ACTIVATING PUPILS TO PREVENT INDISCIPLINE IN EFL CLASSES

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Autor: Anna JIŘÍČKOVÁ
Adresa: Fügnerova, 825
464 01. Frýdlant

Vedoucí práce: Mgr. Zeno Vernyik
Konzultant: Mgr. Zeno Vernyik

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ZADÁNÍ DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE
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pro (diplomant): Anna Jiřičková
adresa: Fügnerova 825, 464 01 Frýdlant
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[Podpisy]

Převzal (diplomant):
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Podpis:
Úvod: Diplomová práce zahrnuje akademický výzkum a praktické ověření teorie, která se týká příčin nekázní a způsobů zajištění školní kázné formou aktivizace žáků.

Cíl: Cílem je prokázat, že nekázní v hodinách se dá předcházet správnou aktivizací žáků pomocí vhodného a účinného výběru takových aktivit zařazených do výuky, které žáky motivují a především plně zapojují do činností a úkolů.

Zpracování praktického projektu, analýza a interpretace výsledků v uvedené diplomové práci prokáží porozumění metodám analýzy teoretických východisek a jejich kritického zhodnocení a schopnost využití teoretických závěrů při volbě vhodných metod při výuce cizího jazyka. Posouzení efektivnosti teorie a zvolených metodických postupů v praxi dále ukáže schopnost využití evaluace jako nezbytné strategie hodnocení celého výzkumu.

Specifikou uvedeného projektu je analýza nekázně jako obecného problému, se kterým se potýká především začínající učitel. Výzkum zařazený v diplomové práci se snaží ukázat, že jedním ze způsobů zvládnutí nekázně je umožnit dětem zvládnout nároky výuky a pomocí jiných metod vybraných v praxi dále ukáže schopnost využití evaluace jako nezbytné strategie hodnocení celého výzkumu.

Literatura:


Prohlášení

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ANOTACE

Tato diplomová práce si kladě za úkol zjistit, které metody mohou učitelé použít k prevenci nekázně v hodinách anglického jazyka. Výzkum byl realizován během 7 vyučovacích hodin anglického jazyka, které obsahovaly různé aktivity, u nichž se předpokládá, že mohou zabránit nekázní žáků. Cílem těchto aktivit bylo aktivizovat žáky natolik, aby se nechovali v hodinách nevhodně. Byly použity 3 metody k dosažení aktivizace: personalizace, afektivní vyučování a poezie.

Výsledky, zvláště pokud se zaměříme na pozorování v hodinách, prokázaly, že aktivizace žáků pomocí personalizace, afektivního vyučování a poezie má pozitivní vliv na výsledek nekázně. Nicméně výsledky hodnocení vlastního chování žáků a reflexí vyučující nebyly tak jednoznačné.

KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA

aktivizace, nekázeň, chování, prevence nekázně, anglický jazyk, personalizace, afektivní vyučování, poezie

ANOTATION

This diploma thesis presents ways that teachers can use to prevent indiscipline in their English language classes. The project was tested during 7 lessons and included various activities which were considered to be helpful in keeping students disciplined. The aim of these activities was to engage or activate students so that they do not misbehave. 3 ways to evoke students' engagement were used:
personalization, affect and poetry. The occurrence of indiscipline during the research and ordinary activities was then compared.

The results, especially according to the classroom observation, show that activating pupils through personalization, affect and poetry does have a positive influence on occurrence of indiscipline. Nonetheless, the results of students' self-assessment and the teacher's reflections were more hesitant.

KEY WORDS

activation, engagement, indiscipline, misbehaviour, prevention of indiscipline, EFL, personalization, affect, poetry

ANOTACIÓN

Esa tesis de diploma se dedica a métodos que maestros y profesores pueden usar para prevenir que indisciplina se encuentre en sus clases de inglés. El proyecto se realizó en 7 clases y incluyó actividades varias que se habían creído de ser asistidas en poner los alumnos disciplinados. El objetivo de estas actividades fue activar y cautivar los alumnos para que sigan en portarse bien. En el proyecto se usaron 3 modos de cautivar: personalización, actividades afectivas y poesía. Después, la presencia de indisciplina en actividades del proyecto y actividades generales fue comparada.

Los resultados, según el registro de observación, indican que activar los alumnos a través de personalización, actividades afectivas ayuda ayuda en reducir la ocurrencia de indisciplina. Sin embargo, los resultados de los alumnos (auto-evaluación) y las reflexiones de la enseñante fueron más indeterminados.
PALABRAS CLAVE
activar, cautivar, indisciplina, prevención de indisciplina, inglés, personalización, actividades afectivas, poesía
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I. Today's School.

A. Characteristics of 21st Century Education.

There is one important feature of the process of education: it must be in concord with the development of the society to which the students belong and it must reflect its changes as soon as possible to make sure that the educated people are people of today's, not of the past society. The society of 21st century certainly demands a lot from educational institutions; the pressure laid on schools is strong, as shows for example the article "Education As Ongoing Modernization Process" which talks about educationalization of social problems (Depaepe and Smeyers 2008, 379). This chapter will deal with 4 characteristics which may be linked to the topic of this thesis - indiscipline.

First, education specialists call for school-parent (school-family respectively) partnership (Ratcliff and Hunt 2009, 495-496; Fry 2001). Parents are, at the basic level, in the majority of schools asked to help with homework and communicate with the school in what regards the child's progress and/or possible problems, however, the involvement of parents reach up to functioning as school administrators or classroom helping staff. There is a significant evidence that even low parents' involvement in the run of the school has got positive effect on the children's behaviour, learning and academic results (Fry 2001). The advantages of parent involvement are, nonetheless, highlighted more than disadvantages, which can be found in Minke and Anderson (2005, 181-182).

Further on, there is a demand for teaching emotional and social skills, character education and engaging students in civics matters. Graczyk et al. (2006, 267) discusses various interventions to prevent behavioural problems, one of them being SEL (social emotional learning). Lin (2007, 362-363) calls 20th century "century of war"
and advocates for teaching children to love, care, respect and be concerned about global peace and human rights. One of her arguments – that history books are full of war topics, but contain little peace topics – is a bit superficial, though. Learning about a war does not necessarily mean educating pro-war citizens, what is more, learning about a war is one of the ways to educate citizens, who will value peace.

At this time of an immense flow of information around us and rapid changes, schools can no longer succeed in educating people who “know,” that is, possess knowledge. The aim is to create life-long learners, who will adapt themselves to new conditions through continual learning. Responsibility for one’s own learning is one of the issues connected with life-long learning. Crick and Wilson (2005, 360) say:

Learning, including 'learning to learn' is something we do for ourselves, no one can do it for us. It may be possible to cause a pupil to write down the correct answer to a mathematical problem, but unless she knows what she is doing, she cannot have become self aware of her learning processes, nor has she taken responsibility for her own learning.

Ultimately, various multimedia are an issue that shapes modern education strongly. This point is related to the previous one, too, since multimedia is a way for obtaining information. Karl Fisch thus stresses the importance of critical thinking in this “information-abundant society” (Walker 2009, 24). Walker argues, that e.g. the internet can help students learn better – students can for example share the outcomes of their work with somebody else than the teacher, which can motivate them – but also tells a story of a teacher,
whose students, due to her using various multimedia, asked her if they could just read a Shakespeare play instead of listening to it (Walker 2009, 24).

Undoubtedly, these four characteristics do not represent all the tendencies that can be found in today's education, but they are the most important ones related to motivating students, engaging/activating them. A more complex description can be found for example in the article "Social, Emotional, Ethical and Academic Education: Creating a Climate for Learning, Participation in Democracy, and Well-Being" (Cohen 2006).

B. The Necessity to Prevent Indiscipline in the Language Classroom.

The character of today's education, as introduced in the previous sub-chapter, changes the position of the teacher in the classroom, which is accompanied by the necessity to deal with indiscipline in different ways. If students are responsible for their own learning (Crick and Wilson 2005, 360), the teachers find themselves in different positions (e.g. facilitator) and can hardly make use of their formal authority. They must strengthen their informal authority, which includes preventing misbehaviour through various ways.

One of these ways is activating (or engaging) students in the work. The presupposition is that students who are active/engaged in their work and fully participate in the activities during the EFL lesson are less likely to behave in an indisciplined way than passive recipients. The term active/engaged is described further on in the theory chapter and may include such features as motivation from the part of the student, co-operation in classroom activities and promoting positive relationships with the teacher and other students.
The idea to propose ways of preventing indiscipline in this diploma thesis comes from my experience of teaching at a high school in 2006-2007. Starting the school-year with a plan of fairly strict rules and tight discipline, I eventually (about 3 months later) ended up tightening these rules, exercising heavier homework and assessing more tests, all this to make students do their work and behave in a disciplined way. It did not do without a lot of fights between me and the students, obviously. When I tried to solve the situation with the school's deputy head, I got this advice: "If you want them to obey you, they must be the sheep who are afraid of the wolf — you." It was only much later that I understood that I will never be the wolf and that I have to — if I want my students to behave well — evoke something else than fear in them: a will to take part, engage themselves, be active.

C. Personalization, Affect and Poetry to Prevent Indiscipline in the Language Classroom

The research included 7 activities which were designed to engage students and thus prevent them from behaving in an indisciplined way. Most of these lessons (5) used personalization as a means of engagement, one used poetry and one was an affective activity. Closer definitions of personalization, poetry in language classes and affective activities can be found in the chapter "Activating Students."

The result of this research is inconclusive. One activity proved to be too difficult for the students to cope with, so it actually was the activity itself which produced indiscipline. As for the other activities, the classroom observations — records of students' indisciplined behaviour — indicate that the activities did have a positive influence on the behaviour. Following the teacher's reflections, only 2 activities can be labeled as "useful in preventing indiscipline," the
other three did prevent it, but only with exceptions and one was qualified as unable to prevent indiscipline. Students themselves identified their behavior better than average in 4 activities out of 6.
II. Indiscipline and Its Prevention.
   A. Discipline in Education.
      i. Various Perceptions of Discipline

      When using the term discipline or indiscipline, we may be
talking about various areas of human lives – economy (so-called
"financial indiscipline" widely discussed in India and other
developing countries; Iran Daily 2007), transportation (Traffic and
Transportation Discipline Report 2006), penal institutions
(Management and Operation of Penal Institutions Regulations 2009)
and school.

      The etymology of the word, however, shows that “discipline”
comes from the Latin term “disciplinare” which means “to teach”
(Banks 2002, 1447). However, nowadays, it refers also to other
aspects of the educational process – rewards, punishment, self-
direction, social development, attitudes, and so on (Banks 2002,
1447). What, unfortunately, complicates the situation even further, is
that school discipline is often perceived differently in various
countries and educational institutions. Tudor in his book, The
Dynamics of the Language Classroom, points out that these
differences within socio-cultural settings and particular educational
institutions relate to each other: “Institutions are of course likely to
reflect aspects of the sociocultural rationalities which prevail in the
society of which they are part” (Tudor 2001, 37).

      In addition, differences in the perception of indiscipline also
appear between student teachers, beginning teachers and experienced
teachers (Molina et al. 2005, 11-12), and even among individual
teachers without regard to their level of experience. According to the
NASUWT (National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women
Teachers), the differences in the perception of discipline among
various teachers can be an impulse for students' misbehavior, since at
each lesson they have to conform to what the particular teacher of
that very lesson considers inappropriate (Wright and Keetley 2003). A similar case, not between two teachers of two different subjects but two teachers of the same subject, one following the other in the same class, is described by Harmer:

Previous learning experiences of all kinds affect students' behaviour. Even at the level of the last teacher let me..., students are influenced by what went before, and their expectations of the learning experience can be coloured either by unpleasant memories [...], or by what they were once allowed to get away with. (Harmer 2001, 126)

Definitions of school discipline found in various professional sources are diverse: “When you can get students' attention and keep it (for the duration of a lesson), then it is safe to say you do not have discipline problems” (Prodromou 2006a, 5). Although Prodromou's definition might sound accurate, it actually can be considered very narrow. First, it is impossible to keep a child's attention for the whole lesson (Lokša and Lokšová 1999, 55). The second objection to this explanation is that teachers not only want the learners to be attentive. They need them to be involved, participating and actively working.

While Prodromou highlights what students do to contribute to discipline, Harmer lists forms of indisciplinary behavior:

Problem behaviour can take many forms, [...] disruptive talking, inaudible responses, sleeping in class, tardiness and poor attendance, failure to do homework, cheating in tests and unwillingness to speak in the target language (Harmer 2001, 126).
A similar list can be found in a study conducted in Scottish primary and secondary schools, where these forms are divided into two parts according to their seriousness: the less serious forms (talking when not allowed, being cheeky, breaking class rules, work avoidance etc.) included in the group of "low-level" behavior, other, more serious forms (physical or verbal violence, racist abuse, harassment etc.) in the second group (Wilkin et al. 2006, 37).

In contrast to the previous definitions by Prodromou and Harmer, Ur describes discipline as a setting in which both the teacher and the students follow certain rules, which are supposed to contribute to effective learning and teaching (Ur 1991, 270). This definition is unique, due to the inclusion of the teacher as well as the students, and the teaching process as well as the learning process. Both participants and parts of the educational process are balanced, which opposes the previous views where only students are those whose discipline is discussed. What Prodromou's and Ur's view on discipline have in common, however, is the perception of it as forms of behavior.

In contrast, Cameron in his article "Managing School Discipline" describes discipline not as rules, but as the actions that teachers take to control and manage students' behavior, including the effects and consequences of school conduct: threats, suspension, (corporal and other) punishment and other actions that teachers take to ensure a smooth run in their lessons (Cameron 2006, 219-227).

Finally, we have to be aware that discipline is perceived differently by teachers and students, as it is demonstrated in a study by Haroun and O'Hanlon, where they compared teachers' and students' views on discipline and aimed to measure the agreement of these views (Haroun and O'Hanlon 1997, 239-246). This study showed that the "good" behavior is not only perceived differently among teachers, but also among students based on their age. Both
students' and teachers' discipline were included, as in Ur's *A Course in Language Teaching* (Ur 1991, 270). Among students, discipline was perceived as certain rules which they were to follow. Especially older students expressed their views on discipline as rules concerning both students and teachers. According to many teachers, discipline rules should apply even to other school staff and parents and more than students they stressed the importance of students' obeying the teachers in day-to-day situations.

Comparing various sources, we can thus see that there is no commonly accepted definition of (in)discipline and what it consists of. Main factors influencing various groups' view are roles (teacher/student), level of teaching experience, age and sociocultural background. Within these factors, the perception of discipline ranges from a set of methods to direct students' behavior to an agreement about certain rules of behavior that will be followed by both participants of the educational process (or even the third part, parents).

ii. The Relation Between Discipline and Education.

In the introduction to their study about students' and teachers' agreement on disciplinary rules, Haroun and O'Hanlon point out that discipline is "the most essential [...] aspect of education, for without discipline there can be no effective teaching" (Haroun and O'Hanlon 1997, 237). An objection to this statement could be that teaching is not the only part of the educational process.

However, even if in the introduction the authors do not deal with the influence of indiscipline on learning, in the analysis of the results of the research they emphasize that some students do view discipline as having a positive effect on learning: "students [...] stated that school discipline was important because it helped accomplish learning aims. It was [a] prerequisite for teachers to
teach[,] and for students to learn” (Haroun and O'Hanlon 1997, 241). However, they do not give any specifications about the students' opinions (why they think so and in which way it is essential for teaching and learning). A closer perspective on the relation between discipline and teaching/learning is offered by the study *Behaviour in Scottish Schools* (Wilkins et al. 2006, 45-50).

This study was conducted in Scottish schools on the basis of a report called *Better Behaviour – Better Learning* (Scottish Executive 2001) which recognized one of the difficult features of today's education: increase of indiscipline and its impact on learning. As regards teaching, it was proved that students' indiscipline was an important factor influencing it. Teachers and other staff were asked to identify the types of behavior that was the most difficult to handle, and they reported that it was the low-level behavior – talking out of turn, making noise, breaking rules, changing seat – that had the greatest influence on teaching. Not only did it disrupt lessons, but it also frustrated teachers, who often felt responsible for not being able to cope with it. According to this study, indiscipline also has a negative effect on time management – dealing with it “wasted teachers' time and hindered teaching” (Wilkins et al. 2006, 47).

As for learning – the first study's title *Better Behaviour – Better Learning* itself suggests that there is a direct link between discipline and learning – students themselves referred to indiscipline as behavior that deterred learning and kept teachers from teaching and students from learning. Many of them pointed not to the structure of the lessons and the content of learning, but to the waste of time that misbehavior caused: “It was also said to be unfair to other pupils who were being ‘cheated’ out of teaching time” (Wilkins et al. 2006, 47). A similar view was noted about the distribution of teachers’ attention – the undisciplined students were getting more of it than the disciplined ones and as such were perceived as being.
"praised" for their behavior, which in addition was said to have a negative influence on other students. Distracting the "good" pupils from work was also recognized as a form of indiscipline relevant to the learning of the whole class.

B. Forms of Indiscipline That Occur in Language Classes.

Basically, misbehavior can be divided into two main forms. The first one is school-wide indiscipline, which mostly is more serious and involves actions such as stealing, truancy, vandalism and destruction of school property, bullying and fighting (Finn et al. 2008, 260; McCurdy et al. 2003, 158). These instances occur mainly during out-of-classroom time, such as breaks, lunch or after the classes in the school's vicinity, and they are often solved by the intervention of the headmaster and in the presence of the child's parents. These cases are often more serious, apparently due to the facts that the level of supervision during these occasions is lower and the activity is usually less organized than in a lesson. This kind of indiscipline does not interfere directly with the course of the lesson.

The second type, that is classroom-based forms of indiscipline, sometimes also called low-level behavior (Wilkin et al. 2006, 36), is considered less serious and is usually solved by the teacher during teaching time. These may involve being late from classes, leaving seats without permission, speaking when not allowed to, or making unnecessary noise, distracting other pupils (which may take various forms), avoiding the completion of a given task (or avoiding completing it well), not following the classroom rules or the teacher's instructions or delays in following them and cheating in tests (Cartledge et al. 2008, 29; Cangelosi 1994, 233-279); Magableh and Hawamdeh 2007, 904; Wilkin et al. 2006, 34-35, 40; Finn 2008, 259). With its occurrence on a daily basis, low-level behaviour is,
according to Wilkin et al., more frequent than the school-wide forms of indiscipline (2006, 48-49).

The border between school-wide indiscipline and low-level behavior, however, can often be very thin: for example, bullying can occur in the classroom during lessons as well, just as it can outside the classroom and the teaching time. The only difference is that due to the teacher’s constant supervision in the classroom, the incident is less likely to gain on seriousness. There is a notion that school-wide discipline is based on classroom discipline (Buluc 2006, 31), therefore the behavior that students exhibit in out-of-classroom time might partially depend on how teachers carry out the classroom management in terms of students’ discipline. Because this thesis will suggest ways that the teacher can use to prevent indiscipline in classes, only “low-level behaviour” will be dealt with in the methodology section.

In terms of classroom-wide discipline, misbehavior can be either disruptive or non-disruptive (Cangelosi 1994, 24-29). Disruptive behavior hinders the teachers’ teaching (the teacher reacts on it and prevents the student from carrying on in this behavior or repeating it in the future) and the students’ learning, since the students’ attention is interrupted or they are physically impeded in completing their tasks). Non-disruptive behavior does not obstruct other students in learning, it is “only” uncooperative on the part of the misbehaving student who does not complete the task or is inattentive to what is going on in the lesson (instructions, discussion etc.). Most teachers do not worry as much about non-disruptive behavior as about disruptive one (Cangelosi 1994, 25) and students might not even perceive it as misbehavior: As a student reflected on her behavior in one of my classes, “[m]ost of the time in our English lessons, I was just lying on the desk and thinking about various stuff. I don't think I'm a problem student. I didn't disrupt anybody.”
While many forms of indiscipline (disruptive behavior, avoiding tasks etc.) can occur in various classes, there is one that is specific for language classes: the use of the mother tongue where the target language should be used and practiced. If students talk in their mother tongue when they are supposed to talk in English, they

- do not fulfill the learning task and may not be able to complete the following tasks
- may get left behind in their progress over a long period of time if this behavior occurs often
- finish earlier than the other students and may develop other behavior that is contrary to the aim of the lesson.

However unnecessary mother tongue use in language classes can be, Harmer points out that teachers should not always try to make students talk in English. “[Stamping out using mother tongue in EFL classes] may only discourage the students who feel the need for it at some stages” (Harmer 2001, 132). Harmer’s view is also supported by Mattar’s study on the counterproductiveness of mother tongue use in the language classroom, claiming that the use of the students’ mother tongue does not interfere with the acquirement of the target language (Mattar 1999, 136). However, neither Harmer nor Mattar deal with the situation in which an immoderate use of mother tongue hinders any learning and therefore may be considered a form of indiscipline.
C. Reasons of Indiscipline.

Sources are particularly diverse as regards what causes indiscipline in the classroom. Some blame poverty, the community and the family the student is growing up in (Richardson 2008, O'Neil 2004, 25; Finn 2008, 260, McCurdy 2003, 158-159) while some point out the actions (especially those viewed as over-punitive) taken by the school to deter misbehavior as a reason students repeat this behavior (Lewis et al. 1998, 447, McCurdy 2003, 159, Cameron 2006, 219). Some also highlight certain classroom activities that are generally more likely to produce inappropriate behavior than others (Prodromou, Clanfield 2006a, 29).

Knowing the origins of students' indiscipline in the classroom is important for both the prevention of and a reaction to this behavior. O'Neil proves this on an incident which happened to a Muslim teacher: after a pupil called him "Bin Laden," he rejected scolding the boy or solving the situation in the presence and with the help of the principal, but rather inquired into the reasons why the boy used such a name for the teacher and only then did he take actions to discipline the boy (2004, 24). Shukla-Mehta and Albin also promote knowing the "triggers" of students' indiscipline to be able to prevent it: "Most student behavior is triggered (i.e., set off) by something. [...] The best way to deal with such situations is to make these adaptations before behavior problems occur-proactively" (2003, 157).

An important question is whether students are aware of the origins of their own behavior. If they are, it would mean that teachers can rely on self-reflection when teaching discipline. However, Prodromou and Clanfield claim that "in an investigation into misbehavior, many students themselves couldn't answer why they behaved badly. It wasn't always a conscious decision to "ruin a class"" (Prodromou and Clanfield 2006b, 5). This unawareness goes
even further: students often are not aware even of their behavior being inappropriate (Malmgren et al. 2005, 38), which is also supported by an incident that happened in my lesson. A grade 9 girl kept disrupting other students by shouting out remarks about the topic of the exercises and generally commenting on events in a way that she found funny. After the lesson, when I talked to the girl about the disruptive effect her behavior had on the lesson, the student responded that she did not know her behavior was bad, she apologized and promised not to exhibit this behavior again, which she, to a certain level, fulfilled. Considering that students do not realize the inappropriateness of their behavior, we can assume that they are not aware of the reasons of this behavior.

Teachers are often blamed for not being able to motivate children, who, without motivation, become indisciplined. The role of motivation in learning is one of the most discussed matters in education. The definitions of motivation vary from source to source (Cangelosi 1994, 136-138; Dörnyei 2001, 5-7; Rugutt and Chemosit 2009, 17; Finocchiaro 1989, 42), however, most of them are in agreement with the basic definition that motivation is a desire to do something or a force that makes humans take an action. Regarding the differences, these sources vary mainly in the existence of the clarification of motivation as intrinsic or extrinsic (integrative or instrumental respectively) (Dörnyei 2001, 5-7; Finocchiaro 1989, 42).

According to Dörnyei, motivation is the key element in language learning which carries more importance than aptitude or cognitive characteristics: “Without sufficient motivation [...], even the brightest learners are unlikely to persist long enough to attain any really useful language” (Dörnyei 2001, 5). This view is also supported by Marinak and Gambrell who stress that intrinsic motivation is the principle of learning, no matter what the learner’s
other characteristics (e.g. phonemic awareness, comprehension, vocabulary etc) are (2008, 9). But what is the relationship between motivation and indiscipline? If indiscipline hinders learning (Wilkin et al. 2006, 47, Finn 2008, 260) and motivation promotes it (Dörnyei 2001, 5-6), therefore in a class of motivated students it is more probable to find fewer examples of misbehavior.

A common cause of indiscipline in a classroom is boredom (Prodromou and Clanfield 2006b, 5). Haseltine defines boredom as “a reaction to a static environment,” i.e. environment without changes for a certain period of time (2000, 116). Cangelosi points out that if the teacher is speaking in a monotonous way (especially if the students are expected to listen only), the students will become bored even if the topic is interesting to them (1994, 153). This is supported by Prodromou and Clanfield who quote a high-school student describing their teacher:

He was a very small man with a high-pitched rasping voice. I found it difficult to keep awake in his lessons because of the monotonous drone of his voice. I was forced to do nothing but listen to his voice. (2006b, 5)

First, the student claims he or she was bored due to the monotonous tone of the teacher’s voice, second, the utterance “I was forced to do nothing but listen to his voice” suggests that the activities in the lessons did not vary or even that the only activity were instructions with no involvement of the students, which then can also contribute to boredom in a lesson.

Moore et al. name too demanding tasks as a source of disruptive behavior, saying that no-demand or low-demand tasks contribute to less off-task behavior whereas too demanding tasks produce so-called “escape-maintained behavior,” i.e. behaviour.
which serves the student as an escape from the task (2005, 216-217). While Scrivener is in agreement with Moore et al. in the view of too demanding tasks, he argues that also a low-demand ("not challenging enough") task can be the origin of indiscipline in the classroom (Scrivener 2005, 107). This may become a problem especially when the teacher very often orders students to do tasks that are not challenging enough, students might suspect that the teacher does not consider them able to fulfill more difficult tasks or that he/she does not believe they have the abilities to get them done well. Moore et al. also suggest that if students are given too easy tasks, it is harmful for their academic achievement (Moore et al. 2005, 216-217). Taking into account that there is a link between academic achievement and the occurrence of indiscipline (Wilcox et al. 1998, 17), presenting students with too easy tasks can do a disservice to them later on.

Many sources also blame the social background of the problem students (Lewis et al. 1998, 447; McCurdy 2003, 158-159; Richardson 2008). However, the term “social background” is very broad and covers various out-of-school conditions in which the students find themselves:

- parental discipline: harsh practices in parental discipline and inconsistence of rules can result in anti-social behavior at school (Lewis et al. 1998, 447) and too soft parental discipline which leads to children’s spoiledness, unpreparedness for school life and lack of important skills is also influential (Azzara 2001, 16-17).

- poverty and urban setting: according to McCurdy et al., schools in urban places are more in danger of experiencing anti-social behavior, especially on the part of the children coming from families living in poverty (2003, 158-159; Richardson 2008)

- unemployment and low stability of relationships between parents and/or their partners; Auger and Boucharlat claim that relationships are often unstable, which might result in a situation
when a parent considers the child a partner to them and refuses to make any educational impact. In addition, in this case, the child lacks any model and support for their behavior and the absence of authority does not allow them to establish their own identity (2005, 15-16).

- community life: features of the community that children live in might have an important influence on how children cope with school discipline. Lai-yee Leung and Wing-lin Lee conducted a study in which students in a high school on a Hong-King island constantly kept breaking the smoking prohibition rule at school. The researchers suggest that it might have been caused by the fact that a high percentage of adults and even children on this island smokes and smoking is not perceived as a bad habit (2005, 53).

Students' misbehavior may have many reasons, which teachers might not always be able to detect, however, knowing them helps both in prevention and in dealing with this behavior. These reasons may arise from the teacher (inability to increase students' motivation, to attract students by varying activities and to use proper intonation), the student (lack of motivation) or the social background of the students. Teachers are able to influence only a part of these reasons, but with awareness of the other ones they can take the right proactive or reactive steps to decrease the occurrence of indiscipline in their classes.
D. The Impact of Indiscipline on the Teacher and the Students.

Any classroom is an environment in which both educational and social goals are pursued and which can either boost motivation and engagement if its climate is positive, or decrease if misbehavior occurs (Ryan and Patrick 2001, 428; Conroy et al. 2008, 24). Every participant of an ordinary class (teacher, students) is in constant interaction with the others, therefore, the behavior which occurs in the classroom influences every participant. The differences lay in whether the misbehavior is disruptive or non-disruptive (Cangelosi 1994, 25-29); naturally, disruptive misbehavior will affect the other participants more than the non-disruptive one.

First, indiscipline negatively influences teachers. The misbehavior that they have to deal with might cause stress and frustration and thus lower the effectiveness of their teaching and change their relationships with students, if being present regularly in classes (Kyriacou 2008, 152 – 153). Malmgren et al. name indiscipline in classrooms as the main stress factor for teachers, which leads them to leaving their profession soon after beginning teaching (2005, 31) and O'Neil (2004, 25) says that the discipline of students has been listed as a major concern for teachers in Phi Delta Kappa polls since 1969. It is evident that a teacher who struggles with motivating students or constantly persuading them to do what they are expected to do will rarely have a good relationship with the students. In addition, it is unlikely that they will feel satisfied with their work if their teaching is disrupted or impeded.

Next, indiscipline can also have a negative impact on the misbehaving student and the other students’ learning: “If a student is unruly and disruptive, he or she will be unable to respond to academic opportunities or manage subject matter tasks rapidly and accurately” (Greenwood et al. 2002, 328). The indisciplined students
do not pay attention to the teacher’s instructions and thus waste time with asking for them, or they are not able to fulfill the task to a satisfying level. If their misbehavior is disruptive, other students are affected: they might have difficulties concentrating on the task or be unable to get the attention of the teacher who is solving the situation with the misbehaving student. Hirschy and Braxton (2004, 71) conducted a study on the effects of student misbehavior on the students’ perception of achievement, intellectual development, relationships and commitment to the institution. It showed that indiscipline distracts students and their involvement and negatively affects the perception of their academic achievement. It also lowers their attachment to their classmates and the institution. “Students who become frustrated with a chaotic classroom environment due to the student classroom incivilities may feel isolated and sense that their values, beliefs, and attitudes do not fit with those of other students” (Hirschy and Braxton 2004, 72). The limitation to the use of this study in this thesis is that it was carried out in colleges, not in primary or secondary schools, therefore it remains a question how much college conditions coincide with primary/secondary school conditions in terms of the influence that indiscipline has on other students.

Finally, indiscipline in a classroom can change the content/structure of teaching and learning and waste the teacher’s time. Zuckermann (2007, 13-14) asked 68 trainee teachers to identify a discipline problem and tell how they dealt with it; some changed the pace of the lesson and some replaced certain activities with other, more interesting ones, when they noticed a minor form of indiscipline or a sign that misbehavior is likely to occur (e.g. when students seemed to be getting out of control). When behavior problems occur, the teacher usually reacts on it, which causes a waste of time: in a report by Wilkin et al., teachers name “stealing” the
teaching time the strongest influence that indiscipline has on teaching (2006, 47).

Teaching, learning and generally reaching the aims of the educational process can only take place in an environment which is "peaceful, safe and orderly" (Buluc 2006, 31). Problem behavior eventually disrupts other students, causes stress to the teacher and hinders the students' learning. It may also intervene with the teacher's plans for teaching, if he/she is susceptible to make immediate changes to prevent an escalation of a minor problem. To ensure that students have their ways towards the educational aims free, that teachers make use of the time that they dispose of and that they feel more satisfied in their work, educators will need to prevent indiscipline in classrooms.
III. Activating Students.

Before looking at the ways which the teacher can use to activate/engage students, we need to answer the question “What is an active/engaged student like? What does he/she do in the classroom?” There are some common features of student engagement:

- participation in classroom activities (Greenwood et al. 2002, 329)
- an active and productive approach to the task which includes asking and/or answering questions (Ahlfeldt 2005 cited in Bryson and Hand 2007, 352; Greenwood et al. 2002, 329)
- positive relationships with the teacher and among the students (Bryson and Hand 2007, 360)
- working collaboratively with other students (Ahlfeldt 2005 cited in Bryson and Hand: 2007, 352)
- being concentrated on the task or even experiencing an immersion into the activity (Bryson and Hand 2007, 359, Fullagar and Mills 2008, 354)
- a certain degree of student autonomy in the completion of the task (Ramsden 2003 cited in Bryson and Hand 2007, 353)
- being intrinsically motivated (Fullagar and Mills 2008, 354)
- “a state of emotional and intellectual arousal, the presence of eager anticipation and interest” (Harmer 2006, 4)

As a contrast to reluctant learner as described in Sanacore (2008, 40), an engaged learner may have these characteristics:

- completion of tasks
- not avoiding challenges and not being satisfied with “just getting by”
- generally being interested in the subject and the content of learning and believing that learning is important for their lives
Regarding differences among the sources above, Bryson and Hand distinguish 4 types of student engagement out of which only the basic one fits the criteria above: classroom and task engagement. Furthermore, Fullagar and Mills in their article deal primarily with flow, a term coined by Csikszentmihályi, which describes “the holistic sensation that people feel when they act with total involvement” (Csikszentmihályi 1999, 36 cited in Fullagar and Mills 2008, 533). This involvement in an activity goes far beyond what we consider engagement. An individual experiencing flow has “little awareness of self,” loses his/her self-consciousness and “becomes one with the activity” and there is a “loss of time awareness” (Fullagar and Mills 2008, 534). Nevertheless, the basic definition of flow coincides with the characterization of the state generally regarded as engagement.

The teacher’s task is to engage all learners, which might be especially difficult at schools. Primary and secondary education is compulsory, in contrast to various language courses for adults who have made an independent decision to take up learning (and often also have paid for it), thus it is easier to engage them (Wright 2005, 164).
A. Engaging Students in Different Parts of the Lesson.

The level of a teacher's endeavor in engaging students partially depends on the stage of the lesson: most sources stress the necessity to activate students at the beginning of the lesson (Phillips 2006, 8-9; Kyriacou 1996, 64-65; Marland 1993, 66-68). Marland describes the beginnings of lessons as periods which contain an element of "tension" that needs to be undone by making students busy, otherwise the teacher might be facing discipline problems. This indicates that students are ready to work hard and take a challenge at this stage of a lesson and might address this energy to misbehavior if it is not used in a meaningful task (1993, 66-67). Marland stresses the importance of engaging students in the beginning mainly because of the organization. In a classroom where the teacher waits for the students to come and starts the lesson when all of them gather, it might be more difficult to engage students because some of them have been waiting and the feeling of "tension", the preparedness to work hard, has already gone. However, in Czech schools, the opposite organization is usually used: students gather in the classroom and the lesson starts with the ringing of the bell. Therefore it is necessary that the teacher come to the classroom on time as the delay might weaken the students' preparedness for work.

Phillips (2006, 8.) compares lessons to stories and movies:

Good fiction writers and film producers know that the first few pages of their novel and the first few minutes of their film are especially important, because they set the tone for what is to follow. The same is true of a lesson. If students appreciate the first five minutes of a lesson, they are much more likely to work with enthusiasm during the remainder of the class.
This view is basically in agreement with Laris (1988, V.) and Kyriacou (1996, 64-65) who claim that a good beginning of each lesson "sets the tone" for the rest and that if it attracts the students' attention, it is likely that they will work effectively and with enthusiasm in the whole lesson.

In contrast to Marland, Laris and Kyriacou, Prodromou and Clanfield point to the middle of the lesson as a phase where the teacher will need to engage students more than in any other phase. This is due to the students' attention which is the lowest in the middle. According to them, the teacher should "spice up" the content of the lesson to ensure that students are interested in and pay attention to what is being done.

B. Ways to Engage Students.

i. Personalization.

Griffiths and Keohane in their publication focused primarily on personalization which they defined as "making language learning content personally meaningful [...] relevant to their [students'] own lives" (Griffiths and Keohane 2000, 1). A similar definition, called "need for realism," is offered by Haycraft: "The nearer the language teaching can come to real life, the more interesting it will be. [...] The expression of attitudes and feelings can be the life-blood of a class" (Haycraft 1978, 7). These definitions suggest that the content of students' learning – in EFL classes for example the topic of a text or an exercise, characters in and the topic of a dialogue, issues that are discussed through the target language etc. – holds a certain level of personal relevance to each learner. This level can, naturally, be low or high. It is assumed that if the level of personalization is high, the activity will be more interesting, motivating and activating to the students. They will fully engage themselves in it, which will prevent them from developing inappropriate behavior.
In the UK, the application of personalization in education has its origin in the personalization of public services, where more freedom in the use of services, involvement of users in their development and user-centeredness characterize the process. The user becomes a self-manager, thus carries more responsibility for their own actions. It requires that the professionals (providers of services) are highly skilled and can facilitate the user in making their choices and decisions (Campbell et al. 2007, 136-137). The utilization of personalization in education then resembles rather student autonomy development, usually accompanied by the change of the teacher's role into a facilitator (Campbell et al. 2007, 138).

Application of the personalization model as used in public services (as defined in Campbell et al. 2007, 135-137) possesses some limitations: in compulsory education, neither the teacher nor the student can completely choose what to teach/study. Yet the teacher can modify how to teach it and apply personalization. Developing student autonomy is difficult if the students have no control over what they study (Campbell et al. 2007, 138), therefore, the teacher should personalize the learning content to make it personally meaningful to the learner. In other words, the teacher as much as possible adjusts the learning content to what the students would have chosen themselves, if they could.

There are two main areas of teaching and learning in which personalization can be applied:

1) activities

2) teachers' approach to students

A personalized activity is an activity which uses students' experiences, opinions, preferences, attitudes, feelings for being carried out successfully. An example might look like this: for expressing likes and dislikes, students talk about what they like/dislike instead of talking about fictional characters from the
textbook (Griffiths and Keohane 2000, 1). If the activity is based on real people – classmates who they know well – students will receive the message that their preferences matter to their friends in the class as well as to the teacher.

Griffiths and Keohane criticize insufficient personalization of learning materials (textbooks), so I made an evaluation of textbooks that are available and used in EFL classes in the Czech Republic. The two criteria were:

i. personalization of pre-task activities and follow-ups

ii. the number of fictional characters in texts, exercises and activities (the more fictional characters, the less personalized the book is); textbook authors can hardly avoid using fictional characters, but it is possible to reduce their number by presenting only a few characters who “guide” the learner through the whole book and whose image is more “real” than that of constantly changing characters who are only a “name on the paper” to the learner.

As for books for young learners, Chatterbox, Angličtina pro 3. a 4. třídu and Project were reviewed. Chatterbox textbooks do not link individual activities together. This may be caused by the fact that Chatterbox is a series of textbooks for primary students, where the classroom activities are supposed to occur in the forms of games, songs and not so much in the form of working with the book. However, the author of Chatterbox relies heavily on the teacher’s own personalization of the textbook activities. There are two groups of fictional characters which guide the learner through the whole book and a little number of other, not so stable characters.

The textbook Angličtina pro 3. a 4. třídu differs from other textbooks: it is made by a Czech author and the characters in the book are Czech children from Czech schools. The activities are
rarely personalized, but the "characters" appearing in them somewhat make up for it.

*Projects* offer, out of these three textbook series, the most personalized preceding and follow-up activities. Especially in Project 3, when the level of language proficiency is improved, there are activities which support them to express their own opinions and share their experiences. Furthermore, the same fictional characters guide the learners through the whole book and are, as well as in the previous series, pictured in photos. Other than these, some fictional characters appear, particularly in exercises which sometimes consist of sentences with names under which the student cannot imagine any specific person.

Personalization in coursebooks for adult learners (*Inside Out, True to Life, Matrix, New Headway*) does not reach the level of the books for children and teenage learners. Names in texts, dialogues and sentences only represent a universal person. Occasionally we can find personalization in lead-in and follow-up activities (*Matrix, Inside Out*). An exception is Matrix which employs topics for discussions where learners can express their opinions and the texts deal with brands and celebrities.

The second area where personalization can be applied is the teacher's approach to his/her students. Hess, who in her publication deals with personalization in large classes, says that teachers should make students "feel related to as individuals and [...] not simply numbers on a list. [...] it is doubly important, [...] to provide opportunities in which students may share opinions, relate to their own future plans, explore their ideas on important issues" (Hess 2001, 12-13). Pure listening to what learners say and being truly interested in them represent a form of personalization by the teacher. Hess gives an example, in which a student was reluctant to give his/her opinion because, as he/she told her, "You never hear what I
say. You just hear the mistakes I make.” Therefore the author suggests: “We must assure students that what they think really matters to us” (Hess 2001, 34). The student gets disengaged in an activity because based his/her previous experience he/she knows that the teacher would not listen to what he/she says.

Personalization of a previous activity by the teacher then might look, for example, like this: The students are asked to say what job they would like to do in the future. After each student has spoken, the teacher makes a pronouncement: “When you grow up, I will fly to Spain with Viktor (Viktor wants to be a pilot), get my hair cut at Veronika’s (hair-dresser), [...] and when my cat is ill, we will visit Daniela (vet).” Saying this, the teacher lets them know that he/she has been listening and paying attention to what they say, i.e. what they want to be as adults, and that it really matters to him/her. I carried out this activity in grade 5 and the students were evidently pleased with my interest in their job “plans” and my attempt to make a bond between myself and them towards the future.

ii. Questions and Eliciting.

Questioning learners about the issues that are being taught in the classes belongs to the most effective and very common techniques that teachers use. A research on teachers’ questioning shows that there are classes where more than half of the time of a lesson is spent on learners answering teachers’ questions (Richards and Lockhart 1994, 185; Bond 2008, 41). Richards and Lockhart also give reasons why questioning is so widely used: “They [questions] stimulate and maintain students’ interest; They encourage students to think and focus on the content of the lesson; They encourage student participation in a lesson” (Richards and Lockhart 1994, 185).

Hess recommends questioning in large classes: “Questions arouse interest and create maximum student involvement” (Hess
The types of questions that “keep the entire class awake” are:

- Questions that begin with *Why*
- Requests that begin with *Could you please someone explain me how...*
- Questions to which the teacher does not know the answer
- Requests that ask for clarification and elaboration and start with *Could you please explain that or Could you clarify what you mean*
- Questions initiated by students and moved on to the whole class by the teacher (Hess 2001, 15)

Similarly to Hess (2001, 15), Bond points out that good questioning techniques are more important than just using questions in the classroom and that bad questioning techniques might even cause misbehavior. Therefore he suggest that the teachers
- plan their questions in advance to avoid vague questions
- establish rules for answering the questions (picking up hands/calling out the answers)
- cue the students before asking the questions and use questions which are appropriate to the each student’s level to ensure that he/she can answer it and experiences success which encourages him/her in participation
- encourage students to ask questions themselves (Bond 2008, 42-45)

We can see that Hess' and Bond's suggestions correspond to each other in many points: the questions asked should not be vague, but neither should they be too difficult for students to answer. To provide for this kind of questions, the teacher needs to prepare the questions in advance, to be sure that they fulfill this criteria. Finally, students
are encouraged to ask their own questions and answer them in order to being engaged and focused on the learning item.

iii. Authentic Texts (Newspapers and Poetry).

Language teachers dispose of a variety of teaching aids. Those named here, newspapers and poetry, are only two examples of many possibilities, and are provided merely as examples showing how many possibilities arise from the use of authentic materials.

They can be divided into two groups: authentic and non-authentic. The first group can be defined as “print, audio, and visual documents created and used by native speakers. Examples include books, Web sites, articles, artwork, films, folktales, music, and advertisements” (Foreign Languages Workshop Glossary). A slightly different explanation is offered by Daniel Linder in his article “Authentic Texts in ESL/EFL”:

The term authentic materials can be an elusive one, because it may refer to authentic English language items that are used as realia and as texts. [...] When used as realia, authentic menus, for example, suggest a real situation in the classroom just as spoons, forks, and plates might; they become complementary to the lesson content. When used as texts, however, these same menus become rich resources for exposing students to language as it is used in a real situation within the English language culture. (Linder 1999/2000)

This division is unique for distinguishing two meanings of the term “ authentic”: authentic realia (cf. Haycraft’s “need for realism” above) and authentic texts. This chapter deals with the latter.
Elster (2000, 71-72) gives reason for using poetry in language classes: "Poetry (...) has the potential to convey intense and new ways of experiencing the world," and adds that using poetry in the classroom is useful because these texts contain "gap in meaning": no single poem is the same for every reader and the various possible interpretations allow relating the content of the poem to their own lives.

Another reason why teachers can use poetry to engage students is that poems, especially if they are rhythmic and rhymed, are easily remembered and "stick in the mind" after the experience of working with them has faded (Vardell et al. 2002, 52) or "resonate in our hearts and minds" (Holmes and Moulton 2001, 2). The rhythm captivates students and their brevity and low complexity does not discourage them from dealing with them, especially concrete poetry with its depiction of what is being expressed in words as well, is suitable (Vardell et al. 2002, 51).

Holmes' and Moulton's publication *Writing Simple Poems* focuses on EFL students writing their own poems. They claim that, although writing poetry in EFL classes might sound like a demanding task, all students take the same risk, therefore there is no need to fear embarrassment if they fail, and that this equality in facing the challenge makes them come together as a "community" (Holmes and Moulton 2001, 7). However, it has been proven that a too difficult task may lead directly to indiscipline as students may misbehave in order to escape the task that they are not able to fulfill, i.e. their behavior is escape-maintained (Moore et al. 2005, 216). Thus it is advisable that the teacher choose the poetry and the type of the task carefully to ensure that it will not be counterproductive to one of its aims: preventing indiscipline.

Another kind of authentic materials, applicable in a class of any level of the target language, are newspapers. There are a number
of advantages in language learning that newspapers offer (Sanderson 1999, 2-4). For the purpose of activation of learners, newspapers might be suitable because they offer an insight into the culture of the country where the language is spoken; due to this, he/she gets closer to the target culture. Similarly to poetry, which offers individual interpretations related to students’ lives, one of the newspapers’ quality is their adaptability to the interests of each student: “the enormous variety of subject-matter in newspapers means that any one newspaper will invariably contain something of value or concern to every reader. This makes them interesting and motivation for students” (Sanderson 1999, 3).

Newspapers carry a big deal of authenticity, not only as texts but also as authentic realia (Linder 1999/2000) – they “bridge the gap between the outside world and the classroom” (Grundy 1993, 8). Textbooks are exclusively classroom materials, but newspapers are used in people’s everyday lives and many students probably receive some kind of newspaper at home on a daily basis. (I wouldn’t bet on that these days...) Therefore, using newspapers for learning ensures that students come across things that they are familiar with.
C. Interactive and Affective Activities.

This chapter introduces two types of activities that enhance students' activation: interactive and affective activities. The principle of the former one is that learners interact between each other, amongst themselves, with the teacher or with the material (audio, text, video, etc.). Gower et al. explain the advantage of interactive activities: "Doing these [pairwork and groupwork] interactive activities [...] enables the students to invest much more of themselves in the lesson" (Gower et al. 1995, 45). Rivers (1987, 10-15) defines interactive activity as the one which involves authentic (or at least as authentic as possible) input, a lot of listening (especially to native speakers interacting) and no discouragement from oral responses to it. The activity also should be purposeful, students should work productively with what is read/listened to, and what they produce should be read/listened to by others. Rivers also recommends rich interaction with the community that speaks the language (e.g. comparing values, beliefs, stereotypes, etc. and integrating songs and literature of the target country).

Many teachers avoid using interactive activities in their classes in fear that it may lead to indiscipline. However, students in the classroom do not learn alone, but are a part of a social group in which interaction is natural (we can find that out by overviewing it during their free time). Ryan and Patrick (2001, 454-455) found out that supporting students' interaction during learning not only does not produce misbehavior, but it also increases students' motivation and engagement in learning. This is one reason why promoting interactive activities is useful; the other one is, as Rivers (1987, 4) points out, that language use is interaction, thus teachers should not avoid it as only through interaction will students learn how to speak the language and experience success (they reach the goals – being
able to communicate) which will subsequently motivate them in their learning.

The other type of activity which engages students are affective activities. The role of affection in language learning is undeniable. Some methodological approaches have based language teaching on building the students' affective domain – and some have dissociated it from the domain. However, both sides would probably agree that “if students enter the classroom with a positive affective predisposition to the language or to the learning process, there is a good chance that productive learning will be achieved [...]. If such a predisposition does not exist, teaching and learning are likely to be an uphill struggle for all concerned” (Tudor 2001, 95-96). Related to indiscipline, students who approach learning (learning in general, but also the learning of English, and the English language in itself) with negative emotions, might not only fail to learn but will tend to misbehave during lessons. Therefore, in order to keep students engaged in the activity, teachers should involve affective activities in their lessons.

Richards and Lockhart define affective activities as activities which “include tasks which have no specific language learning goal but are intended to improve the motivational climate of the classroom and to develop students' interests, confidence, and positive attitude towards learning” (1994, 165). While such activities certainly are important and useful, teachers would probably agree that implementing them would take up too much time off the teaching time that they dispose of and which they wish to make the best of. Thus it will be more suitable, if they supplement an affective effect to the ordinary classroom activities.

Affective activities also have positive influence on teacher-student and student-student relationships. Jennings and Greenberg (2009, 491-510) highlight the necessity to teach children to behave in
a respectful, positive and responsible way – which cannot be taught, if the teachers do not behave the same way. This behavior decreases the occurrence of misbehavior, as students are taught to behave in this manner not only to their peers, but also to their teacher.

These are the types of activities which trigger learners’ activation. Some of them already are, and some of them only should be combined with other techniques described above – personalization (of the activity as well as by the teacher), realism in learning or use of authentic texts. However, using the “guaranteed” ways to engage students does not work by itself; the key is in variety: “In order to break monotony, we need to vary as many aspects of the learning process as possible. First and foremost are the language tasks” (Dornyei 2001, 73-74).
IV. The Project: Personalization, Affect and Poetry in the Language Classroom.

A. Basic Information

The research was conducted at ZŠ, MŠ a ZUŠ Frýdlant, Unit 2 – ZŠ T.G Masaryka, Frýdlant v Čechách during the months of April, May and June 2009. The classes involved were the 6th, 7th and 9th grade. My colleagues Eva Šušková and Dana Nejezchlebová took charge of the role of observers. All the classes work with the Project textbooks in their English classes (Project 1 in the 6th grade, Project 2 in the 7th and Project 3 in the 9th grade).

Most of the lessons took place in the 7th grade, because this class proved to be more difficult to handle in terms of classroom discipline. This may have been caused by various reasons: the number of students in this class (17) was quite high compared to other language classes. However, in my other class of 15 students the matter of discipline was not so difficult, thus it is improbable that this factor alone would have caused behaviour problems. Another one might have been the composition of this class: there were a few (mainly female) hard-working students with very good results, one boy whose behaviour was usually a problem in any subject, a boy with light mental retardation, and an integrated ADHD boy who was medicated, but because English lessons took place as the 4th and 5th lesson in the timetable, his ability to concentrate on tasks or to pay attention was very low then. Lastly, there were a few students who generally displayed a high level of disengagement/non-disruptive misbehaviour in most of the tasks.

The 6th grade was a class of 15 pupils, 11 boys and 4 girls. There were no students who tended to be generally disruptive, but non-disruptive misbehaviour took place sometimes. One boy (LB) was diagnosed with dyslexia, one girl (KA) with mild dyslexia. The boy was very quiet and shy and his self-confidence was low; the girl
was also quiet, but she was very confident in fulfilling the tasks. She seemed to be very ambitious and according to her mother she spent a lot of time at home preparing for school. Another boy (JL) was not diagnosed with any disorder, but was continually unable to pay attention or concentrate on the task. When working in pairs/groups (=having a partner who would keep him engaged in an activity, with whom he could interact) he did well, but alone he was most of the time almost unable to work at a satisfactory level.

The 7th grade consisted of 17 students, 8 boys and 9 girls. Other specifics of the 7th grade have been given above; one boy (O.H.) with lower intellect (often completely disengaged, even if working in pairs/groups), one boy (V.B.) with ADHD (often disengaged or displaying highly disruptive behaviour), one boy with recently diagnosed light dyslexia (T.H., often disengaged, but with frequent appraisals his confidence grew and he tended to engage himself more) and one boy with permanent problem behaviour. Regarding academic results, the students in this class could be spread along the whole scale beginning with excellent results and ending with very low ones.

The 9th grade was a class of 15 pupils, 9 boys and 6 girls, however, 2 pupils did not attend the school in the period when the research took place. No students with disabilities in this class. Some students tended to display off-task behaviour, but most of the class usually engaged in the task well. Academically this class is not on a very high level, but the range of abilities is not very diverse, which is due to the fact that the students are divided into 3 groups according to their English skills. This group is the middle one: neither the best, nor the worst.
B. Personalization, Poetry and Affective Activities in EFL Classes.

I carried out 7 activities during 7 lessons. The lessons were divided into two halves, one including an "ordinary" activity and the other one a "research" activity. Each of the parts was planned to take the same amount of time (20 minutes) to make sure that the consequent record of occurrence of indiscipline is reliable. During the research activities, I avoided the usual ways of disciplining students (warning, notes, threats, punishment, referrals) so that the findings – whether the activity, not anything else, prevents indiscipline – were reliable. I used these only if the more or less smooth course of the lesson seemed to be endangered. Because I found personalization the most promising way of preventing indiscipline, 5 of these lessons were devoted to personalization, one to poetry and one to affective activities.

As for personalization, the activities included were: "My Numbers," "I'm This Type of Person," "Intensive Pronunciation Work," "Colours" and "My Ideal School." These activities were taken from the book Personalizing Language Learning (2000) by G. Griffiths and K. Keohane, but for the purpose of using them in my classes they mostly had to be modified. The personalization in "My Numbers" (Griffiths and Keohane: 2000, 138 as "Numbers of My Life") lies in matching an ordinary thing – a number, something we encounter everywhere and work with on daily basis – to the students' own lives and things that are important to them. Later on, students compare their lists and can find links between their own and their friends' lives – through numbers. The activity "I'm This Type of Person" (Griffiths and Keohane: 2000, 24) helps students realize what they are like on a scale between "very" and "not at all", teaches them to explore themselves and self-evaluate. In this activity, it is
important that the teacher participates; for 12- or 13-year-olds it may be hard to reveal what they think about themselves, and the teacher's participation can help it. "Intensive Pronunciation Work" deals with students' difficulties with pronouncing English words; not those words which are usually considered difficult, but with only those which students themselves find uneasy. The activity "Colours" (Griffiths and Keohane: 2000, 118) operates with students' preferences for colours in comparison to which colours they see around themselves most often. "My Ideal School" lets students express freely their opinions about school rules. School conducts, the primary and the most fundamental prevention of indiscipline, are made without any participation of students, and this activity simulates their participation on a creation of an imaginary school conduct.

In the activity based on poetry, students are supposed to choose from 4 options and substitute some words in the poem. This way, they "create" a new poem without facing the difficulty of the task to write a poem. With rhymes and rhythm, poems are also easy to remember, they stick to students' minds and are more attractive than usual texts. All these factors should contribute to the students' engagement in the activity.

As an affective activity I chose "A Letter from the Teacher". The letters students get are personal letters, revealing the basic facts about the teacher and expecting the students to share theirs, and as such the letters are signs of feeling of affection from the teacher towards the students. The teacher finds herself in the role of the students' friend and therefore the students are motivated to engage themselves in reading and replying to the letter.
C. Lesson Plans and Reflections.

abbreviations used:

T = teacher  
OA = ordinary activity
SS = students  
RA = result activity
S1,2,3,... = individual students

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<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ordinary activity</td>
<td>Letter – answering questions about the letter which students read and listened to last lesson; English addresses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research activity</td>
<td>A letter from the teacher (affective activity)</td>
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Part I: Ordinary Activity

1. T asks SS (in Czech) what we did last lesson (read and listened to Mandy's letter) and what the letter was about.

2. "Open your books on page 30. In pairs, do exercise 2a."

3. Correction and feedback
   "S1, who is Ben?"
   "S2, who is Fluffy?" etc.

   In Czech, T asks SS what differences there are between the Czech and the British way of writing addresses.

Part II: Research Activity

4. First, T asks SS (in Czech) if they like receiving letters and if they receive more letters or e-mails.

"These are letters from me to you. Open them and read them. You can
use dictionaries." T uses gestures to help SS understand these instructions. Also, the T tells the SS (in Czech) that their task in the next lesson will be to answer the letters — write their own personal letters to the teacher.

SS receive and read letters from the T. Each S receives a unique letter in which the language is adapted to the S's language skills (simple language for weaker students, more challenging language for stronger students). The letters imitate the structure given in Mandy's letter in the textbook: the T tells SS about herself, her family, pets, hobbies and favourite music and asks questions about these topics.

REFLECTION:

During the first part of the lesson, SS did not seem more indisciplined than in other lessons. In the beginning, a few of them shouted out the answers to the question "What did we do last lesson?". I showed them the rejecting gesture and all of them raised their hands immediately. The first student was wrong, evidently a previous topic stuck to her memory better than Mandy's letter. After asking the second question ("What was the letter about?") far fewer students shouted out their answers (I remember hearing 2 of them) and most of them raised their hands. After this, a student shouted out a question about the date of the next test and was told to ask this question after the lesson. He did not ask it then, though.

During the exercise, I noticed a few students talking about something else in a disruptive manner and some students avoiding the task in non-disruptive manner. The students who misbehaved were those who generally misbehave in English lessons, and those who usually work hard also worked hard in this part of the lesson. Some SS did not work in pairs as they were instructed, however, I do not mind if they choose to do the activity individually instead of with
their desk-mate, and as well I do not mind if SS who sit alone join (without asking) another SS who also sit alone when pair-work is applied, so although the SS did not follow my instructions, it could not be considered indiscipline.

The SS did not seem to approach the activity with any big enthusiasm, but not with aversion either. Out of all my classes, this class (together with grade 5) is the one which enjoys working with textbooks – but only if it is reading the comics. This class takes other textbook activities “as they come,” and this one was not an exception.

The SS' mood changed a lot as the second part of the lesson started. When they understood that I wrote letters for them, one S shouted out big and loud “wow,” some said “that's good” (in Czech, of course), others stared at each other or at me in surprise and eventually started talking among themselves. Their reaction on what is to follow of course is indiscipline, but is also an example of how ambiguous can the term indiscipline be. They evidently liked the idea of getting a personal letter from their teacher and I was glad to receive such an immediate positive feedback. I also told them that each letter was unique and that I wrote every letter just to this single person. A student reacted on this with the remark that it must have taken a lot of time for me to write them all; I did not reply as it was shouted out. During reading the letters, SS were dramatically quieter than during the pairwork in the previous part of the lesson, in fact, I had never seen them so immersed into something. There was only one student who could be identified as indisciplined (task avoidance); it is interesting that it was the student who showed the most approving reaction to this activity at first.

A little trace of indiscipline occurred when students finished reading the letter and were instructed to write drafts of their replies to the letters. A few students probably did not consider the last 5-8
minutes of the lesson worth of any effort and eventually started to disturb their desk-mates. They were more disciplined than in the first part of the lesson, but the level of noise slightly rose as more and more students were finished with reading.

This activity, in my view, prevents indiscipline very well. A possible change would be better timing so that they have more time to reply to the letter or that they do not even start the replies if a short period of time is left. The disadvantage – a big one – is the amount of time it takes. As one of the students noted, it really took a lot of time to write all the letters. Later, when I got their replies, I replied to some of them again to keep on exchanging the letters, but it was not possible to reply to all. I rejected the version where one letter is used for the whole class; it certainly is a solution, but not so personal and affective.
Lesson 2

Date       June 5, 2009
Grade      6
Attendance 15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ordinary activity</th>
<th>Have got/haven't got/has got/hasn't got</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research activity</td>
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Part I: Ordinary Activity

1. T asks SS in Czech: "How do you say mit in English?", "Nemít?"; "In the third person?" (SS revise using have/has got, haven't/hasn't got)

2. T asks SS: "Have you got a brother, S1?"
   "Have you got a cat, S2?"
   "Has S2 got a cat, S3?" etc. (SS practice using have/has got, haven't/hasn't got)

3. Textbook p. 33/2b
   T: "Open your books on page 33. Exercise 2b into your exercise books. S4, can you read the instructions?"
   T: "What will you do?" (in Czech)
   (SS practice using haven't/hasn't got)

Part II: Research Activity

T tells SS in Czech: "On a blank sheet of paper, write numbers 1 – 10 in a column. For each number, write something that means something to you, but it must also relate to the number. For example: 1 – I have got one sister. 2 – I have got two pets. 3 – I have got three best friends. 4 – is my lucky number. 5 – ... Work individually. When you and
your desk-mate have finished, compare your numbers and mark those which you have in common.”

After the activity, the T asks the SS how many numbers they have in common and in which matters do they match.

REFLECTION:

The students were quite disciplined during the first part of the lesson. A few students shouted out the answers to the questions in 1. (revision of theory), but they stopped after seeing that those answers were not accepted. A similar case occurred in Lesson 1, too, and in fact it happened in this class regularly: the students shouted out the answers to questions, and every lesson they “learned” that they should raise their hands. However, the next lesson they shouted the answers again.

Activity 2 went well, too, as soon as the students learned that they have to listen to other students’ answers to be able to answer the following questions (“Do you have a cat, S2?” => “Has S2 got a cat, S3?”).

In the third activity, reading the instructions was accompanied by a reluctance of the student who was supposed to read them. Although we have practised reading the instructions and translating them (the most common phrases like complete/fill in/write/look at/match/copy/listen etc.), most of the times I had to encourage the students. The same reluctance occurred when another student was asked to say in Czech what they were to do. However, for the rest of the activity SS worked quite enthusiastically. This class is a quiet one, they like more activities in which they can work quietly (and in many cases also individually) and in language classes most of the students prefer reading and writing over listening and speaking. Therefore, at writing into their exercise books from the textbooks I did not anticipate any problems – and no major problems occurred.
One student, the only one who strongly stands out in this class due to his communicativeness, talked to his desk-mate for most of the time, regarding both the exercise and other matters. Encouraging him to work did not help much.

During the research activity, many students behaved worse than in the first part of the lesson. I noticed signs of task avoidance (many SS did not manage to match more than one or two numbers in 10 minutes' time), not following the instructions (SS worked in pairs although they were instructed to work individually), disrupting other students (some SS turned back to see how their peers were doing and/or asked them how many numbers they have completed). However, it is unclear whether the indiscipline was caused by the character of the activity or its difficulty. There was a high number of students who did not manage to complete the list of numbers, so the activity might have been too demanding and this difficulty could have made the students reluctant to work.

10 minutes later, I asked the students to compare their lists, even if they were not ready (we were a bit behind schedule), and asked if there were any pairs who found any matching numbers. Two pairs announced sharing number 1 (having a brother and a pet) and one pair announced sharing number 2 (having two siblings). After this, I asked the SS whether they found it too difficult to complete the list and as many students (including the best ones) confirmed this, I requested the students to complete it at home as their homework, so that they could spend on it as much time as they needed. Since even the students with high academic results agreed that the activity was difficult, it is impossible to conclude (on the basis of this lesson) whether the activity prevents indiscipline.
Lesson 3

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>7</td>
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Ordinary activity: Pronunciation practice

Research activity: "I'm this type of person" (personalization)

Part I: Ordinary Activity

1. T asks SS (in Czech) whether they consider English pronunciation difficult, especially the fact that the written and oral form of words do not correspond in many cases.

2. T: "Open your books on page 72, exercise 8a."
   T: "S1, read the instructions."
   T checks understanding: "S2, read the example. Why is the word "there" circled? S3, what will you do with line 2?"

3. SS do the first part of the exercise in pairs, T monitors the class and helps if necessary. Then they listen and check their answers.

Part II: Research Activity

4. For the purpose of the next activity, T elicits adjectives describing people's character (happy, hard-working, friendly, polite, good, intelligent, quiet,... and their opposites) and adds some which SS might have heard before but do not recall, or even new ones (with translation).

5. T tells SS what they are supposed to do (make a line with two ends - “very” on one end and “not at all” on the other and put the adjectives on the line depending on what they think they
are like) and illustrates the whole task on the blackboard, making a line about herself. At the end of the lesson, SS are told that they will present their lines next lesson.

REFLECTION:

Both parts of the lesson seemed equal to me in their occurrence of indiscipline. The lesson started in a good mood, which was due to the fact that there was no mess on the floor of the classroom. Which is unusual – the “hobby” of some students is to mess the floor with little pieces of paper or rubbish during the breaks.

SS were very engaged in the first phase of the lesson when they were asked whether they find English pronunciation difficult, most of them raised their hands and had something reasonable to say. One student even mentioned that the difficulty lies in the “fact that words are written in a different way from how they are pronounced”.

During the pronunciation exercise the behavior of the class was close to the typical one: part of the class working hard and finishing sooner than the rest whose one part consists of a few very reluctant students. These SS were avoiding the task and some of the “good” SS were disruptive after having finished, although they were instructed to check their answers with their classmates. Especially one student, although seated (purposefully) far away from her friends, completely ignored the instructions to check her answers or help the weaker students and kept on disturbing the ones who were still working on the task. I had a hard time when trying to help the SS with mild disabilities, encourage the reluctant students and calm down the talkative ones.

The correction of the exercise was, compared to the previous activity, a bit better, and it surprised me. I did not do many listening activities with this class, because the place where the cassette player
was (and where I had to be during listening), was a bit remote from the students, and this might have given way to indiscipline. However, this time it did not work so. Indiscipline was most obvious on the part of the reluctant students who did not do their best to do the task and thus were not interested in checking their answers.

The second part of the lesson started again with a great enthusiasm of the SS – when I was making my line, they listened very well and showed a great amount of curiosity. This confirms the fact that for personalized activities, the teacher should take part as well as the students – if I want my students to tell me what they think about themselves, I must show them that I can open up enough to tell them what I think about myself.

The second part – making their own lines – went worse than the previous part of the activity, but it was more or less the same as the previous part of the lesson. The SS with mild disabilities struggled a lot with this task – it seemed, that they both (even though their disabilities are different) have problems with self-evaluation. Especially O.H. was not able to think about himself at all. When I asked him, “Are you tall?” or “Are you a good friend?”, his only answer was “I don’t know.” Due to this situation, I could not attend to the rest of the class as much as before. The only change in contrast to the first part of the lesson was that the “good” students made themselves busy with adding more and more adjectives to their lines.

Although I have expected quite a lot from this activity, after trying it out I do not think it prevents indiscipline. It can probably work in making the teacher-students rapport better, more open and friendlier, it can bring these two parts closer together, but as prevention of indiscipline itself it seems not to work. The positive impact was that the good students, who have finished earlier, continued in making their lines more complex, but the majority of the class did not behave any better than during a regular activity.
Additionally, this activity was a huge – unmanageable – problem for the students with mild disabilities, and this fact itself produces indiscipline (their task avoidance).
Part I – Ordinary Activity:

1. Project 2 – Introduction; p. 4, exercise 1ab
   T: “How many people are there in the picture, S1?”
   “How many boys are there in the picture, S2?”
   “How many girls are there in the picture, S3?”
   “How many computers are there in the picture, S4?”

2. “Write down – practise – erase” vocabulary – SS write down
   words from the blackboard, together we practise
   pronunciation and one after one the English words are
   erased while the SS have to repeat them on the basis
   of Czech equivalents.

   *live, neighbor, cousin, too, describe, unit, each,
   find, think, lost, advertisement, stupid*

3. SS listen and repeat the names. They are asked to say whether it
   is a person’s name or a name of a place.

4. SS listen again and complete speech bubbles. If necessary, the
   tape will be played once more.

Part II – research activity:

5. Poetry; SS get 4 simple poems with marked words (2-7 per
   poem). SS are instructed to read the poems and replace the marked
words with others while retaining the rhyme and rhythm as much as possible. The newly formed verses should also have a meaning. (For the poems that the students were given see Attachment 1.)

SS dispose of vocabularies during this activity.

REFLECTION:

Discipline in this lesson stayed merely the same during both parts. During the first activity I noticed a few pupils talking to each other. V.H., the ADHD boy, was occupied with looking around the classroom and trying to make eye-contact with the rest of the class.

During the second activity (vocabulary entries and practice of pronunciation) some students moved their mouths to pretend practising pronunciation (task avoidance). It was very hard to spot indisciplined students because pointing at the blackboard requires the teacher's concentration, besides, getting the indisciplined student's attention was almost impossible while the rest of the class kept on reading the words. After we finished the words, I called on two students to read the words alone. They did not know how to pronounce some of the words but they seemed to take it easy.

When the students were listening and completing the speech bubbles, they were slightly more disciplined than I expected. Although I was far from them (at the cassette player), most of them did what they were supposed to. I ascribe this to the fact that they were working with a new book after almost a month without using any textbook. The distribution of students' engagement was again typical: a few students very engaged, a few very disengaged, the ones between approaching the task as something they just have to do. However, two weak students (one reluctant and one with lower intellect abilities) had their answers right.

During the second part of the lesson, part of the class welcomed the challenge and change in the "regular way" of learning
English. They were interested in choosing the most suitable (= easy, but special to them) poem. Some were only choosing the easiest one ("Let's choose this one, there are just 2 words!") which could be identified as half-engagement (readiness to complete the task, but with minimal effort, avoiding challenges). R. B., the problem behavior boy, probably considered dealing with poetry too childish and rejected doing any work.

Did this activity activate students and prevent indiscipline? Yes, some. It had a magical effect on the good students, but almost none on the reluctant ones.
Part I – Ordinary Activity:

1. Project 2, p. 4, exercise 1ab.

   SS read the names in exercise 1a and state whether they are
   names of a person or a place (revision of last lesson).
   Next, individual students read the speech bubbles and translate
   them.

2. Depending on how much time is left, two activities are possible:

   a) time left => SS do exercise 2 on page 5 (writing answers to
      questions into their exercise books)

   b) little time left => short oral exercise on giving basic
      information
         “Where are you from, S1?”
         “Where is S1 from, S2?”
         “Where do you live, S3?”
         “Where does S1 live, S4?”
         “Do you have any brothers or sisters/cousins, S4?”
         “Does S3 have any brothers or sisters/cousins, S5?”
         (etc.)
Part II – Research Activity

3. T asks SS which English words they perceive as difficult to pronounce and writes them on the blackboard. They practise the pronunciation.

Next, SS are given sheets of paper where they write a phrase or a sentence using one of the words on the blackboard. They pass the paper to their neighbor or the person sitting behind them and repeat this procedure until the paper reaches the author of the first phrase/sentence (if we have enough time, otherwise 5 rounds will be enough).

Finally, the students rate the phrases/sentences 0-10 according to how difficult they find them. Next lesson, SS work in pairs and present their ratings to their partner.

REFLECTION:

There was a terrible mess on the floor of the classroom (again). I left the room and stood behind the door for a couple of minutes while the students were tidying up the classroom. The lesson started 4 minutes later and with a negative tone. This problem is a long-term issue which bothered many teachers who taught in this class. Precious time was lost and those who tidy up the classroom were hardly those who mess it up.

I skipped the revision of exercise 1a and went straight to the translation of speech bubbles. Students were quiet, but hesitant and reluctant. I noticed a lot of task avoidance and wondered whether pressure or relaxation would make them work more effectively. I chose relaxation, the students were praised a lot, could take their time to do a good job and offered help from a classmate was welcome. As a following activity we did oral practising (b) and students seemed a bit more active. They had to listen to their classmates' answers to be able to answer questions laid to them.
Nevertheless, with the increase of students' activation grew the disruptiveness of indiscipline, as well.

Change came at the beginning of the research activity. Similarly to Lesson 3, students actively (and without indiscipline) expressed their opinions. I had to correct their perception of the task: one student mentioned the difficulties with reading English while now they were supposed to find difficulties in pronunciation of sounds of English. After this, students suggested words like *three, river, clever, students' book, children, mother, father, brother, Wales* and others. V. B., the ADHD boy, adds about 2 or 3 words and actively participates in the task. I had never seen such a devotion from him to the task.

Although the preparatory phase of the activity was great, the rest was total chaos. I took care during the instruction, but whole class instruction works usually wrong with this class. However, the complicated procedure of the activity requires that everybody understand what they are supposed to do. I ended up saying the whole instruction twice and with breaks to make sure everybody is listening. Some students asked questions which would be answered if they only listened to what is to follow.

When students finally get the sheets of paper, some students wrote a sentence within a minute while others could not find a simple phrase. I had to encourage a student to make such a simple phrase like “three cats.” When it was time to pass the sheets to their neighbours, some students understood the instruction “Pass the sheets behind” as that they should pass every single sheet to the back of the row. The class was in total disorder – some students insisted on passing the sheets to the back, some opposed with the right instruction, and some students from various places around the classroom simultaneously asked for my explanation. I was forced to speak to the whole class again, which was now accompanied by
students' comments. Before we could distribute the sheets of paper back to their first owners, I noticed that only a couple of minutes of the lesson are left, so I finished the activity and with a little help of some students we summed up why the activity had not gone well.

This research activity clearly had two parts out of which one worked perfectly and the other not at all. I did not (and still do not) consider the task (making sentences or simple phrases) too difficult for 7th graders, very simple words were chosen and if they had made a phrase of 2 words only, it would have been enough, so task difficulty as a reason of failure is out of question. As it is mainly the first and last part that are personalized, and the first part prevented indiscipline even in the case of the ADHD boy, it may be assumed that personalization does prevent indiscipline.
Lesson 6

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<td>Attendance</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Signs – what people must or mustn’t do (modal verbs)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research activity</td>
<td>Colours (personalization)</td>
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Part I – Research Activity:

1. SS were given homework last lesson: to carry with themselves a piece of paper with a color chart on it and put down which colors they can see around. All of this for a period of 2 hours. At the beginning of this lesson, I ask them which color they noticed most often and if there was any that they did not notice at all.

On one of the classroom walls, colorful sheets of paper are stuck. SS are requested to stand next to their favorite color. Next, they place themselves next to the color which they saw most often.

The students are given various questions related to the colors and the classroom:

- Which color can you see most in the classroom?
- Which objects in the classroom are of your color?
- Which of the two colors (favorite and most seen) is cold/warm?
- Which of the two colors do you like to wear?

Back at their seats, the students' task is to match colors with objects for which it is typical and then to match them with adjectives according to how they perceive the color (healthy, happy, sad, lovely, fresh, shy, stupid, alert, sweet and any of their own).
Part II – Ordinary Activity:


3. Students' book p. 67, exercise 4. SS write what particular signs mean, using modal verbs must and mustn't. They may work in pairs. If they are ready, they are supposed to find a partner and check their sentences.

REFLECTION:

Apart from one moment, this was a nice lesson without any major discipline problems. There was an indicator that the research activity worked well to prevent indiscipline: all the students but one brought their homework. This was very rare, usually about half of the students brought their homework. However, this could have been caused by the easy possibility to fake the homework. Because I considered the relationship between me and my students quite friendly and open, I asked them if they faked it, and promised no punishment if they did. Nobody confessed, though, so it may be assumed that this activity had a good influence on the students' doing homework.

There was some noise while the students were standing at the color-posts – 6 students chose green as their favorite color and now were chatting among themselves. The preference for green, in my opinion, may have been due to the fact that the class 9 A, from which is the majority of students in this group, is going to get their green end-of-school-attendance T-shirts soon. All of them are looking forward towards them a lot.¹

¹ teacher's note on 16 November 2009: a quite big part of the class spent the rest of their school days wearing this T-shirt.
When students were naming objects in the classroom, one student reached for a chair and sat on it. When I asked him what he was doing, he answered "Well, you are sitting, too," and made me wonder whether a good relationship between a teacher and his/her students can only be an illusion. Apart from this event, the rest of the activity went well - students were activated and the occurrence of indiscipline did not prevent it from being well finished.

The second (ordinary) activity started with oral revision, during which the students seemed a bit bored. First I wondered whether it was too easy for them or boring, but because modal verbs are rarely easy (and I insisted on teaching them more than those which are in the textbook), so I incline to the opinion that it was rather boring.

When making sentences to the signs, some students worked quietly and some disrupted their classmates with comparing their progress and eventually stopped when I called their attention. One student avoided the task and spent the time looking around the classroom. After my notice, he pretended to work, but when I asked him to read a sentence, he was not able to do it.

The rudeness from the part of one student which happened during the research activity, was not directly related to its quality and whether it does or does not prevent indiscipline, so the conclusion is that this activity does activate students and thus prevent indiscipline.
Lesson 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>April 27, 2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordinary activity</td>
<td>School rules (modal verbs must and mustn't)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research activity</td>
<td>My ideal school (personalization)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part I: Ordinary Activity

1. modal verbs – revision
   T asks SS which modal verbs they know and what they mean (so far we have studied must, mustn't, can, should and may).
   Then they are asked to translate the verbs that T says from Czech to English as quickly as possible.

2. Students' book p. 66, exercise 2. Individual SS are asked to read a rule and connect it to a picture. At more difficult sentences, the SS translate them.

Part II: Research Activity

3. SS get double sheets of paper. With the headline “Our School” they form a list of rules which they have to follow at school. With the headline “My Ideal School” they make a list of rules which they would establish in the school of their dreams. They are requested to use at least 3 modal verbs (must, mustn't and can are recommended) and make at least 9 rules, 3 for each modal verb. The number of rules for “Our School” is not prescribed but there should be at least a few.

REFLECTION:

This was a wonderful lesson. Many of the lessons with this
grade were great, which is a kind of surprise, taking in account the fact that indiscipline in the 9th grade usually grows during the second half of the school year. I did not notice any increase of indiscipline in this class during my lessons. And this lesson was not any different. In the first part, students struggled a bit with the modal verbs at the beginning, but reading the rules and matching them to pictures went smoothly with only minor occurrences of indiscipline — disturbing other students while another one was occupied with reading a sentence. After this exercise, I asked the students (in Czech) which rules are the same in Czech and British schools. Most of the students actively search for differences.

The second part of the lesson goes in the same course; there are signs of disturbance during the instructions, but as soon as the class understands what they are supposed to do, they work peacefully and exactly as they are expected. One student, a “talkative” boy with persistent comments on whatever is or is not going on, looks around trying to get in contact with others, but others are immersed in work. I approach him and ask whether he needs help. His answer is negative, so I point out that he should work on his task. He does not disturb others any more, but does not participate, either.

There is a boy (D.B.) who was graded 5 in the mid-term school report. His behavior is not disturbing, but he is very passive. Academic results do not matter to him. When help is needed (ecological activities of the school, moving heavy furniture etc.), he is always the first to help and in any way, he is the most polite. However, he shows complete reluctance in tasks he is given during lessons. This reluctance changed during the second half of the year to a more or less satisfying cooperation from his side. At the end of this lesson, D. B. hands out the sheet with a couple of rules under “Our school” and the sentence “I'm quite satisfied with our school :-)”, where the rules of his ideal school should be. I hesitate a lot whether
I should appreciate his originality or take it as a manifestation of his continuing reluctance and effort to avoid the task as much as possible. I make a funny comment on the way he avoided the task and privately instruct him to fulfill it at home.

My impression of this activity is very good. Now that in our schools students' parliaments are established and students get more chances to participate in what their school is like, it offers an interesting insight into what they would change about their school. I was glad to learn that, in my class, every student took a serious stand to this matter. It does not mean that they do not request impossible rules (like eating in class allowed), but I am convinced that when making their lists, they really thought about it (I expected to get a few lists with silly suggestions). Therefore, as a means of preventing indiscipline, this activity works well. Students were engaged and not many actions of indiscipline took place.
D. Results.

In this research, 3 methods were used: classroom observation, self-evaluation of students' behaviour and the reflection of the teacher. During the classroom observations, the observers recorded individual occurrences of students' misbehaviour into an outline of the seating order in the classroom. Each seat was divided into two parts, the upper part for the first (usually the ordinary) activity, the lower part for the second (usually the research) activity. The two numbers – occurrence of indiscipline during each part of the lesson – were then compared. The students' behaviour self-evaluation cards contained lines with two ends: a smiling face for good behaviour and a gloomy face for bad behaviour. Students were instructed to put a mark on the line according to how they behaved during the research part of the lesson. For the purposes of eliciting the results, the lines were divided into 5 parts and each student's behaviour was marked with a number from 1 to 5. 1 standing for good behaviour, 5 for bad behaviour.

The following table shows occurrence of indiscipline during each lesson:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Ordinary activity</th>
<th>Research activity</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>IO Index$^3$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 1</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>2.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Letter from the Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Lesson 2 | 17                | 17                | 34    | 1            |
| My Numbers |                   |                   |       |              |

| Lesson 3 | 33                | 17                | 50    | 1.52         |
| I'm This Type of Person |                   |                   |       |              |

| Lesson 4 | 39                | 26                | 65    | 1.5          |
| Poetry |                   |                   |       |              |

| Lesson 5 | 28                | 24                | 48    | 1.17         |
| Intensive Pronunciation Work |                   |                   |       |              |

| Lesson 6 | 33                | 18                | 51    | 1.83         |
| Colours |                   |                   |       |              |

| Lesson 7 | 29                | 18                | 37    | 1.61         |
| My Ideal School |                   |                   |       |              |

We can see that in every lesson but lesson 2 the discipline during the research activity was better than during the ordinary activity. The activity which had the biggest impact on indiscipline was “A Letter

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2 IO Index (Indiscipline Occurrence Index) is the ratio of the number of indiscipline during the ordinary and the research part of the lesson, it was gained by dividing the OA by RA, which implies that the higher the numeric value, the bigger the difference between the occurrence of indiscipline of the OA and the RA

3 Because the activity My Numbers proved to be too difficult for the students, it will not be included in the results.
from the Teacher”; the one with the weakest impact on misbehavior was Intensive Pronunciation Work.

The next table shows how students evaluated their behavior during the research activities on scale 1 to 5:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson 1</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Letter from the Teacher</td>
<td>4 SS</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5 SS</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4 SS</td>
<td>15 (1 excluded)</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 2</td>
<td>6 SS</td>
<td>1 S</td>
<td>5 SS</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2 SS</td>
<td>15 (1 excluded)</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Numbers</td>
<td>11 SS</td>
<td>1 S</td>
<td>1 S</td>
<td>2 SS</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 3</td>
<td>3 SS</td>
<td>1 S</td>
<td>6 S</td>
<td>2 SS</td>
<td>5 SS</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm This Type of Person</td>
<td>9 SS</td>
<td>1 S</td>
<td>4 SS</td>
<td>1 S</td>
<td>1 S</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 5</td>
<td>2 SS</td>
<td>4 SS</td>
<td>4 SS</td>
<td>1 S</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intensive Pronunciation Work</td>
<td>7 SS</td>
<td>1 S</td>
<td>1 S</td>
<td>1 S</td>
<td>1 S</td>
<td>12 (1 excluded)</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students found their behavior average or worse than average only in lessons 1 and 4, all the others they found it better than average. At the top is lesson 3 with 11 students (out of 15) and also lesson 5 with 9 students (out of 16) who marked their behaviour 1.

4 These results had to be excluded for lack of clarity of the students' answers (two marks at a line).
The last table compares the teacher's impression of the activity regarding preventing indiscipline, the numbers of occasions on which indiscipline occurred, and the students' own perception of their behaviour during research activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson 1</th>
<th>Teacher's view</th>
<th>Number of instances of indiscipline</th>
<th>Students' self-evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Letter from the Teacher</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>31 OA / 12 RA</td>
<td>2,8 (average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 2</td>
<td>Inconclusive</td>
<td>17 OA / 17 RA</td>
<td>2,2 (better than average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Numbers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 3</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>33 OA / 17 RA</td>
<td>1,6 (very good)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm This Type of Person</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 4</td>
<td>Partially: good students</td>
<td>39 OA / 26 RA</td>
<td>3,29 (worse than average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poetry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 5</td>
<td>Partially: only the first part of the activity</td>
<td>28 OA / 24 RA</td>
<td>2 (better than average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intensive Pronunciation Work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 6</td>
<td>Homework: yes; classroom behaviour: no</td>
<td>33 OA / 18 RA</td>
<td>2,36 (better than average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 7</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>29 OA / 18 RA</td>
<td>2,1 (better than average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Ideal School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the teacher, only two activities ("A Letter from the Teacher" and "My Ideal School") had a clearly positive effect on classroom discipline. However, based on the observation, it appears that 6 out of 7 activities prevent indiscipline. In case of "Intensive
Pronunciation Work” (lesson 5) the difference is not so big, but the indiscretion decreased to almost a third of the usual situation during “A Letter from the Teacher” and almost to a half of the usual situation during “I'm This Type of Person” and “Colours”. The most coherent results are there for the activity “Poetry” – none of the three methods gave evidence that it prevents indiscretion. The activity, which seemed strongest in preventing indiscretion, was “My Ideal School,” followed by “A Letter from the Teacher” and “I'm This Type of Person.”
V. Personalization, Affect and Poetry as a Means of Preventing Indiscipline in Today's Education.

Teachers today face problems that are raised by the character of education: there's the requirement for transforming students into life-long autonomous learners, schools fight with a load of responsibilities (educationalization of social problems) that they have to carry out in addition to educating children and young people academically. The teacher's position changed, which demands different ways of motivating students so that the educational aims (both academic and non-academic) are reached.

This thesis suggests various ways which teachers can use to make students engaged in the activities and therefore prevent them from misbehaving. In the research, some of these (personalization, affective activity and poetry) were examined. Three methods (the teacher's reflections, observation and students' evaluation of their own behavior) offer an insight into which activities work well in engaging the students. However, the results were not always coherent. According to me, the teacher, the most promising seem to be two activities, A "Letter from the Teacher" and "My Ideal School." Students assessed themselves best in the activity "I'm This Type of Person," and classroom observation reveals that "A Letter from the Teacher," "I'm This Type of Person" and "Colors" are particularly useful for keeping students engaged and disciplined. The activity which failed achieving this aim was "Poetry," at which the students assessed their behavior as below average and in the lesson, it proved to engage only part of the class.

Possible limitations of the research might be caused by the fact that these activities were new to the teacher, thus it could have been hard to anticipate problems (e.g. overly challenging activity in lesson 2). Not anticipated problems are also difficult to be solved effectively when they occur. Furthermore, the organization of these
activities is complex and differs from the typical structure of textbook activities and the other ones (practising vocabulary, oral revision, teacher's questions etc.). Students – and the teacher as well – might operate these “typical” activities more easily and the “untypical” ones with some difficulties, which may be the source of misbehaviour. On the other hand, this “atypicalness” is, at the same time, a source of curiosity which should promote students' engagement.

As the teacher who carried out the research activities and compared students' behaviour during them and the ordinary activities, I would recommend other teachers to include personalization, affective activities and even poetry (although it did not work well in my lesson) into their lessons, but I would also advise them to bare in mind that it is not only these arrangements that classroom discipline depends on. Careful lesson planning, classroom management and other factors might still be necessary when thinking of an engaged and disciplined class.
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LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

1 Poems – research activity in lesson 4
THE MAN FROM NUN

The man from the country of Nun refused to stop shooting his gun.
   He shot a nun
   who was having a lot of fun
   eating a vanilla bun.

THE WOMAN FROM MAINE

There was an old woman from Maine
   Who could never stay out of rain.
   She was quite in pain
   Because she was always sick
   after playing in the rain.

THE GORILLA

There once was a dapper gorilla
   who wore a big coat of chinchilla.
He wore a bow tie which was navy blue
   and a black beautiful suit he wore, too.
   He had a big comfortable car
   and dreamed to be
   a famous film star.

THE SPIDER

A little red spider named Fred
   Liked to hide at the end of the bed.
   He liked his mummy.
   Mummy liked him
   and she often made him
   a beetle ice-cream.