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DEVELOPING READING COMPREHENSION IN THE 5TH AND 6TH FORMS

Bachelor's Thesis

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INTRODUCTION

Understanding the written text is a necessary part and the ultimate goal of the reading process. Comprehension means that the learner extracts meaning from the text he/she reads. If a reader lacks comprehension skills, then he/she cannot understand the message. Cognitive skills are the essential skills for the brain, they play an important role in processing a new information. Metacognition is also a key contributor, it is considered as the control of cognitive strategies, essential for reading comprehension development. Reading strategies are also parts and parcels of the process of comprehension and should be taught to learners as the process of understanding is both interactive and strategic. The interaction takes place between the reader and the text as readers must analyze what they read, internalize it and make it their own.

The process of reading can be divided into decoding and comprehension. It is considered to be a combination of subskills or microskills. The **object** of the year paper was the process of reading and the way young learners understand simple texts in English.

The **subject** of the year paper was the comprehension difficulties young learners have in understanding a text in a foreign language and the role of four microskills essential to understanding a written text, problems and reasons, and the motivation of children were analyzed.

The **aim** of this work is to give a thorough literature review on the topic and measure the reading skills of young learners in order to determine reading comprehension difficulties. The thesis touches upon the questions of the way one can become a good reader, the different types of decoding and reading comprehension difficulties, the ways teachers can develop the comprehension of learners, reading comprehension impairments, and the causes and reasons of reading comprehension difficulties as well as the motivation of learners. In the research the author made an attempt to reveal how young learners of EFL can cope with two types of comprehension tasks and which microskills from the four examined ones are developed better and which are those that should be paid more attention to in developing young learners' reading comprehension.

The first part contains a theoretical overview of the concept of reading and reading comprehension, shows different levels of comprehension. It also contains a part explaining how a reader can become a good reader and what a good reader does. In this part the task-types used by teachers aimed at developing reading comprehension have been mentioned as one of the

aims of teaching a FL is to teach learners how they can become successful readers. Also, this part contains the notion of reading sub-skills, and explains the difference between “higher” and “lower” skills.

The second part contains a literature review of the types of reading comprehension difficulties, the causes and reasons some readers have difficulties. In addition, the role of motivation in developing reading is touched upon as motivation plays an important role in becoming successful readers and language learners.

The third part contains a description of a research measuring reading comprehension of EFL learners and its results. Two texts and three tasks were used to investigate children’s comprehension. The types of the comprehension tasks were answering questions and deciding whether the given statements are true or false. Both tasks demand learners find either the answer or the required information in the text by looking for literal answers or by using their prior knowledge and then inferring answers based on clues in the text. The test was administered in grades 5 and 6.

Hypothesis

- learners of grade 6 will perform better on the reading comprehension test;
- from the microskill examined learners will understand explicitly stated information best.

The research question aimed to find out whether the lexical or the grammatical cohesive devices are better understood by the learners.

The research **methods** are mainly theoretical. An empirical research was carried out with the help of tests. The methods of data analysis is quantitative.

I have chosen this topic, because I think developing reading comprehension is important if we want our children to become successful adults who love reading, can easily read books in a foreign language and thus can improve their vocabulary and knowledge. Only in case teachers achieve success in teaching reading to children will they love reading books.

PART 1 – READING COMPREHENSION

Reading is between 3500-5000 years old. Reading needs the parts of the brain which are designed for language, memory and perception. [16]

According to Nurnianti [23] reading is a receptive skill and a process, when reader chooses available information from the text to select and predict a decodable language structure. Reading is used to get knowledge from books.

Reading is a process, when people successfully understand the written text, and it develops knowledge and imagination. Reading is viewed as a cognitive, metacognitive, developmental and socially constructed task. Metacognition is an important ability for reading fluently and correctly. Metacognition is an ability to recognize errors in the text, distinguish between important and unimportant ideas, and then understanding and using different strategies, which are used with texts. Reading in a foreign language provides new vocabulary. [1, 6, 25]

Reading can be considered as a psycholinguistic guessing game according to Goodman, because the reader decodes the written signs and interprets the words. The main aim of the reading is to understand the written text.

In schools teachers apply two types of reading: silent reading and loud reading. Silent reading means that students read the text in silence, and try to understand it. Loud reading means that students read the text aloud. But teachers apply silent reading less of a level than loud reading. Loud reading is considered as a type of reading which does not develop reading skills of students. Loud reading is a good way to practice the pronunciation, but it does not develop the reading comprehension skills.

Children need to know the alphabetic principles. Letters symbolize sounds. Combination of letters create a word, which has a meaning. When children have decoded the word, they have to understand what is coded in the written text. Nowadays, Look and Say Technique has become a famous technique among teachers and students. Look and Say Technique is used for teaching reading to children about spelling words in English. This technique teach children to recognize words which are separated from stories. Learning is a critical feature of developing reading comprehension skills. To become effective readers, reading comprehension skills are important. Letters and letter groups are decoded by the readers. Then reader reads words, sentences, stories and books. Reader can develop decoding skills with reading aloud. It can develop the fluency. [16, 22, 25]

Roehl and Shiue [25] states that „reading comprehension is the ability to understand what we read where words have context and texts have meaning. Reading comprehension skills allow us to read proficiently, learn effectively and to conceptualize.”. So to read fluently, learn effectively, people should have reading comprehension skills and should develop them.

According to Roehl and Shiue [25] the central components of reading processing include:

- the orthographic processing,
- phonological coding,
- recognition of words,
- activation of working memory,
- sentence parsing,
- propositional integration,
- development of text-model

The following things are important for the effective reading comprehension: accurate reading skills, automatic reading ability, fluent reading ability. Automaticity is identifying the the word level quickly. Reading fluency means automatic word identification, it includes features, such as rhythm, intonation and phrasing. [25]

Teachers can contribute to develop reading comprehension skills of children. L1 reading teachers know that it is important to develop letter-sound correspondence for early reading, that students need large vocabulary for fluent reading, and they need to become effective strategy users. They also know that extensive reading has a huge value among students. Developing reasonable reading rates have benefits among students. According to Grabe, with the L2 reading contexts this is not the case, but some thing concern to the L2. [24]

Reading in foreign language involves bottom-up and top-down cognitive processing. According to Nunan, [22] the bottom-up view means that the meaning of words derived, because the individual sounds were decoded. The top-down view require to use real-world knowledge to construct aural messages. Despite many years of schooling, not all learners can become successful L2 readers. According to Eskey the learners weak linguistic processing skills are neglected, L2 readers are distinct from those who read successful only in their L1s. [10, 22]

According to Eskey the bottom-up processing of reading involves different cognitive subskills, such as word recognition, spelling and phonological processing, morphosyntactic parsing, and lexical recognition and access. Learners gather information from the text, identify the meaning of words. Then they process the structure and the meaning of phrases and

sentences. According to Koda, Chikamatsu, and Shimron and Savon, visual processing of words and letters represent a cognitively complete task. [10]

Renandya and Jacobs [24] argue for including extensive reading in the second language curriculum. Extensive reading can have an influence on learners second language development and reading ability improvement, can increase learners intensive language proficiency, as grammar, spelling, writing, vocabulary. According to Carrell and Carson extensive reading means rapid reading of longer readings for general understanding and focus on the meaning of the written text on the language. Extensive reading encourage learners to read self-selected, large amounts of meaningful language connected with principles for good foreign language learning. According to Renandya and Jacobs teachers still not use extensive reading. [24]

The speed is an important feature of reading technique. From the beginning of learning reading the acceleration of speed is need to be stimulated. Sixth grade students should read at least 250 words in a minute according to Visnevskij. The speed of reading in foreign language is connected with the speed of reading in mother tongue. [32]

1.1 The Role of Cognitive Skills in Reading Comprehension

Cognitive skills are the essential skills that human brain uses to think, learn, remember, read, pay attention, and reason. They work jointly and take incoming information. Then they move it into the collection of knowledge in the brain, that is used everyday at school, at work, and in life. Cognitive skills, that are used by the brain to think and learn, can be trained by brain training. Each of the cognitive skills play an important role in processing a new information. Therefore, in spite of what kind of information is available, if even one of these skills is weak, using information is restricted. Most of the students struggle are caused by one or more weak cognitive skills. [31]

According to scientists, research suggests that schooling can stimulate cognitive skills in children. [9]

Cognitive skills in reading comprehension are the following: fluency, vocabulary and semantic processing, visualization, working memory, reasoning and inference

Fluency considered as a prerequisite skill to comprehension. Fluency authorizes the cognitive capacity which is required for comprehending the meaning of the words. It considered as the automatic recognition of words. There is a bridge between comprehension and decoding. According to early studies decoding was the skill that predicted differences in comprehension.

But according to a landmark study only those children were able to precisely answer comprehension questions, who practised reading the words until they automatically recognized them. For young learners fluency has a greater impact in developing reading comprehension skills than to older learners. Fluency becomes less predictive when the text becomes more challenging. Instead it gives way to vocabulary.

Vocabulary and semantic processing are important constituents of comprehension. A sense of semantics is required in order to understand the meaning of the text. Before children extract meaning from the text, they have to understand the meaning of the words. The first empirical study was published in 1942, which is about the correlation between word knowledge and reading comprehension. The knowledge of vocabulary was considered as a primary predictor of reading comprehension development for decades. For young learners vocabulary skills are the best predictors of reading comprehension development. So students with poor comprehension present a lack of semantic awareness. Vocabulary instruction helps the development of reading comprehension, mostly when students are exposed to vocabulary.

Another component of the comprehension process is visualization. The active construction of a mental image of the text is another importance of reading comprehension. As the reader assimilates the new text these images change. Visualization is an adaptation of the dual-coding theory of reading. To create meaning, readers process visual representation of verbal information and of object. This skill contributes to comprehension and intensify memory of the text.

Working memory is also considered as an integral part of reading comprehension. Working memory is responsible for keeping information in the mind, for managing the process of extracting information from text and combining it with prior knowledge to create meaning of the text. Working memory stores the sequences of text-based information and combined with new incoming text and with prior knowledge stored in long-term memory. There is a correlation between comprehension and working memory. A greater amount of working memory is needed for melting longer sentences into rapidly changing mental images.

The ability of using information in the text to identify additional information contained by the text is called reasoning and inference. Drawing conclusion is connected to reading comprehension ability. Students with poor comprehension lack inferencing ability. Inferential reasoning requires long-term and short-term memory. Acts on retrieval of background knowledge what is combined with the text extracting implicit information from the text. [13]

So cognitive skills are essential skills that brain uses to think, can be trained by brain training. There are five cognitive skills, each of them play an important role.

1.2 The Role of Cognitive Strategies and Metacognition in Reading Comprehension

Cognitive skills are important prerequisites for reading comprehension. Beside cognitive skills, cognitive strategies are also required for reading comprehension. They are different, because while cognitive skills are passive, cognitive strategies are rather active. [13]

In its simplest form the term „cognitive strategies” is the use of the mind (cognition) to complete a task or solve a problem. Cognitive strategies may also be mentioned as procedural facilitators or procedural prompts.

If a task cannot be finished or done through a series of steps, cognitive strategies provide a structure for learning. If the student pays attention to the steps, he/she can successfully complete the problem. Reading comprehension is a complex task that does not follow a series of steps.

According to Rosenshine, as the learner develops internal procedures that allow him/her to complete tasks that are complex, a cognitive strategy tends to support him/her. Cognitive strategies are very important in the reading comprehension area. With the help of a self-questioning strategy, students understand the text what they read. According to Rosenshine, creating questions does not lead directly to comprehension. Students search the written text, then they combine information and generate questions at the same time. Then they understand what they have read. [7]

Metacognition is considered as thinking about thinking. Metacognition means the control of cognitive strategies. Metacognition is a key contributor to reading comprehension development. Cognitive strategies help process new information from text. There are several strategies that contribute to successful reading comprehension. They are the following: prediction, activating prior knowledge, questioning, visualizing, monitoring and clarifying, drawing conclusions. While reading, multiple cognitive strategies improve reading comprehension and text memory. According to Oakhill and Cain students’ ability to monitor their comprehension at age eight predicted their reading comprehension skill at age 11. A primary deficit in poor comprehenders means that they are unable to employ metacognitive strategies during reading. But many poor comprehenders are simply unable to use or select strategies. So knowledge of cognitive strategies is required for reading comprehension.

For effective reading comprehension the ability to activate prior knowledge, otherwise cognitive strategy is also needed, necessary for generating inferences. Background knowledge is a collection of prior knowledge, as prior mental images of text long-term memory. It is a significant contributor to comprehension. Students will struggle to make sense of the content of the text if they lack of prior knowledge. [13]

Cognitive strategies are important for reading comprehension, as well as cognitive skills. „Cognitive strategies” is the use of the mind to complete a task. Metacognition is considered as thinking about thinking, the control of cognitive strategies.

1.3 Reading strategies

To understand the text before, during, and after reading, effective readers use strategies. Before reading, they make predictions of the meaning of the text, use prior knowledge about the topic, preview the text by skimming and scanning to get a sense of the meaning. During the reading readers monitor understanding by questioning and reflecting on the ideas in the text. After reading, readers reflect upon the information, relate the text to their own knowledge and experience, clarify the meaning of the text, and extend their understanding in different ways. Students can be taught how too become strategic and effective readers. [27]

There are three types of strategies: bottom-up strategies, top-down strategies, and interactive strategies.

Bottom-up Strategies

Graphic symbols are decoded into sounds. So the reader first identifies features of letters, connects together these features to recognize letters, join letters to recognize words, proceeds to sentence. Deriving meaning from the text is generated by graphic information. With the help of bottom-up strategies, readers process the text from low linguistic level to a high linguistic level. The reader first identifies letters to recognize words, then proceeds to the phrase, sentence. It begins with one linguistic step after another, than comes the recognition of the letters and continuing to words-by-words, than sentence-by-sentence, than comes the top-meaning of the text being read.

If the text is difficult to read, readers also use bottom-up strategies. The language of the text and the content can be difficult for the reader. When readers feel that the language of the text is difficult, they start to identify the meaning of words. After that readers combine the meaning of words to get understanding of the sentences until reaching the meaning of text. Additionally,

when the context is difficult for the reader, he/she tries to comprehend the text by depending on the visual information to get complete meaning of the text.

Top-Down Strategies

The process starts from the reader's previous knowledge. Readers start to process the text by using the higher level stages. Readers start with predictions and attempt to monitor them. By having prior knowledge readers can make predictions about the text before reading it.

According to Goodman, reading is a procedure that concerns using available language cues chosen from perceptual input on the base of the reader's predictions. While the information is clarified, decisions are affirmed about the meaning, refined as reading progress. Therefore readers do not distinguish all elements of the text. They just choose a few cues to make predictions. Readers try to support or reject hypotheses about meaning with the help of graphic information.

Readers, who use top-down strategies, have sufficient language competence and background knowledge about the text. Despite the readers have knowledge about the text and understand the meaning of every word, they may have difficulties to understand the text. If in the text there are not any cues that can trigger a certain content schemata, then there difficulties will occur there.

Interactive Strategies

The process is launched by making prediction about meaning or decoding graphic symbols. The reader formulates assumptions based on the collaboration of information from semantic, syntactic and graphophonemic sources. Comprehension is dependent on both the graphic information and the prior knowledge in the reader's mind. Comprehension may be obstructed when the knowledge or a critical skill is missing. When comprehension is obstructed, reader could rely on context or decodes a word.

Interactive strategies contain bottom-up and top-down strategies in combination. Readers use these two strategies in understanding a text. The interactive strategies suggest that the process of reading is launched by decoding letters and words and by formulating predictions about the text. Readers start with processing the apparent visual information in the text, what is used to cause to function the higher level of schemata. They use them as a basis of forming predictions, after activating the schemata. These predictions are then fortified to the new information what is in the text.

To understand the text, readers use several references of knowledge coincidentally to interpret the graphemic information that is in the text. These sources of knowledge concern syntactic, lexical, semantic, and ortographic knowledge. By these knowledge sources the process carries on inconsistently. Reader's analysis is not consequent from visual information to text interpretation absolutely. [5]

Readers use more interactive strategies, because it is the mixture of bottom-up and top-down strategies, not only bottom-up or top-down strategies in understanding a text. Readers cannot depend on visual information or non-visual information only to try to understand the text. The knowledge is used interactively.

1.4 Different levels of comprehension

Reading comprehension have different levels. The levels in different sources are not the same. The concept of literal comprehension, reorganization or reinterpretation, inference and evaluation can be found in the Barret Taxonomy [28] and in the Article of Muliasari [19]. The fifth concept in the Barret Taxonomy was the appreciation, but in the Article, which was written by Muliasari, the fifth concept was personal response.

The Barrett Taxonomy of Cognitive and Affective Dimensions of Reading Comprehension [28] states that reading comprehension has the following levels.

- literal comprehension, which include recognition and recall
- reorganization
- inferential comprehension
- evaluation
- appreciation

According to Muliasari [19], there are other different levels of reading comprehension:

- literal comprehension
- reorganization or reinterpretation
- inference
- evaluation
- personal response

So reading comprehension levels match in the sources, but there are a little difference between the two source.

Literal comprehension

Literal comprehension includes recognition and recall. It focuses on ideas and information which are explicitly stated in selection.

Recognition is a process, when the student locate or identify information, which was explicitly stated in reading selection or in exercises, in which explicit ideas and information were used. Recall is a process, when the student produces ideas and information, which was explicitly stated in the reading selection, from memory.

Teacher's questions and purposes for reading designed to evoke reaction may be simple or complex. The recognition or recall of a single fact or accident in literal comprehension could be a simple task. The recognition or recall of a series of facts or sequencing of incidents in a reading selection could be a more complex task. [19, 28]

Reorganization

The process, when the students analyze, synthesize and organize information, which was explicitly stated in the selection, is called reorganization. The reader could use the statements of the author literally or paraphrase the statements. There are different reorganization tasks: classifying, outlining, summarizing, synthesizing.

Classifying – the student divides people, things, event or places into categories.

Outlining – the student uses direct or paraphrased statements, arrange (organize) the selection in outline form.

Summarizing – the student uses direct or paraphrased statements, synthesizes the selection.

Synthesizing – the student reinforce information from more than one source. Information must be fused. [19,28]

Inferential comprehension

When the student uses his/her intuition, personal experience, the ideas and information, that was stated in the selection, is called inferential comprehension. Inferences drawn by the student can be convergent and divergent. Inferential comprehension is stimulated by aims for reading and questions of teacher's which requires imagination and thinking about the text.

Inferential comprehension has the following subsections: first point inferring supporting detail that means the student suppose facts which were in the selection, and made the selection informative. The second point is inferring main ideas that means the student produce main idea,

or theme of the selection. The third point is inferring sequence that means the student suppose what action might have happened between two stated actions, or what will happen next. The fourth point is inferring comparisons. It means that the student draws conclusions about the differences of characters, times, or places. The fifth point is inferring cause and effect relationships, the student suppose the motivations of characters, and their collaboration with time and place. The sixth point is inferring character traits that means student suppose the nature of the characters. The seventh point is predicting outcome that means the student has to read a portion of a selection, and suppose what will be the outcome of the selection. The eighth point is interpreting figurative language that means the student draws conclusions about literal meanings from the author's usage of language. [19,28]

Evaluation

Aims for reading require student's answer. Comparing ideas that were presented in the selection with external criteria, students made an evaluative judgement. Evaluation focuses on accuracy, acceptability and judgement. Students can make judgements such as: judgements of reality or fantasy which means the students judge, if an action really could happen. The second judgement is judgement of fact or opinion which means the student analyzes the intent of the author and the writing according to their knowledge. Third is judgement of adequacy and validity which means the student analyzes and opposes the source with other sources. Fourth is judgement of appropriateness – the student makes judgements about the appropriateness of different parts. The last is judgement of worth, desirability and acceptability – the students make judgements based on their value system if the character was right or wrong. [19, 28]

Appreciation

Appreciation involves literal comprehension, reorganization, inferential comprehension and evaluation. Students should not only have knowledge of, but an emotional response to the work, it's style and structure. There are different types of appreciation: the first type is called emotional response to the content - in this case the student verbalizes his or her feelings and emotions about the selection. The students can tell if it was interesting, exciting, boring, or fearful. It is in contact with the emotional influence on the reader. The second type is identification with characters or incidents - in this case students can express their sympathy for, and empathy with characters, happenings, and ideas portrayed by the author. It also reveals their sensitivity to the ideas. The third type is reactions to the author's use of language - in this case the students react to the author's competency with regard to the semantic dimension, especially

connotations and denotations of words. The last type is imagery - in this case, the students verbalize his or her feelings concerned to the author's artistic ability to illustrate word pictures. [28]

Personal response

Students have to react with their feeling. In this case every answer is correct, because the answers are not found in the text, and they have to express their feelings with their own words. [19]

Based on the five levels, students have to focus on information in the textbook, organize the information, think and imagine, make judgments about the text and have emotional response.

1.5 What does a good reader do

To become a good reader students have to develop their skills. They also need to practice for a long time.

According to Duke and Pearson good readers do the following points when they read written texts: firstly, good readers are active readers. It means that a reader reads written text to learn something. They permanently evaluate, if the text and their reading of it is meeting their goals, which they keep in mind from the outset. Before they read the text they look over, because the structure and the sections of the text are the most essential. When they read the written text, they can make predictions about what will happen. They can make decisions about what to read carefully or quickly, and what they should re-read. As they read, readers revise, analyse and interrogate the meaning they made. If readers see unfamiliar words in the text, they try to find their meaning, or the determination of concepts. Readers unite their previous knowledge with material in the text. Readers expect the author's intention, or they think about the style of the authors. They can regulate their reading and monitor their understanding of the text. They can respond to the text intellectually and emotionally, evaluate quality and value. Readers read several texts differently. They participate closely to the setting and characters in case when the reading is narrative. Readers revise and analyse the summaries of written texts in case when reading is an expository text. Text processing happens during reading and during short break between reading, even after the reading begin or stop. [21]

Comprehension can be satisfying and productive despite the fact, that comprehension is a complex activity. The most complex cognitive task for the children is learning to read. The

study of cognitive development is important to understand what has to happen for children to if we want to teach them read fluently.

1.6 Teaching reading

Teachers need to know the student's needs, strengths and weaknesses. Then teachers can properly teach students to read fluently and develop their skills.

In building up pupils reading competence the choice of an appropriate text is very important. Too difficult text can produce frustration among students, because text can include words that were not explained, or have complex grammatical constructions. A text which is too easy does not require student's effort.

It is important to use questions for reading tasks, to test the students whether they understand the text or not. Questions can be general questions, questions which require a short answer or word group, questions which require a clause or full sentence, true or false questions as well as multiple-choice questions.

Whatever text the teacher chooses, there will always be some pupils for whom the texts are too difficult or too easy. To solve this problem the teacher can individualise the instruction. Teacher give to students carefully graded texts with appropriate exercises. Then pupils can work on their own. This is a long-term project, it requires the teacher's great dedication to carry through successfully. [4]

So teacher should choose appropriate text based on students level of knowledge, and use questions and tasks to know whether the learners understand the text or not.

1.7 Reading subskills. „Higher” and „lower” skills

In theories of reading it is usual to recognize skills which contribute to the reading process. The skills can be connected to linguistic features of text, can be connected to different sorts of meaning, or can be connected to different levels of the understanding of readers deriving from text. These reading skills can be identified, taught, tested and researched. [3]

There are different levels of understanding of a text in mother tongue and in foreign language also. There are different subskills according to Davis [2]:

- recalling word meanings

- drawing inferences about the meaning of a word from context
- finding answers to questions answered explicitly or in paraphrase
- weaving together ideas in the content
- drawing inferences from the content
- recognizing a writer's purpose, attitude, tone and mood
- identifying a writer's technique
- following the structure of a passage.

These subskills are associated with the level of understanding of a text.

Munby (1978) has a list of microskills contributing to readers abilities. It has an influence on teaching and testing English as a Foreign Language. Munby thought about the nature of language. Thought about what are the readers duty to understand written texts.

According to Munby [2] there are different microskills:

- Recognizing the script of a language
- Deducing the meaning and use of unfamiliar lexical items
- Understanding explicitly stated information
- Understanding information when not explicitly stated
- Understanding conceptual meaning
- Understanding the communicative value of sentences
- Understanding relations within the sentence
- Understanding relations between part of text through lexical cohesion devices
- Understanding relations between part of text through grammatical cohesion devices
- Interpreting text by going outside it
- Recognizing indicators in discourse

- Identifying the main point or important information in discourse
- Distinguishing the main idea from supporting details
- Extracting salient points to summarize (the text, an idea)
- Selective extraction of relevant points from a text
- Basic reference skills
- Skimming
- Scanning to locate specifically required information
- Transcoding information to diagrammatic display

Benjamin Bloom [2] has a shorter list. The Bloom taxonomy does not correspond with the Munby taxonomy. Bloom's taxonomy contain the following:

- Knowledge
- Comprehension (sub-divided into: Translation, interpretation, and extrapolation)
- Application
- Analysis
- Synthesis
- Evaluation

Munby's taxonomy was criticised by Widdowson (1980), Holliday and Cooke (1982), Hutchinson and Waters (1987). Nowadays taxonomies deriving from his are commonplace in teaching. These taxonomies were under debate. The debate was about the suitability of the taxonomies.

Munby's categories are connected to levels of linguistic organisation, but there are few exceptions. These categories are rather knowledge-based, than skill-based. Munby refers to his categories as „skills“. However the precise status is unclear. They are expressed in terms of a communicative feature and an operational element.

According to Matthews [15] if most of the categories connected more to knowledge than to skill, the taxonomy might be useful for the specification of discrete-point test or structural test.

Categories of knowledge are important for successful comprehension. The importance of different sorts of background knowledge were demonstrated by the development of schema theory. There were debates about what sorts of skills are required. Eskey and Grabe (1988) enhance the importance of speed and automaticity. According to Matthews, they state that it is not sufficient but necessary to know words for successful reading, instant recognition must be developed. Eskey, Grabe, Carrell (1988) and Devine (1988) highlights the relevance for success of coordinating „top down” and „bottom up” processing, and the negative results of developing the one mode damaging of the other.

„Skimming” and „skanning” seem to be different in kind to other skills. They were considered as skills, but they were considered as strategies too. In terms of flexibility and speed could be seen how skill is involved here. Pre-readers can scan successfully given unlimited time. Speed concerned as an important criterion, so ability in the two areas must be investigated by sub-tests. Speededness is an essential element in these sub-tests. [15]

Reading Skills or subskills can be classified hierarchically into „higher” or „lower” skills. In the Bloom taxonomy, memory, translation and interpretation are considered to be „lower” skills. Analysis, synthesis and evaluation are considered to be „higher” skills. Lower order skills engage with language abilities, higher order skills act toward cognition, reasoning ability, etc. In the Davis list „lower” skills are recalling word meaning and finding answers to questions answered explicitly. „Higher” skills are drawing inferences and recognising writer’s purpose or tone. According to Alderson lower order skills are inevitable before higher order skills. [2]

According to Weir, Hughes and Porter [30], it is believed that language testers would agree, that the practicing of higher order skills will concern the use of some lower order skills, in spite of order of acquisition. For example one cannot comprehend the main idea of the text (higher skills) without understanding the relations in the sentences of a text. The accomplishment of foreign language higher-order skills may not be altogether relying on the foreign language itself. They may be acquired from use with the first language.

Higher order skill items need to have minor facility values than lower order skill items. Alderson seems to accept that there is an implicational association between high-order and low-

order skills. In addition, higher-order skill measuring test items should be more difficult than those test items measuring lower-order skills.

In very exceptional circumstances it is easy to consider the relative hardship of the items. There is completely no sense to expect the higher order or lower order of skills investigated by two items. For example failure of a lower order skill does not indicate the failure of a higher order skill. Yet from this was not concluded, that lower orders skills are unnecessary.

Alderson's conclusions are the following:

- Judges are incapable to coincide as to what an item is testing
- Judges are incapable to coincide the tasking of a particular skill to a test item.
- Judges are incapable to coincide the degree of a particular skill or an item.
- There seems to be an absence of connection between item statistics and items alleged to be testing.

The explanations are the following:

- There are serious causes for disbelieving that skills can be ordered into higher or lower than other skills in another hierarchy that indicates relative difficulty or some unequal step of accession.
- The skills based on Munby, examined by Weir and Criper and Davies, are rather overlaying than discrete.
- It is incorrect to classify the skills in the Munby taxonomy into higher order and lower order skills.
- It is doubtful that any test item can be apparently said to be testing any one skill.

According to Alderson [30] in the field of reading teachers, researchers and testers view reading skills as being ordered hierarchically into higher order and lower order skills. In spite of the relationship between the two order of skill, the valid test of reading comprehension need to be based on a competent selection of higher order and lower order skills. Then it would be logical to take the idea of proper selection as indicating that it should be possible to say what the essential skills are, which ones are lower order and which ones are higher order and which of these skills or which variety of them is being tested by a test item. [30]

There are different subskills, what can be ordered into higher (act toward cognition, reasoning ability) and lower order (engage with language abilities). Subskills are different levels of understanding of a text in mother tongue and in foreign language also. Microskills are contributing to readers abilities.

PART 2 - READING COMPREHENSION DIFFICULTIES

The process of reading can be divided into two parts:

- recognizing printed words
- understanding the message, which is conveyed by the written text.

Without the ability to recognize words, or without linguistic comprehension, which helps to understand what they have decoded, there can be no reading comprehension. So, reading comprehension consists of decoding and linguistic comprehension. [17]

Learners of EFL can have reading comprehension difficulties. A specific problem in decoding or linguistic comprehension, or the combination of deficits in both skills can cause reading comprehension difficulties.

2.1 Early predictors of reading:

There are six different skills, which is used to predict reading, these are print knowledge, phonological awareness, rapid automatized naming, vocabulary, verbal memory, grammar.

Before children start to read, they need to have some knowledge associated with print. They need to have knowledge of letters and how the text is read. It is called print knowledge. The second constituent part of reading is phonological awareness (PA). It is a widely recognized skill, that make use of sound structure of language. It is the consciousness that spoken words consist of phonemes and combinations of speech sounds. The third part of reading is rapid automatized naming (RAN). It is an ability of naming well known objects with speed. RAN is a good predictor of individual differences in reading. The fourth part of reading is vocabulary. It is significance for successful reading. Vocabulary has a relationship with reading comprehension. The fifth part of reading is verbal memory. It is an ability to store verbal information in temporary storage. It has a strong relationship with decoding development. The sixth part of reading is grammar. It is set of rules about the clauses, phrases and words in a language. Grammatical knowledge has an influence on the later reading comprehension. Reading comprehension was explained by the grammatical skills and previous ability of reading word. [6]

2.2 Decoding and reading comprehension difficulties

There are two subtypes of poor readers, which have:

- decoding difficulties
- reading comprehension difficulties. [6]

2.2.1 Decoding difficulties

If a child has poor decoding skills this problem is called dyslexia. „Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically results from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction.”

People who have dyslexia, cannot establish the basis of decoding, the grapheme-phoneme correlations. That is the reason, why they have difficulties with their reading. With time, children learn to decode words correctly, but this process is time-consuming.

The decoding deficit is become noticeable, when a reader reads non-words. To determine the word, contextual hint is not help, the word has to be decoded. The cause of reading difficulties is the weak phonological coding.

Readers with dyslexia have damage in storage and retrieval of speech sounds, compromised verbal short term memory. They may have poorly specified phonological representations. Poorly represented sounds have an influence on learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences.

The alternative theories are demonstration of a widespread deficit of damage in general cognitive and motor functions. There are three most widely recognized alternative theories: auditory theory – caused by auditory deficits; visual theory – caused by visual deficits; cerebellar theory – caused by motor function deficits.

There are two hypothesis that deal with difficulties: the first is the double deficit hypothesis which states that reading difficulties are underlied by phonological deficits. The second is the hypothesis of decoding deficits and reading comprehension which states that reading comprehension ability is often affected by decoding deficits. [6]

Difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and poor spelling and decoding abilities are called poor decoding skills or dyslexia. It means that readers have damage in storage and retrieval of speech sounds.

2.2.2 Reading comprehension difficulties

In the early grades of school the reading comprehension and decoding are highly related. Despite the fluent word decoding, readers can have reading comprehension problems. They are called poor comprehenders.

Few studies analyzed forerunners of reading comprehension difficulties. Retrospective studies go back in time and look for cognitive profiles which might justify the later reading comprehension difficulties. Prospective studies examine the problem which first appeared after a couple of years, this studies go forward in time.

Reading comprehension is in close connection with vocabulary, grammar, verbal memory, inferences and other text-related processes.

Vocabulary

According to Elwer, close connection was found between vocabulary and reading comprehension in studies. Poor comprehenders have deficits in their vocabulary. There are differences between poor comprehenders and typical readers. Elwer states that poor comprehenders complete the receptive and expressive vocabulary tasks worse, than typical readers. Poor comprehenders can learn new words through reading, they can infer words from written text. Poor comprehenders do the task worse, than typical readers, if the explanation and the target word is isolated by filler sentences.

Grammar and morphology

While poor comprehenders did a test for perception of grammar, it revealed, that poor comprehenders have deficit at the word or sentence level, in grammar and morphology by several studies.

The ability to work with the word, form it to new word, and the consciousness of morphemic structure is called morphological awareness. The relevance of morphological awareness increases while the child learn more complex words. Poor comprehenders have deficits in inflection of irregular verbs, mostly past tense constructions in inflected words, which means, that a word is a modification of a word to past tense, for example: say-said. Poor

comprehenders have deficits in comprehension of derived words, which means that a word is formed, for example: logical-illogical. So, poor comprehenders start having problems, if the usage of language becomes more complex.

Verbal Memory

Poor comprehenders have a general working memory deficit. It is possible, that the comprehension deficits appears in certain tasks involving semantic aspect of language. Then poor comprehenders would accomplish badly the tasks where oral language skills is emphasized. Poor comprehenders perform as similar as typical readers on task using general working memory. Although in verbal working memory tasks poor comprehenders do not perform as well as typical readers.

Inferences and other text-related processes

The reader has to combine each sentence with the situation model and draw conclusions from the text in which there are not explicitly expressed information, in case to create a rich representation of a text. The links are inferences, which connect sentences with each other. To establish global coherence, inferences have to be made from text information to general knowledge.

Poor comprehenders make fewer inferences. On a task connected to text connecting inferences, poor comprehenders performs remarkably worse than young readers, inference problem exist in advance to the reading comprehension problems.

Comprehension monitoring is another complex process, which create a situation model. To evaluate the readers comprehension, comprehension monitoring makes refer to a person's ability. It means, that it is possible to check if text makes sense. Error detection tasks can evaluate comprehension monitoring. Poor comprehenders have restricted knowledge of different text structures. [6]

Poor comprehenders have reading comprehension problems, even if they have fluent word decoding. Reading comprehension is in close connection with vocabulary, grammar, verbal memory, inferences and other text-related processes.

2.3. Problems causing reading difficulties

There are different children with different reading problems and different reasons for comprehension difficulties. If teachers understand why a student is struggling, then they can help students easily. There are eight problems that can cause reading comprehension difficulties.

The first problem that children have poor spelling and guess short words for a long time. It is called optilexia. Children can read a word fine on one page, but on the next they could have difficulties with the word. They cannot read the short words correctly, but they can read long word fluently. Unless there is a clear context clue, they are incompetent to read unfamiliar words. In the early years, they seems to progress well, but then they reach a state, when they do not develop. The comprehension is far lower, than teachers expect. They have a lack of interest in reading. The solution is to give the child the tools to engage with the phonic structure of each word and then compel the involvement of the auditory cortex. Teachers should use the visual strength of the child to help them achieve proper phonic decoding of the text, using trainertext visual phonics system. Then children can easily access the phonemes within each words, and later they can blend them successfully. Teachers can create games that can be won easily in case decoding the words in this way. Winning that games are impossible if children try to use sight-memorization, guessing and familiar strategies.

The second problem that there are lot of cases, when children can decode short words very well but they have difficulties with decoding long words. This is connected with weak short term auditory memory. Reading development is harder, than in other cases. They have difficulties with blending longer words, following the meaning of a sentence, remembering list of things over a period of seconds, and with organizing things. Elements of the progress begin to become automatic, as children's reading improves. That happens, because they go into the procedural subconscious processing areas. The more practice the students get, the easier becomes the reading. As a child starts to practice reading, firstly the process takes place in their declarative memory, but then, over a period of months, slowly moves into procedural memory. It is the slowest solution, but it is the most useful for them.

The third problem that there are some children who on some days cannot read words properly, and skip it, or skip whole lines of text. These children have eye convergence and eye tracking difficulties. They skip words, skip lines, read large texts easier, when they read, they omit the endings of the words, they read flashcards easier, than whole sentences and they

struggle more when they are tired. The only solution is to do simple exercises to work the cerebellum of the child.

The fourth problem that there are children, who cannot put a word together from the individual sounds, they have difficulties with blending sounds. In their auditory processing cortex they have developmental delay. It is called auditory processing weakness. Between 5-10% of children have APW (auditory processing weakness). This makes an impact on a children's ability to learn how to read. It is hard for them to work out the sounds in words. APW has many symptoms. But the most common ones are the following: children's hearing is normal, but they behave as if it is not. In the presence of surrounding noise they have problems with hearing. They have difficulties with distinguishing between similar sounds. They misunderstand the information what is being said, but they do not notice it. They seem to have problems with attention. They have speech issues from a young age. They have problems with following listed instructions. They cannot stand noisy places. Auditory processing weakness is an issue with how the brain interprets what is being heard. That is, why they sometimes have difficulties with speech too. Children with APW turn to their visual strengths as a strategy for learning how to read. They learn words as an image. For them it needs to be provided a consistent structure for the sounds, and teachers should help them to learn phoneme-sound combinations at the same time.

The fifth problem that if children have rising frustration, it can cause meltdown. Reading can turn into anger, or they remain in silent. It is caused by the normal stress systems that are going into a spiral. Reading is absolutely a higher brain function, so stress can negatively affect reading. Sometimes students can read and do things normally, but confidence seems to collapse. They become frustrated, and then this frustration leads to anger, silence or running away. With some people they can read better, but with others no. Teachers should make the reading process fun for them, and talk to them that it is not a problem, that they find reading hard. Teachers should create a pleasant environment, where children can read without fear.

The sixth problem is the fluency block. There are some cases, when children never start to read words fluently, but they can decode words. If this is not fixed, it never turns into proper reading.

The seventh problem that when children have anxiety about reading, and try to look at the words, but words moving around on the page, it is caused by eye tracking and convergence difficulty. Children skip words or lines of text. When they are tired, they read worse. They have

difficulties with word endings. They become tired after reading a page of a text. They accelerates through punctuation. Reading small text is harder for them, than reading the large ones. This can be fixed instantly with some simple acetate sheets.

The eighth problem that if children are trying to read, but have poor focus, it is caused by contrast sensitivity or eye tracking weakness. But in other case, it can be caused by attention deficit. They have problems with paying attention to tasks. They see distortions of the text, complain that the text moves on the page. With the right reading materials, the progress can be made easier for students. When tinted acetate placed over the page, there is a marked improvement. [29]

So, there are eight problem that children could have. First is poor spelling and guess short words for a long time (optilexia). Second is when they have difficulties with decoding long words. Third is that there are some children who on some days cannot read words properly, and skip it, or skip whole lines of text. Fourth is auditory processing weakness. Fifth is that some children have rising frustration and it can cause meltdown. Sixth is fluency block. Seventh is when children have anxiety about reading, and try to look at the words, but words moving around on the page. And the last problem is that some children are trying to read, but have poor focus.

2.4 Reading Comprehension Impairment

Appropriate reading comprehension depends on the ability to decode and understand the written text. If either of these is inadequate, reading comprehension problems will appear. The connection between reading comprehension and decoding skills inclined to reduce slightly, as children get older, while the connection between reading comprehension and listening comprehension increase.

Children who has reading comprehension impairment, have appropriate decoding together with reading comprehension deficits. They show deficits of language comprehension.

There are different attitudes to help children with reading comprehension impairment, focusing on: inference training that means children pick out words from a section and tell, how the word connects to sentences or stories. The next is reciprocal teaching, this means, that children can be urged to work in groups on a reading comprehension task, each student can take different role: first student can clarify, second can summarize. The next is mental imagery, this means to ask students to use drawings to illustrate stories. The following is verbalizing, this

means to ask children to create summaries of what they have read. The next is oral language skills, this means, that children work only with spoken language. Children thereby develop their vocabulary.

Poor comprehenders have less motivation to read, because they are anxious. With motivation and practicing they can become good readers. [10]

So reading comprehension impairment is a condition, when children have appropriate decoding together with reading comprehension deficits, but they show deficits of language comprehension. With practicing they can overcome.

2.5 Why Some Students Are Poor at Comprehension?

There are a lot of factors that contribute to reading difficulties for many students with special needs. According to Lewis and Doorlag the underlying causes of their reading problems may be largely unknown and the most children's problems linked with economic and social circumstances at home.

According to Juel, Pressley, Chapman, Tunmer children's early acquirement of decoding skill is a dependable predictor of later reading accomplishment. Reader should be able to process the written symbols of written text.

Poor comprehenders read noticeably less, than typical readers. Reading comprehension is a complex interactive process. [23]

So, some students who are poor at comprehension, need only practicing, if they do not have any problems, for example optilexia, dyslexia, etc. But most of them cannot practice reading because of economic and social problems.

2.6 The role of motivation in reading

Motivation is an important factor. Motivation can engage students. Then students actively learn and develop their comprehension. Students, who have difficulties with reading, can be anxious. Teacher should motivate children to read more, and then reading can be a pleasant activity for them.

There are ten points that can motivate children to learn. The first point is proper teacher behavior. If a teacher show enthusiasm, establish a good agreement with students, and show students that care about them, children can be motivated. The second point is recognizing students efforts and achievement. Teachers have to monitor students, celebrate their victories

and make sure grades reflect student's efforts. The third point is promoting learners self-confidence. It means that teacher provide students with positive feed-back, teach students learning techniques and design appropriate tasks for the students. The fourth point is creating a pleasant classroom climate. Teacher can encourage students with humor, create a supportive classroom climate that supports risk-taking and use an interesting opening activity. The fifth point is to present tasks properly. It means giving clear instructions and giving good reasons to students of the importance of a particular task. The sixth point is that teacher increase learners goal-orientedness. Teacher find out students needs and build them into the curriculum, encourage students to set goals. The seventh point is to make the learning tasks stimulating. Teacher can break the routine by varying the presentation format, introducing various interesting topics. Teacher can make tasks challenging. The eighth point is to familiarize learners with L2 related values. It means that teacher shows authentic cultural materials, remind students of the benefits of learning and using English. The ninth point is to support the group's coherence and group norms. It means that teacher allow students to get to know each other, ask students to work for the same goal, explain the class rules and their importance. The last point is to promote learner autonomy. It means adopting the role of facilitator, equally teaching and allowing students to assess themselves. [14]

If teacher can care about students, recognize the needs and efforts, can give positive feedback, give clear instructions, present the curriculum interestingly, it can motivate learners.

PART 3 – INVESTIGATION OF COMPREHENSION IN 5TH AND 6TH FORMS

Planning the study

In recent years, research have become increasingly interesting because of the children's reading habits. As an experience, children do not like to read nowadays, may be because of the increasing technology. In our developing society, YL-s are not interested in reading as much as the previous generations. The purpose of this research is to investigate the reading comprehension skills of young learners of EFL in the local schools.

Hypotheses

- The task is appropriate for the level of schoolchildren

Participants

The present research was carried out in two elementary schools of Beregszász: in Primary School number 6 and in Primary School number 9. The research was carried out among fifth and sixth grade learners. There were 44 respondents, 25 from grade five and 19 from grade six. There were 27 girls, and 17 boys. The participants were not randomly chosen, but all the learners studying in the above-mentioned schools have been involved in the research with a purpose to get a general picture of the reading skills of the learners.

Research instruments

Learners had to fill in a reading comprehension test. The test consists of two texts. The first text is followed by two tasks: the first task contains five comprehension questions while the second one is made up of four true-or-false questions. After the second text six true-or false sentences can be found. True-false task prevail because this is the most widely used tool for measuring reading comprehension of young learners aged 10-12. The total score of the test is 20 points (first task 2x5 points, second 1x4 and 1x6).

Data collection and procedures of the research

The research was carried out in February. The teachers in both schools were helpful in administering the tests and explained the tasks as well as the purpose and importance of the test. The tests were written during the English lesson. The time was appropriate for children, they could solve all the tasks in the time limit.

Results

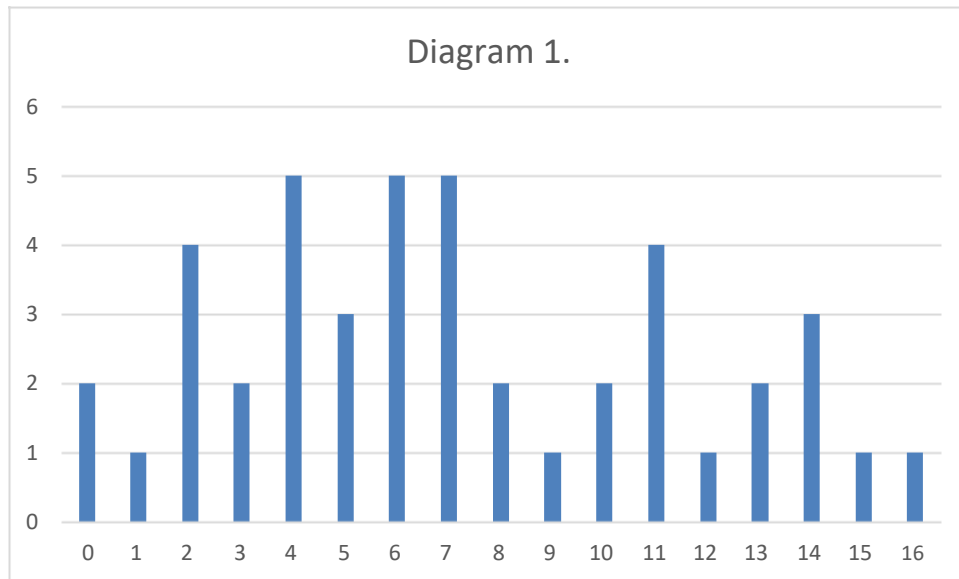
The results of any test can be analysed best with the help of statistics. It allows researchers to critically evaluate the results of an educational research. The main statistics used in order to analyse the results of a test are the following: mean, median, modus and standard deviation. The mean or average of a test is found by adding all numbers in the data set and then this number is divided by the number of values in the set. The median is the middle value. The mode is the number that occurs most often. The standard deviation is a measure of how close the numbers are to the mean. If the standard deviation is big, then the data is more "dispersed" or "diverse".

The results of the reading comprehension test administered in both schools have been summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Statistics of the reading comprehension tests.

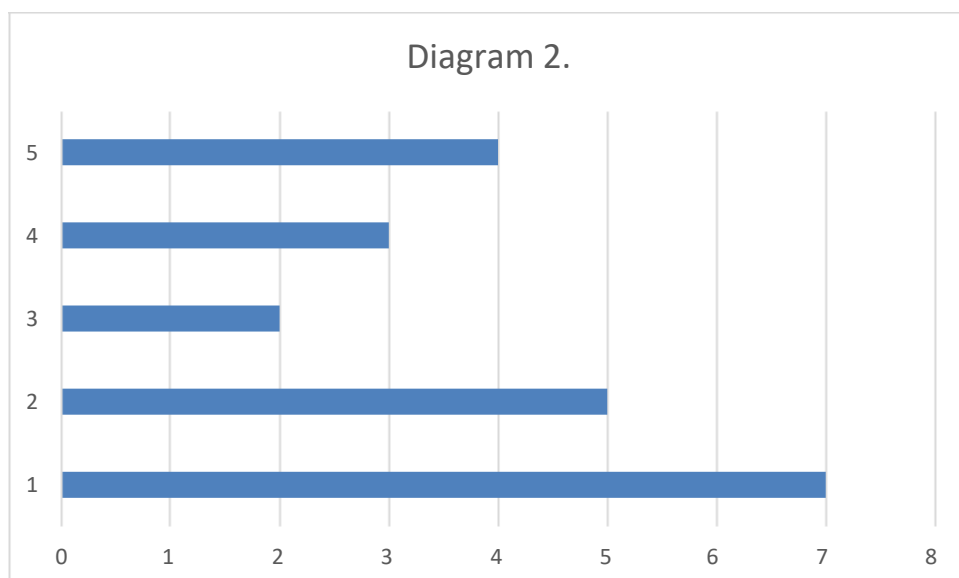
	Total	School no6, grades 5, 6	School no 9, 5, 6	Grades 5	Grades 6	School no 6		School 9	
						Gr. 5	Gr. 6	Gr. 5	Gr. 6
Mean	7,15	7,96	4,4	7,98	6,05	8,92	6,57	4,2	4,6
Median	6,5	7	4	7	6	10,5	6	4	4
Mode	7	6	7	11	4	11	6	-	-
SD	3,57	3,63	2,48	4,17	2,59	4,09	2,22	1,44	3,52

For the detailed analysis diagrams have been constructed. In Diagram 1 the results of the two schools can be seen. Axis X shows the points of the text, axis Y shows the number of children who scored the points on axis X. From the diagram we can see that the highest point was 16 and only one learner achieved it. 12 (27%) learners have scored 60% or over. It must be admitted that two learners scored no points at all.

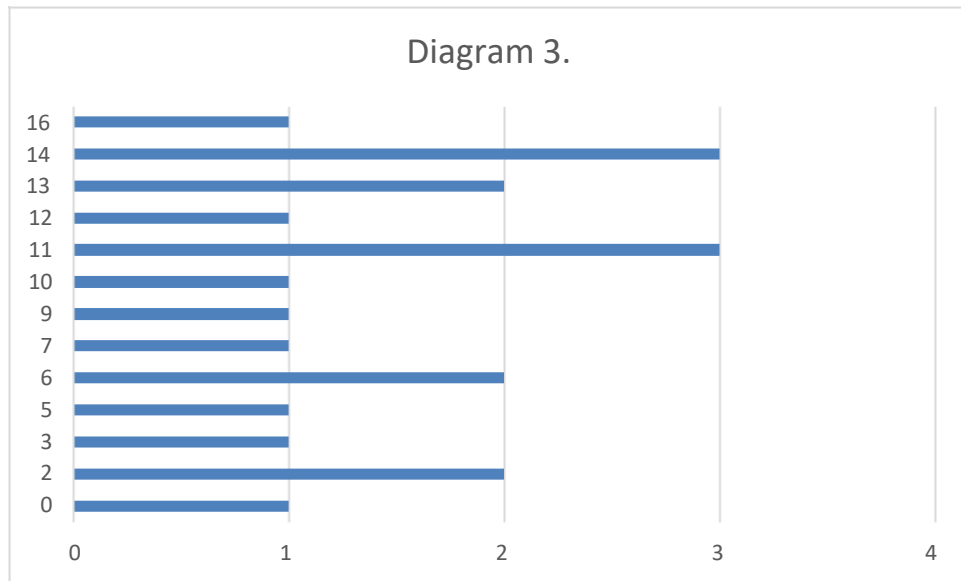


Results of the reading comprehension test in Grades 5 and 6

Test statistics (Table 1) shows that the best results have been achieved by learners of grade 5 in school no 6. Learners of grade 5 in school no 9, on the contrary, have the lowest statistics. Both the mean and the median are the lowest in this grade. Comparing the results of these two classes we can see a considerable difference in SD. Diagrams 2 and 3 show that in school no 6 the highest point scored was 16 and the lowest was zero (Diagram 3) while in school no 9 the highest point was 7 and the lowest was two points. (Diagram 2). Axis X shows the number of children who scored the given points, axis Y shows the points of the text.

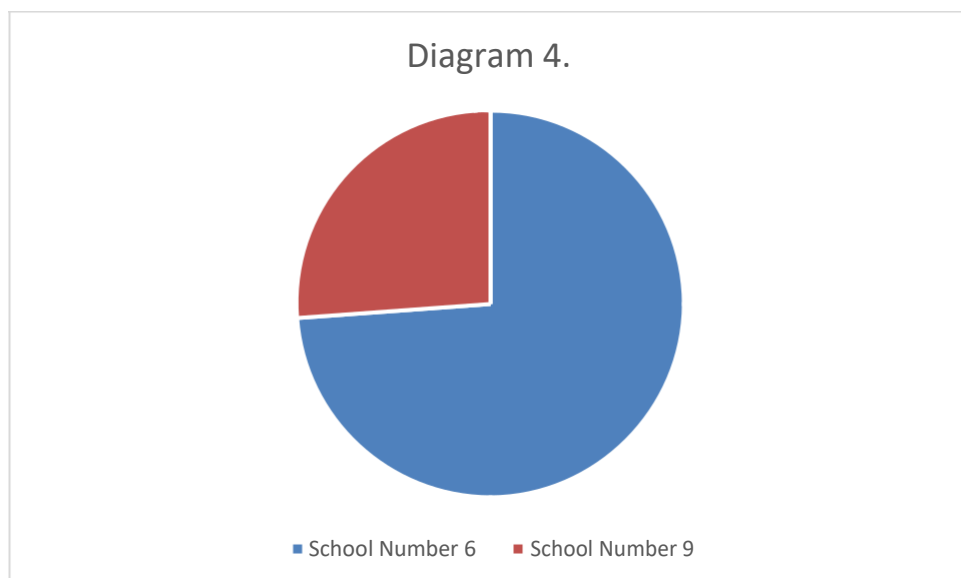


Results in 5th grade, school number 9.



Results in grade 5, School no 6.

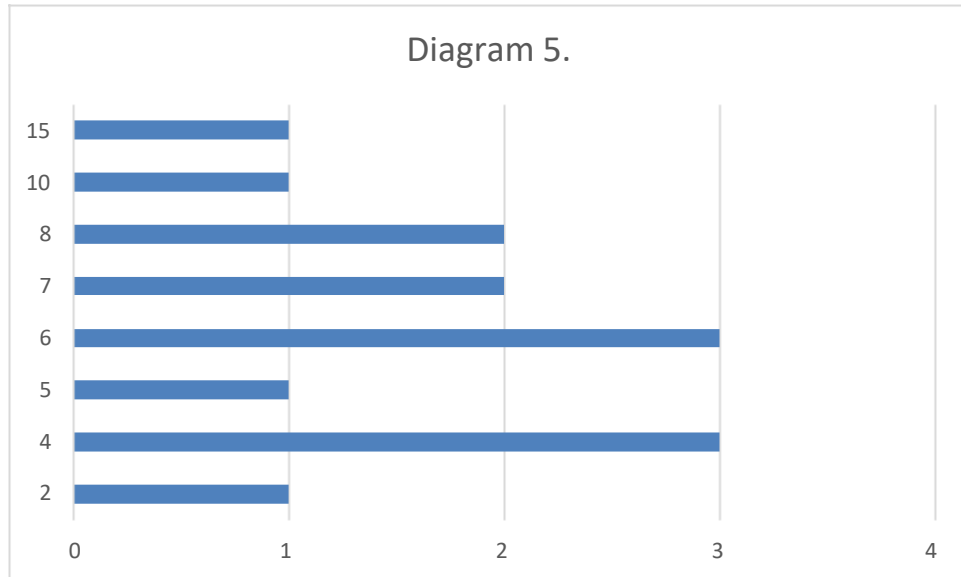
Comparing the general results of the two schools i.e. grades 5&6 school in no 6 and grades 5&6 in school no 9 we can state that they are better in school number 6. In Table 1, columns two and three show that the mean in school no 6 is 7.96 while in school no 9 it is only 4.4. In this school children had difficulties in completing the reading comprehension tasks. In grades 5 school no 6 showed far better results than school no 9. (Diagram 4)



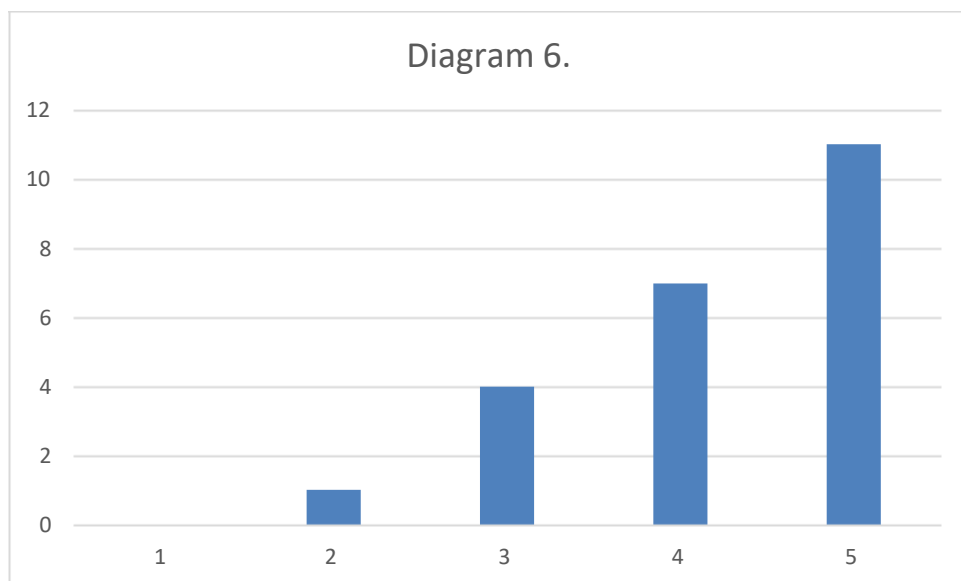
Comparison of the results of the schools in grade 5

When we compare the results of grades 6 in the two schools we do not see such a big difference as in case of grades 5. The means are very close to each other and the median is the same. The means of grade 6 are: 6.57 in school number 6 and 4.2 in school no 9. (Table 1) The tendency remains the same: better results have been reached by learners of school no 6.

Diagrams 5 and 6 tell us more details. The highest point scored by learners in school no 6 was 15, the lowest was two points (Diagram 5). In school no 9 the highest point was 11 but the lowest point was zero (Diagram 6).

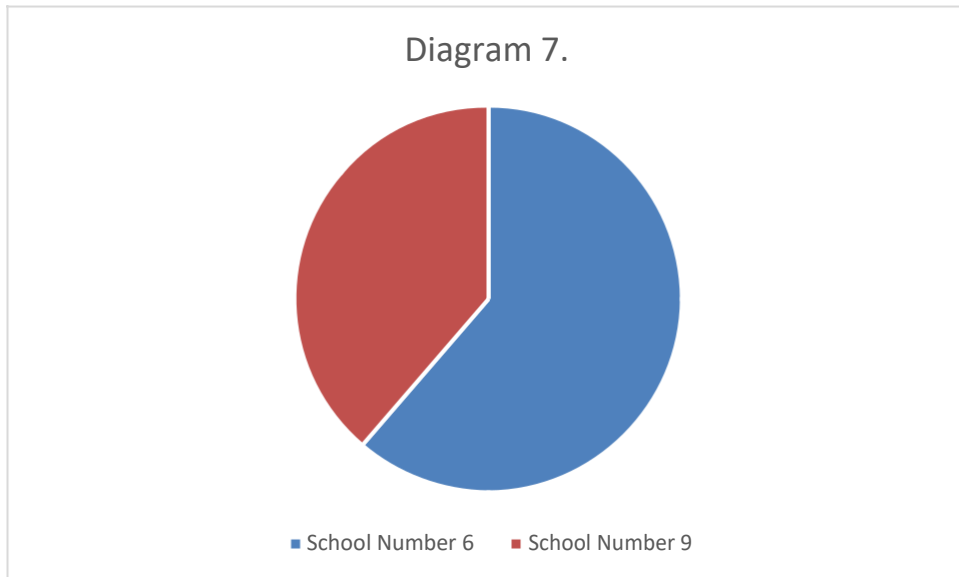


Results of grade 6 in School no 6



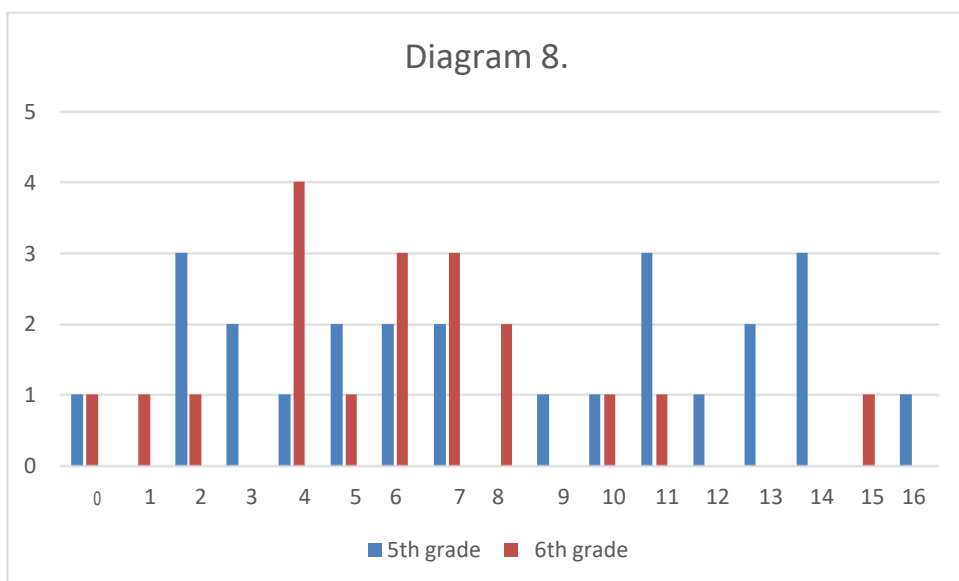
Results of 6th grade in School Number 9.

The results of grade 6 are better in school no 6 though the difference is not as big as in grades 5. (Diagram 7).



Comparison of the results of the schools in grade 6

Finally, comparing the results of grades 5 and 6 of both schools in more detail, from Diagram 8 it becomes obvious that only two learners from grade 6 completed more than 50% of the tasks while the number of such learners in grades 5 is ten. Columns showing the number of participant completing less than 50% of the task (lower than 10 points) are higher in grades 6. From all the participants the highest score was reached by a learner of grade 5 from school no 6. As to the lowest scores, in both schools, there was one respondent who was not able to complete any task correctly and did not achieve any points at all.



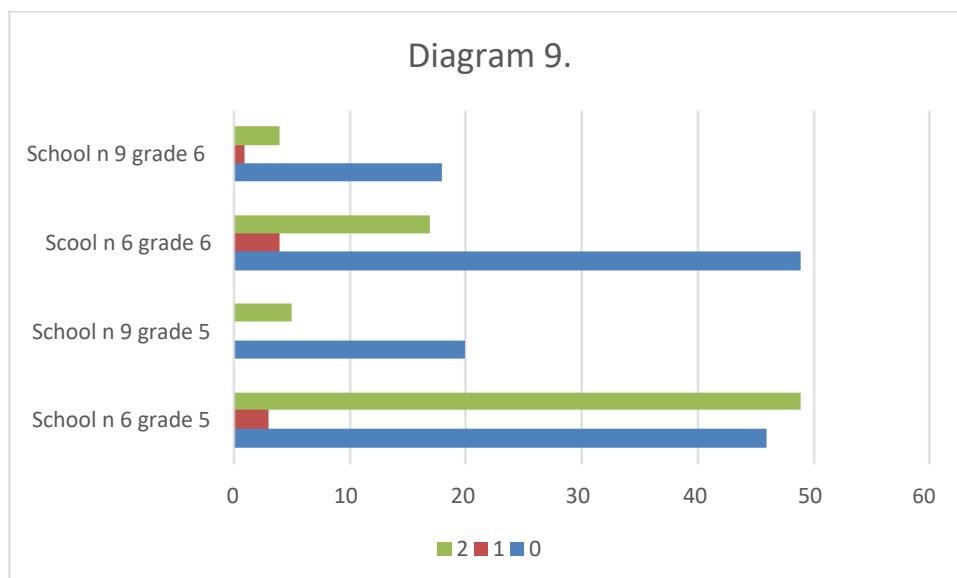
Comparison of grades 6th and 5th

Drawing conclusion, it can be seen that learners from Primary School no 9 have more difficulties with the tasks, than in the Secondary School no 6. In Primary School no 9 the sixth grade students performed better, than fifth grade students, while in Secondary School no 6 fifth grade students performed better. Analyzing the statistics, the best result was achieved by the fifth graders in Secondary School no 6. The worst result was achieved by fifth graders in Primary School no 9. The level of the texts was appropriate for children, but they showed low level of understanding of the texts.

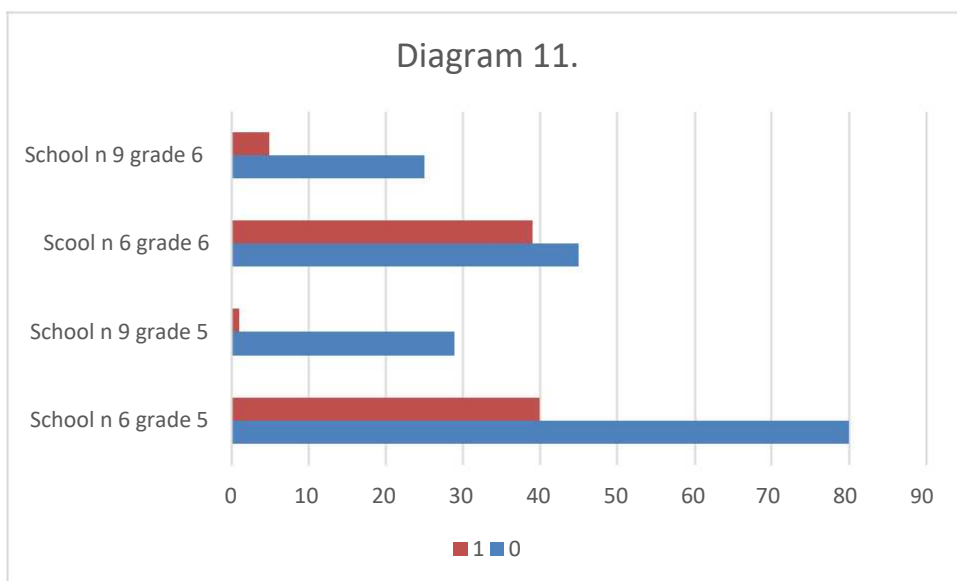
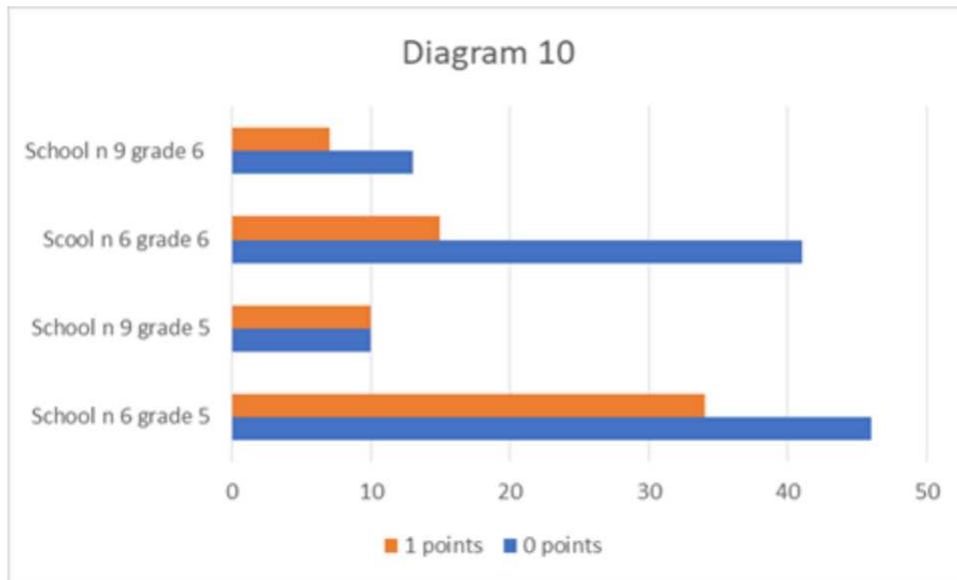
Analyzing the tasks of the test

The first text was about a small town, its location and some places of interest. It was followed by two tasks. In the first one the learners had to answer five questions based on the text, the second was a True or False statement. Two points were given for answering the questions, one point for the statements. The second text was an e-mail followed by True or false statements. So, two task types had to be done: answering questions and deciding whether the given statements are true or false.

Diagram 9 shows the points scored on the first task. The total number of answers given by the participants of the research in the first exercise was 216. Not all the respondents gave answers in this task. 34,7% (75) of all answers given were correct, 8 (3,73%) answers achieved one point (the information was given correctly but with minor errors) and 61,57% (133) answers were incorrect. There were students who answered all the questions, but none of the answers given were correct. The highest number of correct answers has been given by the learners of grade 5.



The second and the third task contained short True/False statements. In the second task 176 answers have been given. 66 (37,5%) were correct,110 (62,5%) answers were incorrect. (See diagram 10. for more detailed information) The last task was also a true or false exercise. The total number of answers was 264. 179 (67,8%) answers were incorrect, only 85 (32,2%) were right. (See diagram 11. for more detailed information)



Summing up the number of correct answers, we can come to the conclusion that the two task types – answering questions and identifying the true and false information – proved to be equally difficult for the learners: 34 % of the answers proved to be correct in task 1 (answering questions) and 34,5% correct answers have been given in identifying true or false statements (tasks 2 and 3).

The second text proved to be more difficult, than the first, because only 32,2% of the answers were correct, while in the other tasks 34,54% and 37,5% of the answers were correct.

In the first task (answering questions) students tried to give full answers with whole sentences. There were students, who wrote down the correct answer, but in one word, not in a sentence.

There were a few students, who performed very well and showed high level of comprehension, e.g. a student from school no 6, grade 5 achieved the best result (16 points). 31,81% of students achieved more than 10 points, while 68,18% of students achieved less than 10 points.

Analysing the microskills

The term microskills or subskills is widely used in teaching a foreign language and testing the level of reading comprehension. Reading ability can be divided up into different microskills and reading comprehension is visualised as a construct of microskills. A number of reading microskills were identified in a study by Munby [2]. In fact, this taxonomy has been criticised and other taxonomies have been invented. A great number of studies have been printed about the degree to which it is possible to identify these microskills involved in the reading process. The present study aimed to examine only four microskills from Munby's taxonomy: understanding explicitly stated information, understanding relations between parts of text through lexical cohesion devices, understanding relations between part of text through grammatical cohesion devices and understanding information when not explicitly stated.

In the test administered in schools no 6 and 9 two test items have been identified as items in which the information is explicitly stated. They were questions 1 and 3 in exercise 1. The number of the correct answers and the percentage are the following:

Ex 1. Task 1	Ex 1. Task 3
17 (38,64%)	24 (54,54%)

Two microskills in the taxonomy require understanding relations between parts of text through cohesion devices – one through lexical, the other through grammatical cohesion devices. Cohesion is the grammatical and lexical linking within a text or sentence that holds a text together and gives it meaning. Lexical cohesion is based on lexical content and background knowledge. Repetitions, antonyms and synonyms are considered to belong to lexical cohesion devices. In order to understand the answer questions 2 and 4 in exercise 1 repetition was used:

the word „cafe” was repeated in sentences 'My favourite café is on Belmont Street – it's next to a music shop. The café is called The Beautiful Mountain.' The question was: 'What and where is The Beautiful Mountain' and the phrase '200 years old' was repeated. The second lexical device in the text was an antonym. The sentence in the test was: 'Union Street is a long, busy street with many shops.' In the T/F statement in exercise 2, task 3 'Union Street is a short street' the antonym of 'long' was used. The number and the percentage of correct answers given on these two items:

Ex1. Task 2	Ex 1. Task 4	Ex 2. Task 3
14 (31,81%)	17 (38,64%)	23 (52,27%)

Grammatical cohesion is based on structural content. The cohesive devices are pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, adverbs, ellipsis. In the test from four grammatical devices three were prepositions (*opposite*, *next to* and *on*) and one indefinite pronoun (*any*). The number of correct answers have been summarised below:

Ex1. Task 5	Ex2. Task 2	Ex2. Task 4	Ex2. Task 5
13 (29,54%)	9 (20,45%)	23 (52,57%)	12 (27,27%)

The fourth subskill examined in the present study was understanding information when not explicitly stated. Three tasks have been identified as a not explicitly stated information. This microskill did not prove to be well-developed among the participants of the study. The results are the following:

Ex.2. Task 1	Ex.2. Task 2	Ex.2. Task 4
14 (31,81%)	8 (18,18%)	15 (34,09%)

To sum up, among the examined subskills the explicitly stated information ranks first where 54% and 38 % of all the answers were correct followed by task types in which learners had to understand lexical cohesive devices: 52%, 38,64% and 31,81% of all the answers were correct. Grammatical cohesive devices caused more troubles and only in one case 52,57 % of the respondents identified the information correctly where a preposition had to be understood. Three items were misunderstood by most participants and in all cases less than 30% of the respondents understood the content. The lowest result was 18%. In this item learners had to understand information that is not stated explicitly. However, the other two items of the same subskill have been understood by 34% and 31,81% of all the respondent. So, it can be stated, that the two least developed subskills from the examined ones proved to be the ones when

learners had to understand relations between part of text through grammatical cohesion and when the information was not explicitly stated.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has explained the importance of reading, reading comprehension and developing reading comprehension.

The main aim of the thesis was to collect information from different sources (books, investigations) about the developing of reading comprehension and investigate young learners' reading comprehension development.

The first part of the thesis is about the concept of reading and reading comprehension, the components of reading process, the five different levels of comprehension, the methods of becoming a good reader, how can teacher teach reading properly, and the concept of microskills have been discussed.

Reading is complex cognitive process, the students have to develop their comprehension skills. Reading comprehension have different levels, for example literal comprehension, reorganization, inferential comprehension, evaluation and appreciation or personal response. Teachers need to help a lot to student to develop their comprehension skills.

In the second part of the thesis reading comprehension difficulties have been dealt with. The early predictors of reading have been enlisted, the different types of reading comprehension difficulties, and the problems that cause these difficulties, and the motivation of children to become successful and good readers have been described.

There are two subtypes of poor readers, who have decoding difficulties or reading comprehension difficulties. There are a lot of problem that can cause the problems, for example there are children who cannot decode long words, but short words can decode very well. Motivation plays an important role in teaching reading, because motivation can engage student to practice reading and develop their skills.

In the third part of the thesis a research have been described and its analyses was presented. The third part contains a research connected to children's reading comprehension, two texts and three tasks were used to investigate children's comprehension. The aim of the research was to investigate the reading comprehension skills of young learners of EFL aged between 10 and 11/12. In addition, four microskills from the Munby taxonomy were investigated.

The four microskills that have been investigated are the following: understanding explicitly stated information, understanding relations between part of text through lexical cohesion

devices, understanding relations between part of text through grammatical cohesion devices and understanding information when not explicitly stated. The most developed subskill was understanding explicitly stated information. Understanding relations between part of text through grammatical cohesion devices and understanding information when not explicitly stated were the two least developed subskills. Drawing conclusion, students could perform those tasks well, where the information was explicitly stated rather than the tasks, where information was not explicitly stated. In those tasks, where they had to understand relations between part of text through lexical cohesion, they performed better, as in the tasks, where they had to understand relations between part of text through grammatical cohesion.

The first hypotheses, that learners of grade 6 will perform better on the reading comprehension test, was partly refuted, because the comprehension level proved to be the highest in grade 5, School no 6. The second hypothesis that from the microskill examined learners will understand explicitly stated information best, was supported. Students performed those tasks the best that contained explicitly stated information.

This research indicates that students have different comprehension difficulties. Learners from Primary School no 9 have more difficulties with the tasks, than in the Secondary School no 6. In Primary School no 9 the sixth grade students performed better, than fifth grade students, while in Secondary School no 6 fifth grade students performed better. Analyzing the statistics, the best result was achieved by the fifth graders in Secondary School no 6.

The level of the texts was appropriate for the children, but they showed low level of understanding of the texts. In conclusion, children do not read enough and they do not develop their vocabulary, so they did not understand many phrases, words. That is the reason, that they could not perform the tasks well.

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РЕЗІЮМЕ

Головне завдання дипломної роботи пояснити важливість розвитку навичок читання.

У цій дипломній роботі були описані різні рівні навичок читання, способи стати хорошим читачем, способи вчити читати правильно, труднощі у навиках, проблеми і причини які викликають труднощі у навичках, і мотивація дітей.

Складаючи висновки, читання – це комплексний пізнавальний процес. Учням треба розвивати навички читання. Навички читання мають різні рівні: буквальне розуміння, реорганізація, розуміння смислу тексту, оцінка і оцінювання. А також існує багато допоміжні навички у читання. Вони можуть бути нижчого або вищого порядку. Вчителю потрібно допомагати учням розвивати їхні навички. Після цього вони досягають успіхів у читанні.

Існує два типи читачів, яким складно дається читання: до першого типу відносяться учні, які мають проблеми з роз'ясненням, до другого типу відносяться учні, які мають проблеми з навиком читання. Існує багато проблем пов'язаних з виникненням труднощів. Важливу роль грає мотивація у навчанні читання, тому що, мотивація стимулює учнів, щоб вони читали ще більше і розвивали навички.

Дипломна робота містить результати дослідження про розуміння читання дитини. Діти виконали тести. Тест містить два тексти. До першого тексту було два завдання, до другого тексту тільки одне завдання. Метою дослідження було перевірка розуміння читання дитини, віком 10-12 років. А також допоміжні навички були досліджені.

Ця дипломна робота визначає способи навчання і проблеми у навичках читання.

Я вибрала цю тему, тому що, я думаю що розвиток навичок читання важливий для того, щоб діти стали успішними дорослими, які люблять читати, розвивають свій запас слів та знання.

APPENDIXES

Kedves diákok! Kérlek, olvassátok el figyelmesen az alábbi szöveget, azután pedig válaszoljatok a kérdésekre.

Read the text. (Olvasd el a szöveget)

I'm Tom and I live in Aberdeen. It's a really big city in the north of Scotland. It's 190 kilometres north of the capital city, Edinburgh. 200,000 people live in Aberdeen.

There are some interesting, old buildings and museums. The music hall is beautiful – it's nearly 200 years old. There are many concerts there.

There are also some nice parks. My favourite is a park called Johnston Gardens. There's a small river and a waterfall. There are also many beautiful flowers there.

Union Street is a long, busy street with many shops. There are also some great shops on the small streets near Union Street. My favourite café is on Belmont Street – it's next to a music shop. The café is called The Beautiful Mountain. The chocolate cake is great!

Sport is popular in Aberdeen and there are many sports centres. My sports centre is opposite the beach. There's a small swimming pool for families. There are also football and basketball classes there.

Answer the questions. (Válaszold meg a kérdéseket)

1. Where is Aberdeen?

2. What is 200 years old?

3. What is Tom's favourite park?

4. What and where is The Beautiful Mountain?

5. Where is Tom's sports centre?

Write true or false for the sentences! (Ha igaz a mondat, írd a vonalra, hogy IGAZ, ha hamis, akkor írd a vonalra, hogy HAMIS)

1. Tom lives in Aberdeen. True

2. There aren't any museums in Aberdeen. _____

3. Union Street is a short street. _____

4. Tom's favourite café is next to a music shop. _____

5. There's a sports centre on the beach. _____

Köszönöm szépen a segítséget!

Kedves diákok! Kérlek, olvassátok el figyelmesen az alábbi szöveget, azután pedig oldjátok meg az alatta lévő feladatot.

Read the email. (Olvasd el az emailt)

Hi Josh,

Thanks for your message. You asked about our Charity Day. Well, it was last Sunday in the town centre. The day started with some races between teachers and students. And the students won! After that, there was face-painting and then a magic show for the children. At lunchtime, we sold sandwiches and home-made cakes.

After lunch, there was a concert with different singers and musicians. I played in the school jazz band. Then we had a fashion show with models from the local schools. After that, there was a quiz with a prize of a weekend in London.

After dark, there were fireworks and a barbecue. We had a great day and we raised £1250 for disabled children. I hope this gives you some ideas for your Charity Day!

Good luck!

Natalie

Answer True or False. (Ha igaz a mondat, írd a vonalra, hogy IGAZ, ha hamis, akkor írd a vonalra, hogy HAMIS)

1. Natalie wanted information about Josh's Charity Day. _____
2. The first activity of the day was sport. _____
3. There weren't any activities for young children. _____
4. Natalie wasn't part of the concert. _____
5. The Charity Day continued into the evening. _____
6. They raised more than a thousand pounds for charity. _____

Köszönöm szépen a segítséget!