they will make!" He chased the two pigs and they ran and hid in their houses. The big bad wolf went to the first house and huffed and puffed and blew the house down in minutes. The frightened little pig ran to the second pig's house that was made of sticks. The big bad wolf now came to this house and huffed and puffed and blew the house down in hardly any time. Now, the two little pigs were terrified and ran to the third pig's house that was made of bricks.

The big bad wolf tried to huff and puff and blow the house down, but he could not. He kept trying for hours but the house was very strong and the little pigs were safe inside. He tried to enter through the chimney but the third little pig boiled a big pot of water and kept it below the chimney. The wolf fell into it and died.

The two little pigs now felt sorry for having been so lazy. They too built their houses with bricks and lived happily ever after.

1. What houses did the pigs have?
2. What was the wolf like?
3. Can you describe the three little pigs and their natures?
4. Can you name any differences between this and the Czech version? Which version is better? Why?

SHRNUTÍ

Diplomová práce “Čtenářské preference odlišných generací” se zaměřuje na komplexní analýzu čtenářských preferencí a čtenářských návyků současných dětí a adolescentů prostřednictvím výzkumů a akademických článků, které se touto problematikou zabývaly posledních několik let. Dále bere na zřetel vliv informačních technologií na již zmíněné čtenářské preference a návyky dětí, jakožto vliv filmových adaptací na četbu knih.

Praktická část je věnována výzkumu čtenářských preferencí za pomoci městských knihoven a také, které vyplňovali žáci základních škol ve školním prostředí. Samotný výzkum uzavírá část věnovaná experimentu, který se zabýval vlivem autentických textů na motivaci a čtenářské preference dětí. Cíle, podmínky a jednotlivé fáze výzkumu jsou pečlivě popsány a shrnuty společně s výsledky výzkumu s nimi souvisejícími komentáři a doporučením aplikace výsledků na výuku anglického jazyka.