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Comparison of Adult EFL Textbooks on Pre-Intermediate Level
Master's Diploma Thesis

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I declare that I have worked on this thesis independently, using only the primary and secondary sources listed in the bibliography.

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Author’s signature
Acknowledgment

I would like to thank to my supervisor Mgr. Linda Nepivodová for her kind help and patience with my questions. I also would like to thank to my family for their perpetual support.
Contents
Introduction.........................................................................................................................8

Chapter 1: The role of Textbooks in an English course ................................................. 11

1.1 Textbooks versus Teacher-Developed Materials .................................................. 11

1.2 Benefits of Using a Textbook for Teachers......................................................... 17

1.3 Benefits of Using a Textbook for Students......................................................... 19

Chapter 2: A General Description of a Textbook......................................................... 21

2.1 Types of Textbooks ............................................................................................... 22

2.2 Design...................................................................................................................... 24

2.3 Reading...................................................................................................................... 25

   Reading in a Classroom .............................................................................................. 27

   Skimming and Scanning ............................................................................................ 29

   Bottom-up and Top-down Processing ...................................................................... 30

   Developing Reading Skills ....................................................................................... 30

2.4 Speaking ................................................................................................................... 33

   Fluency and Accuracy ............................................................................................... 33

   Developing Speaking Skills ..................................................................................... 35
Introduction

The title of the thesis is The Analysis of EFL Textbooks for Adults. As the name suggests, the aim of the thesis is to analyze and evaluate several EFL textbooks for adults used by Brno language schools.

The thesis itself is divided into seven chapters. It commences with rather theoretical and general topics such as ‘The Role of Textbooks in an English course’ and develops to more specific ones, for instance ‘Description of Learners’ and ‘How to Choose an Appropriate Textbook’ to comparison and contrast of two selected textbooks, Global by Macmillan and New English File by Oxford University Press.

The textbooks for the analysis were chosen on the basis of a questionnaire which was sent to language schools in Brno. The description of the questionnaire and the analysis of the results can be found in the chapter called ‘The Selection of Textbooks for this Thesis’.

The thesis intends to help teachers in deciding how to choose an appropriate textbook and what it should contain. There are plenty of ESL textbooks available on the market so how should teachers choose the most appropriate one for their course? A detailed evaluation is needed. However, to choose an appropriate textbook is not as easy as it sounds. There are many features of the textbooks that should be taken into consideration and it is crucial to decide at the beginning of the process which of the features will be considered as
important and which not. As Leslie E. Sheldon suggests in his essay *Evaluating ELT Textbooks and Materials*, a checklist may be a great help. Although it might seem that creating a checklist is a time-demanding activity as well, in the long term perspective it is evidently time-saving as the checklists can be reused many times.

However, some teachers may simply choose the most popular textbook without any proper scrutiny. Others might have no right of choice as some language schools have already set their textbooks for given courses and do not allow any changes. Even in these cases when the textbook is assigned to a teacher, there still are ways to deal with the fact that important features are missing in the textbook. The textbook may and should be adapted to the teachers’ and learners’ needs.

The purpose of this thesis is to help teachers with the process of evaluation from the very beginning.

The first chapter of the thesis is dedicated to the reasons for using textbooks and also discusses what benefits their usage brings to both teachers and students.

The second chapter is rather a descriptive one as it deals with different types of textbooks of general English for adults focusing on pre-intermediate level only. Some of the features are examined more closely and they are, later on,
examined in the selected textbooks as well. The covered features are design, reading, speaking, and functional language.

After a description of the textbook a closer look is taken on another element involved in language learning, the students. Aspects influencing language learning, such as age, language level, motivation, and some more are discussed in the third chapter.

The fourth chapter is in fact an interconnection between the previous two chapters. It deals with the problem of selection of an appropriate textbook for the students to match their needs.

The following chapter is predominantly concerned with the questionnaire. It served as a source to obtain data about textbooks used currently in language schools in Brno. The individual sections are described together with the results of the questionnaire.

The sixth chapter is divided into several sub-chapters. First, the general descriptions of both Global and New English File are provided and then the distinctive features discussed in the second chapter are analysed in more detail.

The final chapter provides a contrast and comparison of the two textbooks that were selected on the basis of the questionnaire.

The outcomes of the thesis are then summarised in the conclusion.
Chapter 1: The role of Textbooks in an English course

The aim of this chapter is to examine the role of textbooks in English courses namely to compare them with and contrast to teacher-developed materials and to describe their advantages and disadvantages for both teachers and students respectively.

1.1 Textbooks versus Teacher-Developed Materials

Julian Edge, one of the authors of the Longman series Keys to Language Teaching, claims that if someone looks into a classroom where English is taught, they probably expect to see three things: the students, the teacher (all of them conducting activities in English), and also some teaching materials (Edge, 43). One of the most common materials for English teaching are textbooks. But the problem Edge mentions is that some teachers “try to fit themselves and their students into the demands made by their materials” (Edge, 43). The solution for this problem is to take it the other way round and try to fit the materials to the students’ needs. Nonetheless, it does not mean that published materials should be discarded.

When looking at a page in a textbook and considering its usefulness, according to Neville Grant teachers have basically four options what to do with it. They can omit it, replace it, add something to it, or adapt it.

There is nothing wrong with omitting or replacing a page from a textbook. On the contrary, “[e]xclusive use of a [text]book can become a straitjacket; it can
be very predictable and boring for the students” (Gower, 78). Jeremy Harmer in his book *How to Teach English* mentions that “however good the material is, most experienced teachers do not go through it word for word” (Harmer, 112). He compares a textbook to a springboard teachers use for their lessons and explains that “while they base much of their teaching on the contents of the coursebook, they reserve the right to decide when and how to use its constituent parts” (Harmer 2007, 182).

Harmer, unlike Grant, states only two groups of changes that can be done to a textbook. The number of the groups refers to the numbers of possible answers to the question whether to use the textbook or not. If a teacher decides not to use the textbook, then they can either replace or omit a textbook page or even the whole lesson. If a teacher decides to use the textbook, the question then is whether to use it as it is or change it somehow. In this point, he offers five possible changes: Adding, re-writing, replacing activities, re-ordering, and reducing (Harmer 2007, 182-3).

The question whether to replace or omit a page completely (Grant’s first two options) depends on the usefulness of the lesson. If it “does not teach anything fundamentally necessary and it is not especially interesting” (Harmer 2007, 182), then the choice is quite simple and the lesson can be omitted. On the other hand, if the topic or language presented and practised in the lesson is essential, then it is appropriate to replace it with some other materials relevant to the students and covering the same area.
Replacing some pages of the textbook seems to be a better choice than simply omitting them. The students get what they have in the textbook (e.g. the same part of grammar or vocabulary) and they can use the textbook for example for self-study or revision of the subject.

The third option, adding some material to the textbook, is according to Harmer “a good alternative since it uses the textbook’s strengths but [intertwines] them with the teacher’s own skills and perception of the class in front of him or her” (Harmer, 111-2).

The last option mentioned by Harmer, adapting the textbook, is based on using the core material from the textbook but in a different way which brings the teacher’s personality into the classroom so that the subject becomes more attractive and intriguing to the students.

Teacher-developed materials are very tightly connected with all of these changes to the textbooks. When a teacher wants to replace something in the book, the first question that comes to mind is where he or she should take the material to cover the same language area. Of course it is possible to use some pages or exercises from other textbooks but some teachers feel the need to fit the materials they use just for their class because no textbook can “cater equally to the requirements of every classroom setting” (Williams, 251). Thus, they develop their own material for their own class. Developing one’s own material for teaching is not an easy task because there still are several issues to be considered.
When making a decision whether to use a textbook or teacher-developed material in a course, one should consider several issues. The most obvious one is the amount of time and energy teachers have at their disposal to invest into preparing for the lessons. Kathleen Graves in her book *Designing Language Courses: A Guide for Teachers* mentions that teaching a course without a textbook is sometimes impossible since “[t]he majority of teachers are not paid or do not have the time in their schedules to develop all the materials for every course they teach” (Graves, 149).

Even though using a textbook in a course does not mean that a teacher should not devote any time to his or her preparation, evaluating and adapting a textbook is “less time-consuming than designing a syllabus and creating materials from scratch. So it takes some of the preparation load off teachers” (Gower, 77).

Developing specific materials for every course is by all means very time-consuming and in some cases even impossible. Nevertheless, it is not the only issue that should be considered. The most important participant of both language teaching and language learning is definitely a student, thus, the material used in a classroom should match especially students’ needs. Authors of published textbooks often invest a great deal of effort into making it attractive, reliable, and user-friendly (Edge, 44). Anyone who decides to create a teaching material by his or her own should try to do the same.
The attractiveness mentioned by Edge means that not only the pictures are nice to look at, but also the topics and the overall design of the textbook are pleasing. It is important to remember that what seems attractive to a teacher does not have to appeal to the student as well.

The second term, reliability, Edge explains as “the overall choice and sequencing of what is taught, the correctness of information, and the dependability of the exercises and activities” (Edge, 44). He also warns that it is crucial to proof-read any text or handout a teacher creates as “mistakes will creep into any text” (Edge, 44).

The third term refers to the security the material should provide. As long as published textbooks are concerned, obtaining a copy of a teacher’s book gives the teacher more options and ideas to exploit the textbook.

Unfortunately, choosing teacher-developed material over a published textbook does not always have to seem to be a good option for the students. Leslie E. Sheldon mentions in his paper Evaluating ELT textbooks and materials that “[i]t is a cruel paradox that for students, teacher-generated material (which potentially has a dynamic and maximal relevance to local needs) often has less credibility than a published textbook, no matter how inadequate that may be” (Sheldon, 238). Penny Ur also shares her experience with teaching a course without a textbook. She reports that her students “have complained of a sense of lack of purpose, and, interestingly, that they feel that their learning is not taken seriously” (Ur, 193). It is pity that although teacher-created handouts and
worksheets are results of the popular communicative approach, they are often bad
ly received by students who tend to trust books which are officially published yet not tailor made for their needs.

Two requirements teacher-developed materials should fulfill according to Edge are the connection between the artificial classroom setting and the real world outside the classroom and they should stimulate “authentic communication between the learners” (Edge, 46).

Although it might seem that using teacher-developed material has no advantages over using textbook, it is not true. As Sheldon says, even the newest textbook is always “a little outdated [...] because of the long delays between writing and publication” (Sheldon, 239). This delay does not occur when producing ‘home-grown’ material, a teacher can use it as soon the material is ready to use. Another unquestionable advantage has already been mentioned above. It is the possibility to fit the material to the needs of a particular group of students which is not possible with a textbook without any adaptation.

On the contrary, using textbooks has numerous benefits as well. They can be basically divided into two categories – benefits for teachers and benefits for students which are further discussed in the following two sub-chapters.
1.2 Benefits of Using a Textbook for Teachers

Even though views on textbooks and their usage in language courses vary from being very useful and labour-saving tool to something that does “not seem to provide good value for money” (Sheldon, 237) and is then seen as necessary evil, according to the survey conducted among language schools in Brno, most teachers do use the textbooks. The aim of this sub-chapter is to investigate the benefits of using textbooks in language courses for teachers.

Neville Grant in his book Making the Most of Your Textbook says right at the beginning, that for most teachers “it is very difficult [...] to teach systematically without a textbook” (Grant, 8). This statement makes the first benefit of using a textbook quite obvious and Gower agrees on this with Grant and Ur: A textbook gives a teacher some kind of syllabus to follow. The textbook gives a teacher a clue what they should teach, in what order and how they should teach it. Thus it provides not only the content but also methodologies for teaching. As a bonus, all materials needed are provided “neatly, attractively and economically” (Grant, 8).

Penny Ur also adds that a textbook is a “convenient package” and emphasises that it does not depend on any hardware or supply of electricity which might fail (Ur, 184).

Many textbooks nowadays come in special sets for teachers. This means that teachers do not only have the textbook but also a teacher’s book which gives
“guidelines for lessons and [mentions] possible difficulties to be aware of” (Gower, 77). Thus a teacher’s book is not a mere key to the exercises in the students’ book but it is often a valuable guide through the textbook and usually it contains some useful tips how to exploit the textbook. Beside a teacher’s book the set often contains audio CDs and sometimes even a teacher’s resource pack (e.g. Global by MacMillan) where many additional activities and handouts can be found and it depends solely on the teachers whether they use them or not.

As it was already said in the previous section, it is not always a great idea to follow the textbook completely with all the exercises and all the methodologies suggested by its authors. Sometimes a teacher has to make a decision what to omit or where to supply more teaching material (Grant, 7-8). This is called an adaptation of a textbook and since it is not the point of this thesis it is not described here in a greater detail. Some useful tips for adaptation can be found for example in How to Teach English by Jeremy Harmer, Making the most of your Textbook by Neville Grant, and Designing Language Courses by Kathleen Graves.

In conclusion, a good textbook offers a teacher syllabus to follow in a course, methodology, and all material necessary for conducting a course developing students’ language skills. Nonetheless, using the textbook from cover to cover is not necessary and adding some extra material to the course is welcome.
1.3 Benefits of Using a Textbook for Students

As was stated before, the most important person in a language teaching process is not a teacher but a student. The advantages of using a textbook described in the previous paragraph may seem to be a sufficient reason for using a textbook, but is it beneficial for the students as well? Of course, if there were only disadvantages of using textbooks for students, it is highly possible that the textbooks would not be used at all. This sub-chapter takes a closer look at the advantages of using textbooks for students.

Grant compares the relationship between a textbook and a student to one between a map and a traveller: "Like a map for a traveller in unknown territory, a textbook is a reassurance for most students. It offers a systematic revision of what they have done, and a guide to what they are going to do" (Grant, 8). Jeremy Harmer also mentions, that "[s]tudents like coursebooks [...] since they foster the perception of progress as units and then books are completed" (Harmer 2007, 181).

Harmer, in his section called So why use textbooks at all, agrees with Grant that a textbook is something students can rely on and they can revise what they have already studied and also get an idea what is coming next in the language course. He continues with an idea that textbooks also provide a source of a nice visual material: "Now that books tend to be much more colourful than in the old days, students enjoy looking at the visual material in front of them" (Harmer, 117).
It might seem that there are not many advantages of using textbooks for students in comparison with benefits of using a textbook for teachers. Nevertheless, it is very important for a student to have his or her own ‘map’ of the course so they can revise what they have already studied in the course or have a look where they are going next. Having this ‘map’ bound together and with colourful pictures is an additional benefit many students appreciate.
Chapter 2: A General Description of a Textbook

The aim of this chapter is to describe the textbooks in general, especially different types of textbooks and then also to describe particular the features of textbooks that are later analyzed in further chapters and sub-chapters of this thesis.

Many authors, e.g. Neville Grant and Alan Cunningsworth, have already occupied themselves with textbooks evaluation. However, many of them are irrelevant nowadays as the main issues discussed were racism and subordinate position of women which are not issues nowadays. Today, the most discussed issues can be divided into two different groups. First, it is a layout of the textbook; secondly, it is the content of the textbook. As far as layout is concerned, the main questions researchers ask are: Is the layout clear for the student? Are the pictures modern? More topics are discussed when speaking about the content of the textbook. Most discussed issues are for example the incorporation of the four systems (reading, writing, listening, and speaking), relevance of the knowledge transferred to the student, applicability of the function language taught, relevance to the real life, cultural issues taught in the textbook etc. Some of these questions have been incorporated into the questionnaire which serves as a basis for this thesis as well.
2.1 Types of Textbooks

There are always more options to divide one thing into several categories and usually it is not possible to say which division is the correct one moreover, it is usually not possible to have just one correct answer – different versions reflect different reasons for division and Grant mentions that many teachers have their own way of categorizing textbooks. As an example he states student-centred and teacher-centred materials. Other division might be for example according to the language of instructions (English or L1 of the student), aim of the textbook (e.g. preparation for exams or general English course), type of English (English for specific purposes, general English etc.) and many more.

Neville Grant tries to simplify the subject by using only two, although quite broad, categories. These are traditional textbooks and communicative textbooks. Nevertheless, he also warns that some of the textbooks might fit into both categories partially.

He describes traditional textbooks as those ones that try “to get students to learn the language as a system” (Grant, 13). The basic characteristics of traditional textbooks Grand states are: Emphasis of grammar, not functions, focus on reading and writing activities, usage of L1, emphasis on accuracy, and focus on a syllabus and examinations (Grant, 13).

The result of using the traditional textbooks is that the students know the grammar of a language but they cannot use it.
On the contrary, the textbooks Grant calls communicative try to create “opportunities for the students to use the language in the classroom, as a sort of ‘halfway house’ before using it in real life” (Grant, 13). Although he admits that many different types of textbooks can be called communicative, the features they all should have in common he states as follow: Emphasis on the communicative functions of language, reflection of students’ needs and interests, emphasis on skills and good balance among them, specific definition of aims, reflection of authentic language, encouraging group and pair work, and emphasis on fluency rather than accuracy (Grant, 14).

Grant also gives examples of some communicative activities that help the students to use the language in everyday life, such as listening to authentic recordings (e.g. airport announcement), using information-gap exercises, scanning a text in order to find specific data, and writing a postcard to a friend or filling in an application form.

Although he puts great emphasis on using communicative activities, Grant also claims that some non-communicative tasks can be useful as well. As an example, he states drills for imitating the sounds of a language or sentence completion in order to prepare the students for an exam.

Grant also offers four quick tests to tell if a textbook is a traditional or a communicative one. The first one lies in evaluating the language used in the textbook. If the dialogues are realistic, then the textbook is communicative. If they are unnatural then it is probably the traditional one.
The second test is about the activities presented in the textbook. If they are likely to occur in a real life as well, then it is a communicative textbook.

The third one is an analysis of speaking tasks – if the importance is given to accuracy instead of fluency, then it is not a communicative textbook. Giving the students freedom to speak means also risking they will make mistakes. Communicative textbooks accept the risk.

The last test asks if the textbook emphasizes study or practice. If a lot of time is devoted to studying of a particular feature of a language but not to practicing it, then it is not a communicative textbook.

According to these characteristics, most of the textbooks published nowadays fall within the category of communicative textbooks.

2.2 Design

Design is the most visible feature of a textbook and it is also the first thing most students look at. The important thing is not a modernity of pictures (although it adds some attractiveness as well) but the layout of the pages.

One of the practical problems Sheldon mentions is an exercise that requires microscopic handwriting. This might happen because of “the economic pressures that demand a maximum textual density on each page” (Sheldon, 239). Brown adds that the typesetting should be clear as well.
When a teacher evaluates a textbook, he or she should, according to Sheldon, check several features in the viewpoint of design and layout. The first concerns the density and the mix of text and pictures. Sheldon agrees with Brown that there should be enough space to write in the textbook, the layout should be comfortable, and it definitely should not give the impression of clutter. The illustrations should be functional, it should not serve for artistic purpose only although it should be appealing (Sheldon, 243-4).

Both Sheldon and Brown also mention some physical characteristic that are important when choosing a textbook. These characteristic concern mainly the size and weight of the textbook, as it should be neither too robust nor too heavy. The binding should be solid as well so students do not lose any pages of their copies.

2.3 Reading

Reading is one of the receptive skills. For many students it is one of the most important skills as it is often easier for them than for example speaking, especially because when reading they can take their own time to think about the text whereas during speaking, they have to react immediately. However, as Brown points out, it is not possible to teach reading without connection to other skills: “Reading ability will be developed best in association with writing, listening, and speaking activities” (Brown, 357).
The research on reading and teaching reading in a non-native language started about four decades ago, in 1970s. The researchers devoted their time to issues such as bottom-up and top-down processing, extensive and intensive reading, teaching strategic reading, fluency and reading rate, the role of affect and culture and many more (Brown, 358-61).

Almost no learner of English becomes a perfect reader without practicing some crucial micro- and macro-skills. Brown lists fourteen of these skills:

**Microskills**

1. Discriminate among the distinctive graphemes and orthographic patterns of English.

2. Retain chunks of language of different lengths in short-term memory.

3. Process writing at an efficient rate of speed to suit the purpose.

4. Recognize a core of words, and interpret word order patterns and their significance.

5. Recognize grammatical word classes (nouns, verbs, etc.), systems (e.g. tense, agreement, pluralization), patterns, rules, and elliptical forms.

6. Recognize that a particular meaning may be expressed in different grammatical forms.

**Macroskills**

7. Recognise cohesive devices in written discourse and their role in signaling the relationship between and among clauses.

8. Recognize the rhetorical forms of written discourse and their significance for interpretation.

9. Recognize the communicative functions of written texts, according to form and purpose.
10. Infer context that is not explicit by using background knowledge.

11. Infer links and connections between events, ideas, etc.; deduce causes and effects; and detect such relations as main idea, supporting idea, new information, given information, generalization, and exemplification.

12. Distinguish between literal and implied meanings.

13. Detect culturally specific references and interpret them in a context of the appropriate cultural schemata.

14. Develop and use a battery of reading strategies such as scanning and skimming, detecting discourse markers, guessing the meaning of words from context, and activating schemata for the interpretation of texts. (Brown, 367)

Some of the skills might seem obvious, e.g. recognizing “grammatical word classes, systems, patterns, rules, and elliptical forms” (Brown, 367) but this particular skill is incredibly useful when a reader comes across a word he or she does not know. Brown even states guessing of meaning of unknown words as one of the strategies for reading comprehension and adds that analyzing the vocabulary, e.g. its prefixes and suffixes, might help a great deal when guessing for the meaning. Penny Ur agrees with Brown on the importance of reading a text even if the reader does not understand every word and she suggests encouraging students “to go for the overall meaning of a text” (Ur, 141) and use the dictionary only when every other strategy failed.

**Reading in a Classroom**

As far as types of classroom reading performance are concerned, Brown mentions two main categories. The categories can be summarised into the following diagram:
The diagram shows that there are in fact two types of classroom reading performance: Oral and silent. The silent one is then further divided into intensive and extensive reading. Intensive reading has two sub-divisions, linguistic and content one, whereas extensive reading has three sub-divisions: Skimming, scanning, and global reading.

Oral reading is more suitable for lower-level students where it serves as a pronunciation checker and as an “evaluative check on bottom-up processing skills” (Brown, 371). However, oral reading has some disadvantages as well. Firstly, it is not natural language activity, and secondly, for other students it is very easy to cease to pay attention.

Intensive reading, as the name suggests, means focusing on one specific feature, e.g. grammar forms or discourse markers, of a text or a passage. The purpose of intensive reading is that students understand “literal meaning, implications, rhetorical relationships, and the like” (Brown, 373). Intensive reading is usually an activity conducted in the classroom.

Extensive reading, unlike intensive one, is focused on overall understanding of a long text, usually a book or an essay. Reading for pleasure is an extensive reading and it is beneficial to develop it with the students as it helps them to
enrich their vocabulary and they “gain an appreciation for the affective and cognitive window of reading” (Brown, 373). It is often performed outside of the classroom.

**Skimming and Scanning**

Skimming and scanning are two valuable reading strategies that are necessary for both quick and efficient reading. Brown agrees with Grellet on the definition of skimming as “running one’s eyes across a whole text [...] for its gist” (Brown, 368), to know the structure of the text, or to get an idea on the style and tone of the author.

Grellet and Brown are in agreement with the definition of scanning as well. According to them, scanning means “quickly going through a text to find a particular piece of information” (Grellet, 4). Scanning is very useful in dealing with various timetables, plans, manuals, etc. and Penny Ur adds that “[s]canning tasks [...] are very useful for getting learners to read selectively” (Ur, 147).

In many reading exercises both of these techniques are used. As Grellet suggests, it is possible to skim the whole text first to find out if it is interesting enough, then read it more thoroughly and finish with scanning the text to look up any relevant fact or data.
Bottom-up and Top-down Processing

These two different types of reading are probably one of the most discussed issues on reading nowadays. Brown, when explaining the distinction between them, uses an example by Christine Nuttall who likens bottom-up process to the image of a scientist using a magnifying glass to study all delicate details of a phenomenon, whereas top-down processing is compared to an “eagle’s-eye view of landscape below” (Brown, 358).

Since both of these processes are equally important, it is not possible to teach them separately. A common name ‘interactive reading’ for both of them came into usage. Both Brown and Ur are in favour of using both of these techniques in a classroom.

Developing Reading Skills

In order to develop reading skills, Brown states several principles to follow. The first one he mentions is integrating a focus on reading skills in a general English course. He also emphasises that students should have enough time for extensive reading because it helps “them to develop a sense of fluency” (Brown, 373). Another recommendation concerns the motivation of the students. According to Brown, students usually feel more motivated when working with texts they can encounter in real life as well. One way to do this is to use authentic, not simplified texts. Such texts might motivate the students a lot. On the other hand, simplified texts are not something that should be totally avoided. Nevertheless, as Brown points out, “it is important to preserve the
natural redundancy, humour, wit, and other captivating features of the original material” (Brown, 374). Otherwise, the simplified text might become even more difficult than the simple, yet authentic text. As far as types of texts are concerned, Ur also puts emphasis on the necessity of a wide variety of texts in order to practice different kinds of reading.

The following principles include development of reading strategies, incorporating both bottom-up and top-down reading techniques and following the SQ3R sequence. These letters stand for survey, question, read, recite, and review. Brown states the SQ3R sequence as “a general guide for a reading class” (Brown, 375). Further on, he highlights the importance of pre-reading, during-reading, and after-reading phases.

The pre-reading tasks should focus on introducing the topic through predicting, skimming and scanning the text. Penny Ur adds that it might be a good idea to ask the students to answer the comprehension questions before they read the text and thus they try to predict what the text is about. She also mentions that this type of exercise helps to activate students’ own schemata, i.e. their previous knowledge (Ur, 144-5). The other way to motivate the students before reading a text is to tell them the topic of the text and “invite them to frame their own questions [...] or suggest vocabulary that they think will come up in the course of the text” (Ur, 145). However, questions are not the only type of exercise students can be asked to do before reading a text. For example, they can match newspaper headlines to some parts of the articles or to pictures.
A during-reading task is for example when a student is asked to watch for a specific facts or rhetorical devices. Some Ur’s ideas for reading activities can be called during-reading tasks, too, for instance her activity called gapped text. Gapped text is not a classical cloze test but only a few words are left towards the end of the text and it can be completed only when the student has understood the text correctly. A variation to this is making a few intentional mistakes in the text that students have to look for.

Finally, as far as post-reading tasks are concerned, comprehension questions are the most known activity but it is far from being the only one. Brown further offers studying of vocabulary, various discussions based on the text, and a writing exercise as a follow-up to the reading which could be done, for example, in a form of writing a response to the article (Ur, 146). Ur further on proposes that if the text is a story, students can be asked to continue with the story or, vice versa, suggest what might have happened before.

The last principle Brown speaks about is the assessment of the reading tasks and he again suggests several ways to do so – starting with simple fulfilling teacher’s command, going through answering questions to modelling (e.g. following the instructions in the text) and conversion, which means that the students are able to have a conversation showing that they have understood the text.
2.4 Speaking

Kathleen Bailey defines speaking as a productive, oral skill. Similarly to reading, it is “a vital language skill” (Grant, 34) to learn and, as Thornbury points out, to most learners it is a real challenge. There are several areas that should be taught: conversational discourse, i.e. how to carry on a conversation, pronunciation, accuracy, and fluency. The conversational discourse is in fact a part of functional language, thus it is dealt with it later in the thesis. Other aspects are further discussed in the following sub-chapters.

Bailey states that the view on teaching speaking has undergone a significant change since 1970s when the main focus was on linguistic competence whereas nowadays it lies in the communicative competence. The difference in these two competences is that the communicative one allows the speaker to interact with other speakers while the linguistic one taught them only separated “bits and pieces of a language” (Bailey, 3) and the students themselves were supposed to put these pieces together and communicate.

Fluency and Accuracy

One of the most important parts of the communicative competence is the balance between fluency and accuracy. Accuracy is, in fact, the ability to speak properly. On the other hand, fluency is the ability to speak confidently and “at a rate consistent with the norms of the relevant native speech community” (Bailey, 5). She also warns that at the beginning levels (i.e. up to intermediate)
these two aspects often work against each other as the learners are still acquiring the basic grammar rules and vocabulary.

Scott Thornbury defines fluency in a greater detail than Bailey. He points out that pausing is more important than the speed of the utterance. Nonetheless, the pauses should be placed properly and should not be too long, either. In order to enhance fluency, he offers several production strategies. These strategies consist of pause fillers (e.g. uh, um), vague expressions (e.g. sort of, I mean), and the use of repeats. All of these strategies serve the purpose of gaining more time for the speaker (Thornbury, 6-7). Thornbury also paraphrases a proverb to show the way to fluency: “Practice makes – if not perfect – at least, fluent (Thornbury, 79).

Similarly to reading, Brown makes a list of micro- and macro-skills which are important for a successful oral communication.

**Microskills**

1. Produce chunks of language of different lengths.

2. Orally produce differences among the English phonemes and allophonic variants.

3. Produce English stress patterns, words in stressed and unstressed positions, rhythmic structure, and intonational contours.

4. Produce reduced forms of words and phrases.

5. Use an adequate number of lexical units (words) in order to accomplish pragmatic purposes.

6. Produce fluent speech at different rates of delivery.
7. Monitor your own oral production and use various strategic devices – pauses, fillers, self-corrections, backtracking – to enhance the clarity of the message.

8. Use grammatical word classes (nouns, verbs, etc.), systems (e.g., tense, agreement, pluralization), word order, patterns, rules, and elliptical forms.

9. Produce speech in natural constituents – in appropriate phrases, pause groups, breath groups, and sentences.

10. Express a particular meaning in different grammatical forms.

**Macroskills**

11. Use cohesive devices in spoken discourse.

12. Accomplish appropriately communicative functions according to situations, participants, and goals.

13. Use appropriate registers, implicature, pragmatic conventions, and other sociolinguistic features in face-to-face conversations.

14. Convey links and connections between events and communicate such relations as main idea, supporting idea, new information, given information, generalization, and exemplification.

15. Use facial features, kinesics, body language, and other nonverbal cues along with verbal language to convey meanings.

16. Develop and use a battery of speaking strategies, such as emphasizing key words, rephrasing, providing a context for interpreting the meaning of words, appealing for help, and accurately assessing how well your interlocutor is understanding you.

The implication of this list is that not only form is important, but also the function of the language.

**Developing Speaking Skills**

Brown offers a list of principles that should be respected when teaching speaking. He advises to focus on both fluency and accuracy and use drills only
shortly and meaningfully. Students should also know not only what they are supposed to do but also why. This is true especially for adult learners. Similarly to reading, speaking activities should be also authentic as much as possible. No matter what the exercise is, students should always have the feedback on their performance. Further on, Brown states that although “interactive techniques that involve speaking will also of course include listening” (Brown, 331), it is important to integrate these two skills intentionally. The last but one principle concerns the person who usually starts the conversation – in most situations it is the teacher but it is important to let the students to initiate and control the conversations as well. The very last principle speaks about encouraging the development of speaking strategies, in particular to ask for clarification and repetition, to paraphrase unknown structures, and to use conversation fillers (Brown, 331-2).

Unlike Brown, Bailey differentiates the techniques used for teaching speaking into several groups according to the level of the students. In comparison with a student on elementary level, a pre-intermediate student can already use English in more diverse situations but they still need to know more. They usually need to work on developing both accuracy and fluency, and, in addition, on improving their pronunciation as well (Bailey, 91).

She states three basic principles that should be kept when teaching speaking. The first one involves planning speaking where the students have to negotiate meaning because it makes them to focus on accuracy. As ideal exercises for
this technique Bailey suggests information gap and jigsaw activities because the students have to share their information and ideas to find the solution and it “provides ample opportunity [...] to negotiate for meaning” (Bailey, 108).

The second principle involves designing both transactional and interpersonal speaking activities. Thornbury agrees with Bailey that the interpersonal speech is a type of communication used for maintaining social relationships and for social purposes in general. On the other hand, transactional speech is required when something has to be done, for example exchange of goods or services; Thornbury gives the example of booking a table in a restaurant. Most of the students will probably need both types of communication thus it is beneficial for them to practice both of them in a classroom.

Her last principle is similar to Brown’s third one – personalizing the content of speaking activities as often as possible. She adds that a little change, such as using students’ names or jobs, is sufficient.

**Teaching Pronunciation**

The question whether pronunciation is important or not has already been asked by many prominent linguists many times. Brown maintains a position that although most adult learners will never have accent-free pronunciation in a foreign language, it is still very important to teach the pronunciation to be clear and comprehensible. However, the ways of teaching it have changed over the years significantly.
Unlike in the past, pronunciation is nowadays viewed as a key to gain the communicative competence in a full range because no matter how strong the student is at grammar, if he or she has incomprehensible pronunciation the communication is not possible. The modern approach, according to Brown, does not involve simple “mastery of a list of phonemes and allophones,” (Brown, 339) but also developing the most relevant features of pronunciation: Stress, rhythm, and intonation.

Brown offers a list of six factors that suggest that anyone who wants to learn to pronounce clearly and comprehensibly can do so.

The first and the most influential factor is definitely the learner’s native language. In some languages the sound system is significantly different to the English one and students might have problems to overcome this difference.

The second factor Brown states, age, is discussed in greater details in the third chapter.

The next one concerns the exposure to the language. It is suggested that living in a foreign country for some time can be even less beneficial than devoting the full attention to the pronunciation issues in a class. It follows that “the quality and intensity of exposure are more important than mere length of time” (Brown, 340).

Innate phonetic ability (“an ear for language”) is the fourth item on the list. Brown affirms that if a child was exposed to a foreign language, then they have
better chance to be more successful in gaining the proper pronunciation than someone who has not been exposed. However, it has also been proved that “some elements of learning are a matter of an awareness of [student’s] own limitation combined with a conscious focus on doing something to compensate for those limitations” (Brown, 341). Thus if a student invests some effort, he or she can overcome the deficiency of their phonetic competence.

The last but one item focuses on the identity and language ego that emerges within the students of a language.

Since motivation cannot be omitted in any aspect of learning a language, it is the final item on Brown’s list. Some students lack the intrinsic motivation to improve their pronunciation, whereas others put the necessary effort to reach their goals. To help those not enough motivated students, a teacher should show them “how clarity of speech is significant in shaping their self-image and, ultimately, in reaching some of their higher goals” (Brown, 341).

“Intonation is another very important suprasegmental phoneme. Intonation is the relative rise and fall of the pitch in an utterance. Intonation helps us recognize questions (“It’s ten o’clock” versus “It’s ten o’clock?”). Intonation also helps us detect speaker attitudes, such as surprise, sarcasm, or disbelief.” (Bailey, 13)

It is interesting that Bailey devoted only one half-page long section to teaching pronunciation. What she mentions there is that the intermediate students are
more aware of differences between English accents and might be willing to learn them but she does not give any examples or advice to help them.

**Speaking activities**

Although there are many types of speaking tasks, Bailey describes four activities suitable for pre-intermediate students. These are role-plays, picture-based activities, logic puzzles, and information gap and jigsaw puzzles. In all of these activities students have to use English creatively and try to communicate the meaning even if they do not know all the words and structures necessary.

Role plays are, according to Bailey, “the ideal vehicle for practising the speech acts” (Bailey, 100). They give the students an opportunity to try the language in real-like situations and in the safe surroundings at the same time.

The basic picture-based activity requires a set of photos for each group of students. The students are then asked to invent a story based on the pictures and present it then to the whole class. To ensure the other students are paying attention, they might be asked to vote for the best story at the end of the activity. The variation for more advanced students is, according to Bailey, giving more pictures to the students.

A jigsaw activities are, as Thornbury defines them, “more elaborate information gap activities” (Thornbury, 81). The example he gives involves four pictures shown to the four groups (one picture shown to one group) and the task for
the students in re-formed groups is to put together a story covered by the pictures.

Aleksandra Golebiowska lists more activities than Bailey. Her activities can be divided into two coherent groups: Role-plays (information gap and opinion gap activities) and simulations and discussions. She also points out that any of these activities can be classified into one of four categories according to the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The learner is told who he/she is</th>
<th>The learner is told what his/her views are</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The differences in the four categories can be summarised as follows: In the first two types of activities students are assigned a specific role in comparison to the last two activities, where they can be themselves. The second column shows that in the first and in the third types the students are told what to say, whereas in the other two activities they can follow their own opinions (Golebiowska, 3-4).

No matter what name is given to the activity by either a publisher or a teacher, there are four characteristics a successful speaking activity should bear,
according to Penny Ur. The successful activity should be engaging so the student talk occupies most of the time devoted to the activity. Then all the students should have the same opportunity to speak, those who are talkative should provide the same space for less talkative students as well. The third characteristic is the omnipresent motivation. Students should be interested either in the topic or in the goal of the activity. The last item is the language-level that should be appropriate for the students. Learners should “express themselves in utterances that are relevant, easily comprehensible to each other, and of an acceptable level of language accuracy” (Ur, 120).

2.5 Functional Language

Functional language is also called speech acts, for example by Kathleen Bailey and by Scott Thornbury. Bailey defines speech acts as “recognizable ways to get things done” (Bailey, 5) and she also puts an emphasis on learning these ways so students can accomplish their goals appropriately. Some examples of the functional language include thanking, requesting information, complaining, complimenting, warning, etc.

Scot Thornbury defines speech acts as a part of pragmatic knowledge of the speaker. As examples of speech acts, he quotes complementing, suggesting, requesting, and offering. As an example of an indirect use of the functional language he states the sentence “The music is very loud” which – in specific context – might serve as an equivalent to the request “Would you mind if I turn the volume down?” (Thornbury, 16).
Further on, he points out that sometimes there are fixed responses to the requests, for example the reaction “Not at all” to the request quoted above. He calls these paired utterances adjacency pairs. In some cases the adjacency pairs can have three parts, in fact. These are called IRF exchanges, where the letters IRF stand for the initials in initiate – respond – follow up. If the sequence is longer than three lines, it is called an opening or closing of conversation.

An example of an IRF exchange would be:

   Teacher: What’s the past of the verb to go?
   Student: Went.
   Teacher: Good. (Thornbury, 17)

As an example of pre-closing and the actual closing of a conversation might serve the following part of a conversation (Thornbury, 17):

   A: Well, I’d better get back to work.  
   B: Hmm, me too.
   A: So, I’ll speak to you later.
   B: Ok, then.
   A: Have a good day.  
   B: You, too.
   A: Bye.
   B: Bye bye.

The knowledge of functional language does not lie only in the phrases themselves but also in the way they are incorporated into longer conversational exchanges or talks.
Activities

Role-plays have already been mentioned in the previous section on speaking. They serve the purpose of practicing the functions of the language very well too. One example Bailey gives is about apologizing, which definitely is a useful speech act. She describes several situations students might come across and depending on the social context they might need to choose appropriate reaction ranging from informal to very formal one. The opportunity to practice situations like this in the class is priceless for the students as the teacher can vary the context a lot so they come across many situations possible.

Another often problematic situation students usually stumble upon is polite refusing of invitations. This is also a good circumstance for practising in a class. The students might be not only provided with a list of polite refusals but, to make the task more challenging, they also might be asked to think of their own invitations. With more advanced students Bailey recommends to put aside the non-verbal part of communication by making them to have the conversation on phone, for example.
Chapter 3: Description of Learners

The most important person in language learning and teaching is, of course, the student. Every student is different and the trend nowadays is to use student-centred approach. To be able to use the student-centred approach, a teacher has to know his or her students. There are several characteristics that can help a teacher divide their students into several coherent groups. These characteristics predominantly include the language level students have already achieved in previous learning and their age. Other characteristics are more or less individual and teachers certainly take them into consideration as well.

3.1 Language Level

Language level is without doubt a very important aspect of teaching English. A beginner needs different approach than an advanced student and thus different things are important not only when choosing a textbook but also for methodology and the topics teachers expose their students to (Harmer 2007, 96).

The question, however, is how to determine a student’s level of English. Since this is essential in language teaching, the Council of Europe and the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) defined language competency levels. This is generally referred to as the Common European Framework (CEF) and in fact, it states what students can do at various levels. The terms used in CEF for different levels are: Beginner (A1), Elementary (A1-A2), Pre-Intermediate (A2-
B1), Intermediate (B1), Upper intermediate (B2), and Advanced (C1). Some other authors, e.g. Harmer and Brown, mention also other levels, e.g. real (or true) beginners, false beginners, lower intermediate, mid-intermediate etc. (Harmer 2007, p. 95).

Since this thesis deals only with the pre-intermediate level of textbook, other levels are not defined here.

The Council of Europe’s webpage www.coe.int contains several interesting documents. One of them is called Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment (Structured overview of all CEFR scales). Right at the beginning it describes the six language levels in form of “can-do” statements to help both students and teachers understand what is meant by each particular level. Since the pre-intermediate level is between two levels (A2-B1), descriptions of both levels follow:

A2: “Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.

46
B1: “Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics, which are familiar, or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.” (p. 5)

The text also contains the “can-do” statements for many specific situations, e.g. Understanding interaction between native speakers, Watching TV and film, Transactions to obtain goods and services, etc. Since not all the aspects are discussed in this thesis, only descriptions of those relevant ones follow.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A2</th>
<th>B1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading</strong></td>
<td><strong>Spoken interaction</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can read very short, simple texts. I can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus and timetables and I can understand short simple personal letters.</td>
<td>I can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities. I can handle very complex conversations and discussions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B1</strong></td>
<td><strong>B1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency everyday or job-related language. I can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters.</td>
<td>I can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. I can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are not familiar but can understand and participate in the discussion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
short social exchanges, even though I can’t usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself.

are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).

Spoken production

I can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms my family and other people, living conditions, my educational background and my present or most recent job.

I can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, my dreams, hopes and ambitions. I can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions.

Jim Scrivener in his essay *Pre-Intermediate – a very teachable level* (published in Global Pre-intermediate Teacher’s Book) mentions that the pre-intermediate level is one of the best and the most joyful levels to teach and to be at, as well. He compares pre-intermediate students to those of both lower and higher levels. Lower level students usually understand only a little of the language so some activities can seem to be slow, whereas higher level students often are “more aware of the need to be accurate” (Scrivener, xxvi) and also might be under the pressure of some particular exams. Scrivener sees the main benefit of being at pre-intermediate level in students’ realization that they can finally do something with the language: “Although they certainly still make lots of mistakes, in general, they can start to rise above the struggle to form a coherent sentence and begin using the language creatively to express what they want to say” (Scrivener, xxvi).
3.2 Age of Students

The age of students is another very important aspect of language teaching. It is widely known that students of different ages have different needs and also different ways of learning. A child learns effectively through games whereas an adult would probably appreciate more sophisticated activities.

Harmer points out that “one of the most common beliefs about age and language learning is that young children learn faster and more effectively than any other age group” (Harmer 2007, 81). Nevertheless, later on, he also reveals that the major benefit of young learners lies in pronunciation. Otherwise, children from about the age of 12 “seem to be far better learners than younger ones in most aspects of acquisition, pronunciation excluded” (Yu, 53).

Ming-chung Yu in his essay The Effect of Age on Starting to Learn English comments on an experiment conducted on 54 Japanese children and 24 adults to see the differences in acquiring English pronunciation. He states that “in the case of formal learning situations adults appeared to do better in pronunciation” (Yu, 53).

Alan Rogers, in his book Teaching Adults, brings up a matter valid for all age groups, not only adults. He explains a necessity of “building up from easy to more difficult knowledge and skills” (Rogers, 100) and he also talks about the importance of having the material sequenced into smaller units and only then learnt thoroughly.
However, adult learners have some differences to children or teenage students, of course. Although not all of these variations are beneficial for the adult students, most of them, in fact, are. Harmer gives a list of six positive characteristics of adult learners and only three characteristics that can cause some problems in learning and teaching.

The first positive characteristic Harmer talks about is the advantage of developed abstract thinking. Due to this, more activities than just songs and games can be used; though both songs and games can be suitable for some adult learners.

Both the second and the third advantages are based on the students’ experience, on one hand it is the life experience they have gained within the years, on the other hand it is the learning experience they have already gone through. Most of the adult students already have their own patterns of learning gained in the previous education.

The fourth benefit of teaching adults lies in their discipline. As Harmer says, adult learners are “more disciplined than other age groups, and, crucially, they are often prepared to struggle on despite boredom” (Harmer 2007, 84).

The students’ experiences are also basis for the fifth advantage. Due to these experiences, teachers may use wider range of activities in the lessons.
The last characteristic is about the students’ motivation. Motivation is a crucial factor in not only language learning and adult students are usually highly motivated – they know what they are learning and also why.

The content of the last of Harmer’s positive characteristics was expressed by Alan Rogers in his book *Teaching Adults* by defining adults as “voluntary learners [who] have come with an agenda, an intention, in most cases to achieve a learning goal” (Rogers, 14). The adult learners, unlike children at schools, have chosen to learn something new and to attend the course.

Brown also occupied himself with the problematic of teaching adults and he, similarly to Harmer, lists several advantages of teaching adults. Both of them place the developed abstract thinking on the first place. Brown, unlike Harmer, does not mention any previous learning experience at all. What he does dwell on is adult students’ longer attention span, self-confidence, and the ability to “understand a context-reduced segment of language” (Brown 105).

After listing the benefits of teaching adults, Brown also offers advice on how to treat them. His “do’s” can be summarised as showing respect to the students despite their low proficiency level and giving them as many opportunities to choose what they want to do as possible (Brown, 105). Brown’s “don’ts” in fact mean not treating adult students as if they were children, neither in terms of disciplining them nor in talking down to them (Brown, 105).
Despite the many advantages teaching adults brings, it is not completely problem-free age group either. As far as the students’ experiences are concerned, they are not always a good thing. It may happen that a teacher comes across a student who is used to a specific style of teaching and thus he or she can be “uncomfortable with unfamiliar teaching patterns” (Harmer 2007, 85).

Another disadvantage can be rooted in the students’ earlier unsuccessful effort to learn a language which can make them under-confident about their ability to learn a language some time later.

However, even if a student has never experienced any problems with learning a new skill, they can be worried that “their intellectual powers may be diminishing with age” (Harmer 2007, 85).

Rogers depicts some comparatively problematic issues a teacher may come across when dealing with a group of adults. Most of them are a consequence of putting different people into one group (i.e. creating a heterogeneous group) and would probably emerge with other age groups (e.g. teenagers) as well, for example the difference in previous knowledge of the subject they bring to the classroom. Some of the adult students are “still searching in education for autonomy, others are more willing to accept dependency for the purpose of learning” (Rogers, 82). And, likewise Harmer, Rogers mentions that they have already “acquired their own ways of learning” (Rogers, 82) which may differ significantly.
All of these factors should be taken into account when preparing for a lesson with adult students. Harmer points out that adult students, in comparison to younger students, can be exposed to more indirect learning and they should be encouraged to use their life experiences in the learning process. The teacher’s effort should also aim to minimisation of “bad effects of past learning experiences” (Harmer 2007, 85).

3.3 Learners’ Differences

Each student is different and consequently has different needs. The differences do not entail only the age or proficiency of the learners but also their learning styles (i.e. visual, aural, oral, and kinaesthetic styles), their socio-cultural background, and their previous experience with learning in general and with language learning in particular. Brown also mentions the context of the native language which might cause problems because of different sound systems. Penny Ur gives a more detailed description of characteristics in which the learners can differ. In addition to Brown, she mentions language-learning ability, learning style, attitude to the language, world knowledge, knowledge of other languages, gender, personality, confidence, motivation, interests, self-discipline, and educational level (Ur, 304). She calls the classes where more types of learners occur heterogeneous ones and also lists some possible problems that may appear when teaching a class like that. The main difficulties lie in making the lesson interesting and engaging for all the learners, choosing the proper material suitable for everyone, making even the weaker students
participate in the lesson, and choosing a proper topic motivating for all the students.

Since listing problems without offering any solution would not be a great help for teachers, Ur proposes her solutions directly in the following section of the book. The resolution to the first problem lies in greater variation of the topics – if anyone does not find one topic interesting, he or she might be interested in another one in some of the following lessons.

Then, if the activities are engaging enough, the language does not have to be challenging for everyone to keep them motivated and working. Individualization, i.e. letting the students choose what to do, and personalization are great help too. The last pieces of advice she provides are using both compulsory and optional instructions so the fast finishers and those who are interested in the activity can do more, and using open-ended cues which provoke a discussion rather than using tasks or questions with only one right answer.

However, the heterogeneous classes have some advantages as well. They provide “a [rich] pool of human resources” (Ur, 305), which can be used in the interaction between the teacher and the students. They can also share their knowledge and develop tolerance and understanding towards other students and also support each other and thus “foster the atmosphere of cooperation” (Ur, 305). The last advantage she states concerns the teacher more than the
students since such classes are usually more challenging and provide greater opportunity for professional development and growth of creativity.

Rogers adds that using various teaching-learning methods can also help the students to learn in their own way.
Chapter 4: How to Choose an Appropriate Textbook

Many teachers and experts, such as H. Douglas Brown, Fred Chambers, and Leslie E. Sheldon, agree that choosing a suitable textbook is not an easy task, although it is by all means a very exciting one.

Various linguists suggest different types of attitude, e.g. Chambers treats this problem with “a technique taken from the world of management” (Chambers, 29) which he describes in his essay *Seeking Consensus in Coursebook Evaluation*.

Chambers divides the criteria for good materials into three groups. The first one (and the most important) deals with so called pedagogical factors. These factors include “suitability for the age group, cultural appropriateness, methodology, level quality, number and type of exercises, skills, teacher’s book, variety, pace, personal involvement, and problem solving” (Chambers, 29-30). The other two groups are comparatively about agreeing on choosing the proper textbook and whose views should be taken into account.

Chambers mentions two extremes that can occur during the process of picking appropriate textbook. The first extreme lies in sole usage of intuition or, as Chambers calls it, “professional judgement and expertise” (Chambers, 30). Without reference to the importance of the teachers’ professionalism, decision made in this way is often “difficult to explain to others, and therefore difficult to defend” (Chambers, 31). On the other hand lies the extreme of “highly precise,
mathematical systems for supporting decision-making” (Chambers, 31). However, this system is not ideal either. Chambers mentions two major disadvantages: first, it is the ability of teachers to use such systems, because these are often “beyond the competence of all but the most highly trained” (Chambers, 31); second, it is the presence of personal judgement, although it is given less importance.

4.1 The Chart Method

The optimal way lies somewhere in the middle of these two extremes. Chambers in his paper shows a chart (see below) with possibilities to be considered and weighted since not all of the criteria are of the same importance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Option A</th>
<th>Option B</th>
<th>Option C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate level</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicative approach</td>
<td>Lower and upper intermediate</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Includes intermediate level exams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than £8.00</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>£7.50</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desirable</td>
<td>WT (1-10)</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>SC (1-10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher's book</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Detailed guide</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassettes</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wide variety of exercise</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional features</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial choice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seriousness (high/medium/low)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision</td>
<td>Accept</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reject</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1
Chambers then describes the process of making a table such as above. The first step is simple as it involves only entering the names of the textbooks instead of ‘option A’ etc.

In the second step essential features are identified – in the example above these are: Level, communicative approach, and the price. These can be, of course, different as they depend on the need of the students and/or on requirements of the language school.

Third step is identifying desirable features of the textbook and weighting them. The example table shown above was published in 1997, so nowadays the desirable features would not probably be cassettes but CDs and maybe also a teacher’s resource disc, online support, and class presentation software (for interactive boards). When the desirable features are entered into the table, it is necessary to weight them as not all of them bear the same importance. That’s what the column marked WT (weight) is for.

Following steps number four and five are based on establishing presence of essential and desirable features. If any essential feature is missing, then the textbook lacking the feature is crossed out of the list as happened in the table above with option C which was too expensive. Then desirable features are awarded, counted and entered into the column marked SC (score).

The textbooks can be awarded some extra points in the sixth step in the section called additional features. Additional features are features that were mentioned
neither in essential nor in desirable features but still are positive, e.g. attractive layout in option B. These features do not have any weighting.

The seventh step is pure mathematics, i.e. calculating total scores for each textbook. When this step is done, it is possible to pick simply the book with the highest score. However, another thing comes into play and the final choice is considered in the concluding eighth step.

The last step, before purchasing the textbook, is consideration of the risk connected with buying the textbook. Risk factors are not given any numbers but they are “rated as high, medium, or low” (Chambers, 34). The risk factor mentioned by Chambers is the binding of the textbook. Although in his example option B is the winner, he says it has poor binding and as the book is intended for a group of teenagers, the risk here is very high. That is the reason why, in the end, he decided to choose option A, although it has slightly fewer points than option B.

4.2 Checklist

Leslie E. Sheldon in his essay Evaluating ELT textbooks and materials mentions slightly simpler way of choosing textbook and that is using various checklists. He admits that the issues taken into account change over the years and as an example states an item called ‘adequacy of pattern inventory’ which appeared in a checklist made by Tucker in 1975 (Sheldon, 240).
As a help for struggling teachers he states a list of criteria that should be considered when choosing a textbook. These include “rationale, availability, user definition, layout/graphics, accessibility, linkage, selection/grading, physical characteristics, appropriacy, authenticity, sufficiency, cultural bias, educational validity, stimulus/practice/revision, flexibility, guidance, [and] overall value for money” (Sheldon, 242). He suggests writing these on a list and grading them with for example number of stars or with pluses and minuses. In order to help the teacher to decide on grading a feature, he offers several questions they should ask for each feature. He also emphasises that similar (or even the same) checklists should be used for teacher-developed materials as well to keep a standard of the materials used in the classroom.

David Williams finds the middle way between Chambers and Sheldon’s ways of choosing a textbook in form of graded checklist. He describes this method in his essay *Developing Criteria for Textbook Evaluation*. A part of the example he gives in his essay is reproduced below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of textbook:</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>READING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>offers exercises for understanding of plain sense and implied meaning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relates reading passages to the learner’s background</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>selects passages within the vocabulary range of the pupils</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>selects passages reflecting variety of styles of contemporary English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Criteria for textbook evaluation (Williams, 255)
In fact, it is a list of items that a teacher compiles and that are important in their opinion and it has two extra columns. The left one serves for weighting of individual items. Williams suggests to do so with usage of letters: A: very useful, B: quite useful, C: fairly useful, and D: not so useful (Williams, 253). The column on the right side is for numbers four to zero which indicate how satisfied each criterion is in the textbook being evaluated where four means “to the greatest extent” (Williams, 254) and it goes down to zero meaning “not at all” (Williams, 254).

Neville Grant, similarly to Williams, uses a variation of a checklist to help him choose the most suitable textbook. His version of a checklist has three different answers to choose from – yes, partly, and no. For every positive answer two points are counted, for ‘partly’ only one point is received and the negative answer does not gain any points. Although Grant offers several versions of the questionnaire, he does not state how many points should a textbook score in order to be chosen into a course.

There are not many differences between Sheldon’s, Williams’, and Grant’s checklists except the grading method. The only actual variation is used by Williams and that is grouping similar issues under one heading, e.g. reading, vocabulary, grammar, etc. Grant’s and Williams’ methods are very alike.
4.3 Comparison of Different Methods

There are four methods of choosing textbooks described in this chapter. These are choosing intuitively, using the table method by Fred Chambers, applying the checklist by Leslie E. Sheldon, and updating the checklist to a graded checklist, as Williams suggests.

Although checklists seem to be easier to manage, the table method by Fred Chambers has several advantages over them. First, writing down both essential and desirable features makes it very explicit and thus defendable. Second, unlike in the checklists, the criteria are given priorities which are measured equally for all textbooks. A good step towards the table method by Chambers is the graded checklist by Williams. It bears the possibility to weight the features and keep it simple at the same time.

Nevertheless, the table by Chambers has some disadvantages as well. It might be quite complicated and time consuming to create a table like this, although it is highly probable that the process becomes easier when performed repetitively. Thus it is definitely slower than choosing a textbook intuitively. Sheldon also speaks in opposition to any systematic choosing of a textbook: “Coursebook assessment is fundamentally a subjective, rule-of-thumb activity, and [...] no neat formula, grid, or system will ever provide a definitive yardstick” (Sheldon, 245).
There is no right answer to the question how one should choose an appropriate textbook. It always depends on many factors such as the number of teachers who have to come to a consensus, time available for making the decision and also the experience of the teacher(s). Any of those four methods stated above can be used if found suitable.
Chapter 5: The Selection of Textbooks for the Thesis

The textbooks analyzed in this thesis were chosen on the basis of a questionnaire published on Google Sites. The link to the webpage with the questionnaire was sent to ESL teachers in Brno and close area. In total, 34 responses were received. The results are analyzed in the sub-chapter called Questionnaire Results which follows after the general description of the questionnaire.

5.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire is divided into six parts. After the introductory question about the usage of textbooks in courses in general, the General information part follows, then a few questions on design, reading, speaking, functional language, and then overall evaluation of the selected textbook. Individual parts are described in greater detail in specific sub-chapters together with the results which follow.

In order to make the questionnaire as much respondent-friendly as possible, most questions were in form of checklists or scales, so almost no typing was necessary. However, at the end of each section, there was a text field for respondent’s own comments.

Since there were often more options to choose answers from, the percentage stated in the results below may add up to more than 100%.
5.2 Questionnaire Results

The first question of the questionnaire simply divided the people who completed it into two categories – those who do use textbooks in their courses and those who do not. The result of this first question confirms the general trend: only 6% of respondents do not use a textbook in their course. The reasons stated for not using a textbook were ‘I design my own teaching material’ (twice) and ‘I did not find any convenient textbook’ (once).

On the other hand, 90% of the respondents stated that the main reason in favour of using a textbook was getting the outline for a syllabus, 84% of the respondents think that using a textbook is beneficial for the students and almost half of them do not have time to devise their own teaching material. More than one third of the teachers use a textbook because it is the school policy. 22% of them use the textbook because it is the way they were taught and because they like textbooks. 6% of the respondents chose the option ‘other’ and their reasons for using a textbook were ‘It is good for scaffolding’, and ‘It keeps lessons aimed and students have some material to revise from rather than a pile of loose papers which can get lost easily’. It is interesting that although the vast majority of the respondents use a textbook, no one chose the option ‘Teaching without a textbook is not possible’.

General Information

This section of the questionnaire served for the purpose of finding out what were the most frequently used textbooks and the reasons for their selection. A
list of textbooks by various publishers, e.g. Macmillan, OUP, CUP, etc., was provided with an option to write a name in case of using a textbook which was not mentioned in the list. Some of the textbooks offered, i.e. *Clockwise, Move, Language Leader,* and *True to Life,* did not receive any single vote. On the contrary, the most used textbook is definitely *New English File* (66%) followed by *Global* (22%), *Face2face* (19%), and the third edition of *New Headway* (16%). One third of the respondents also use textbooks that were not offered in the list. The textbooks not mentioned there are (in alphabetical order): *English Unlimited, Four Corners, Horizons, Maturita Excellence, Maturita Solutions, New Market Leader, Real Life,* and *Time to Talk.* Some of these textbooks, e.g. *Maturita Solutions* and *Maturita Excellence,* do not fall into the category of textbooks for adults on pre-intermediate level as they are designed for high school students.

In the following question the teachers were asked to tick an option that expresses their reason for choosing the textbooks. As in the previous checklist, it was possible to tick more than one answer thus the percentage adds up to more than 100%. The main reasons for using a textbook were definitely the view of the textbook as a source of exercises and topics for speaking practice which was chosen by 72% of respondents. Two thirds of them chose the textbook because it contained plenty of interesting texts and almost a half of them use it because it is up-to-date. Popularity was important for 28% of the teachers and one fifth of them had no choice in choosing the textbook. The
same number (19%) also chose the textbook because it has good online support. The least popular reason was definitely the presence of instructions in Czech which gained mere 3%. The low number is no surprise as all the textbooks except Angličtina pro jazykové školy and Time to Talk present the instructions in English.

Since it was possible to comment on only one textbook in the questions that follow, at the end of this section respondents were asked to choose the one they would comment on. The most commented textbook was without doubt New English File published by Oxford University Press as more than a half of respondents (59% exactly) chose this one. The second most commented textbooks were Global by Macmillan and Four Corners by Cambridge University Press (both over 6%). The rest of the teachers commented on different textbooks, e.g. Challenges, English File 3rd Edition, English Unlimited, and New Headway 3rd Edition.

**Design**

As has already been stated before, design is the most visible feature of a textbook and often it is also the first thing students look at. All the questions concerning design were in form of a scale from one to five with given options. The numbers in the scale are used the same way as at school – number one is always considered to be the best option with number five being the worst one. The graphs below show the results for this set of questions.
The first graph shows the results for the question of attractiveness for students as seen from the viewpoint of teachers. All of the respondents agreed that the textbooks they commented on are predominantly attractive for the students. These were *Four Corners* (this textbook did not receive any other mark than one), *Global*, and *New English File* which got mainly number two. The worst evaluation received *FCE Masterclass* and *New Headway 3rd Edition*. The second question asked about the modernity of the pictures and the result is, similarly to the first question, throughout positive. Most of the teachers came to the same answer and they think that the pictures in the textbook are modern with only three exceptions – *Challenges, New Headway 3rd Edition*, and *Time to Talk* which were marked with number four. It is interesting that although the
average mark for *New English File* is 1.9, it was also assessed with number four once.

Unfortunately, the outcome of the third question is not so optimistic when compared to the previous results. Although having enough space for making notes is important for most students, it is clear from the questionnaire that the textbooks assessed do not provide enough of it. *New Headway 3rd Edition* and *English Unlimited* have the least space according to the respondents,. The text and pictures are rather dense in *Challenges, Face2face, and Maturita Solutions,* too. The best results have *FCE Masterclass* and *Four Corners* with clear number two.

However, the layout of the pages seems to be easy to follow enough in absolute majority of the textbooks, as only one of them, *New Headway 3rd Edition,* got number four.

Several comments worthy of a note were collected as well. All of them but one concerned *New English File*. The respondents usually complained about the distribution of the text and the pictures as sometimes the text is on a colourful background and the pages seem to be crowded without any linguistic purpose. On the other hand, the very same textbook was also praised for having each module on one double page which makes the changing of the topics very pleasing. *Face2face,* the other commented textbook, was assessed as ‘unsuitable for adult students’.
To sum it up, the overall evaluation of design of the selected textbooks is fairly positive with the most negative aspect in this section being the lack of free space for making notes.

**Reading**

The third part of the questionnaire was aimed at one of the receptive skills, reading. Respondents were asked four questions and, similarly to the previous section, they were asked to leave comments regarding reading. The graphs representing the results of this section are to be found below.
Reading was assessed quite positively in the overall summary. The most problematic issue is obviously the authenticity of the texts contained in the textbooks.

All of the textbooks commented on obviously include enough reading material, the worst assessed ones were *Maturita Solutions*, *New Headway 3rd Edition*, and *Time to Talk* – all of them received number three.

The second graph illustrates the ratio of authentic and artificial texts in the textbooks. It is obvious that the textbooks contain both artificial and authentic materials but both of these types are in balance with the authentic ones prevailing. The textbooks with the highest ratio of authentic texts are *Global* and *Real Life*.

The third graph displays how interesting the texts are for the students. The median for this question is 2.3 which means that most of them are rather interesting. The textbooks with the best marks are *English Unlimited*, *Real Life*, and *Global*, all of them ranging from 1 to 1.5. The average mark for *New English File* is 2.1. The textbooks with the least engaging texts are *Face2face*, *New Headway 3rd Edition*, and *Time to Talk*.

As can be seen from the last graph, most of the textbooks include plenty of pre-reading and after-reading tasks. The most of them have, according to the results, *FCE Masterclass*, *Global*, *Maturita Solutions*, and *New English File*. It is interesting that *New English File* received once a bad mark (number four), too.
but, unfortunately, the respondent did not leave any commentary explaining his or her opinion. The worst assessed textbook was definitely *Challenges* followed by *Time to Talk*, again.

Additional commentaries on reading were left only for two textbooks, *Global* and *New English File*. The texts in *Global* were described as ‘enjoyable in comparison with other textbooks’. The overall content of the reading material in *New English File* was assessed as ‘great’ and ‘adjusted for each level’ although sometimes ‘slightly challenging’ for the students. One reprehension was aimed to the length of the texts – the answerer claimed that the texts for lower level students are usually short whereas the texts for higher level student are of greater length which does not reflect the real life at all. One of the teachers who commented on *New English File* also mentioned that although there is not anything he or she could criticise on this textbook, he or she started to use *Global* recently and the texts there are more often authentic which is beneficial for students especially of higher levels.

To sum it up, reading was evaluated fairly positively in most of the textbooks, especially in *Global*.

**Speaking**

The fourth category is about one of the productive skills, speaking. The structure of this section is the same as in the previous ones: Respondents were
asked four questions and they were also offered some free space for their own commentaries. The out-coming graphs can be seen below.

It is obvious from the first graph that most of the textbooks contain plenty of material for speaking practice. The best evaluated textbooks were English File 3rd Edition, English Unlimited, FCE Masterclass, Four Corners, and Real Life. The worst assessed textbook was New Headway 3rd Edition. It is interesting that although New English File was evaluated quite positively (average mark is 1.7), it also received number four once.

The second graph illustrates the ratio between free speaking activities and controlled speaking activities. The distribution of the graph is mostly in the left part which means that the textbooks contain more free than controlled
speaking activities. The textbook with the best result in favour of free speaking tasks was unquestionably *Global*. As can be seen from the graph, many textbooks were assessed with number three, with no exclusion of *New English File* which even received the number five twice. However, the overall average for this textbook was 2.8 which correspond with the highest column at number three. *Face2face* and *Time to Talk* also received high numbers and thus, in the viewpoint of the teachers, contain more controlled speaking activities than the free ones.

In the third question respondents were asked to weigh up the amount of vocabulary and patterns students are exposed to before engaging into a speaking task. As can be seen from the graph, the vast majority of teachers assessed the textbooks optimistically. The worst mark was given to *New English File* but as it was given many good marks as well, the average mark is 1.9 and thus it falls into the most numerous category of the second column. Despite good evaluation of *Global*, in this question, it reached to the average mark of 2.5. Only *Face2face* and *New Headway 3rd edition* were assessed worse than the average. On the contrary, *Challenges, English File 3rd Edition, English Unlimited, Four Corners, and Real Life* were marked thoroughly positively.

The outcome of the last graph is by all means very positive. The highest column at number one suggests that the vast majority of the speaking tasks are related to real world and therefore they are very beneficial for the students. The only textbook marked with number four was *New Headway 3rd Edition*, number
three received *Face2face* and *New English File* once, but the average mark for the latter textbook was 1.6.

Again, some commentaries were received as well. The most positive ones were on *Global*, where ‘speaking is covered quite well in comparison with other textbooks’, and *New English File* where speaking is considered to be the best feature of the textbook. On the other hand, speaking tasks in *Face2face* are not varied enough so one of the respondents has to devise his or her own speaking exercises.

In overall summary, speaking was assessed rather positively, although some of the textbooks received quite bad marks, especially in the second question.

**Functional Language**

The section on functional language was the shortest one as it contained only three questions and some extra space for commentaries, of course. It received the best overall mark, 1.9. The results are, as usually, shown in the graphs below.

![Bar graph showing the results for functional language](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes, enough</th>
<th>Not enough</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

75
The result of the first graph indicates that the amount of functional language is quite sufficient as the majority of the results are in the left half of the graph. The textbooks with the smallest number of functional language are Challenges and New Headway 3rd Edition, both of them with number four. New English File was assessed with number four once as well. Despite the bad mark, the arithmetic mean for this textbook is 2.2, which puts it into the category with less functional language than other textbooks, such as English File 3rd Edition, English Unlimited, and Real Life which all got the best marks possible.

As can be seen from the second graph, the number of textbooks presenting the functional language in context is significantly high at the beginning of the graph and is declining as the mark is getting worse. There was only one textbook evaluated with number four and that was New English File which, on average, received the mark 1.7 which is immediately behind the overall median of the whole question, 1.6. Other, not very well evaluated textbooks (with number three) were Challenges, New Headway 3rd Edition, and Time to Talk.
Finally, the last graph implies that in the opinion of most of the respondents, the textbooks contain enough activities for practicing the functional language. The exception is *New Headway 3rd Edition* which received number four. *New English File* received the same bad mark three times and the average mark is then 2.5 which is beyond the overall average of this question which was two. The textbooks with the best marks were *English File 3rd Edition*, *English Unlimited*, and *FCE Masterclass*.

However, one teacher left a comment concerning *Face2face*, that there are enough activities to practice it but not enough to actually remember it. The section of functional language is, according to the questionnaire one of the weaker ones in *English New File* and another respondent noticed, that although the amount of functional language is fine, he or she would prefer if it was not presented but if the textbook offered the students more guided discovery of it.

**Overall Summary**

In the last part of the questionnaire the teachers were asked to express their opinion on both the weakest and the strongest points of the textbooks. There were some options to choose from and also some space to leave their own commentaries, as is usual in all parts of the questionnaire.

As far as the strongest point is concerned, the real world speaking activities and clear design seem to be on the first place both with 56%. Good pre-reading and after-reading activities hold the second place with 53% followed by the number
of speaking activities and presentation of functional language in context, both with 44%. The least popular of the strongest features was the number of texts with 19%.

Some of the responders also left their own commentaries. The strongest points they mentioned were numerous materials for teachers in *New English File*, American English, which is something different from other textbooks in *Four Corners*, and a great number of both free and controlled speaking activities in *New English File*. The very same textbook was also praised for clear structure and it was also said that ‘it is easy to teach from and the students feel it easy to learn from’. However, the same respondent also expressed a doubt if the students actually learn something. The textbook *Maturita Solutions* was praised for containing exercises similar to the exam ones but that is the purpose of this textbook.

The weakest points of the textbooks lie in unattractive or old design (19%), small amount of functional language, and in missing context for the functional language presented (both of them have 13%). Although it might seem that the textbooks do not have many weak points, more than half of the respondents described the weaknesses in their own words. As far as *Global* is concerned, the topics sometimes seem to be too complicated for the students and the textbook is quite new so students need time to get used to it, as one of the respondents commented. The problems with *New English File* are for example price, lack of grammar exercises for the students who do not want to purchase the
workbook, missing grammar reviews in each of the units, and the functional language presented in not very interesting way. One of the teachers also expressed his or her disapproval with the pop culture and western style content which can be found in *New English File* as it is difficult to use such textbook with people of different interests or background.

The problematic issues concerning other textbooks are for example small variety of speaking activities in *Face2face*, lack of free space on the pages of *English Unlimited* and small number of texts in *Four Corners*.

When the average mark for each section is counted then the best results have two sections: Speaking and functional language, both with 1.9 followed by design (2.1) and the worst result has reading with 2.2. However, it can be easily seen that the overall marks do not differ very significantly and all of them are around two which is rather positive result.

The best evaluated feature was by all means the relatedness of speaking tasks to real world with an average of 1.4 and the worst mark received definitely the lack of free space for making notes (part of the design section) with an average of 3.2.

Since for the following part of the thesis it was necessary to narrow down the number of textbooks discussed, in relation to the results of the questionnaire *New English File* by Oxford University Press and *Global* by Macmillan were chosen. The choice of *New English File* is quite obvious since it is
unquestionably the most frequented textbook according to the results of the questionnaire. As has already been said above, the second place (when speaking about the frequency of usage) hold two textbooks, *Four Corners* and *Global*. In the end, *Global* was chosen as according to the questionnaire more respondents use it although they chose to comment on another textbook in the end.
Chapter 6: Features of Selected Textbooks

6.1 Global

*Global* is a six level textbook series for adult students only. Each level includes a textbook, e-workbook (with printed version as well), audio CDs, teacher’s book (which comes together with teacher’s resource disc), global digital software for interactive boards, and online support. All the levels correspond to Common European Framework. Pre-intermediate level is between A2 and B1.

The author of the pre-intermediate textbook is Lindsay Clandfield and the additional material is by Amanda Jeffries. On the first, introductory page a student can learn about the author of the textbook and also read six quotes that inspired creating the textbook and a summary of the textbook in numbers. The opposite page is called Content Highlights and as the name suggests, it picks the most interesting parts of each unit. For example, in the third unit, Art & Music, a student can read a part of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde and also a part of *High Fidelity* by Nick Hornby. The penultimate ninth unit called Health & Fitness, for instance, contains facts about common cold and Olympic tales. There is also a list of essays by prominent linguist David Crystal students can find in the textbook in the lower right hand corner.

The following double page is the content section. There are always two topics for each unit which are either somehow connected (e.g. Eating & Drinking) or they are opposites (e.g. Home & Away). For each half of the unit there is a well
arranged summary of what grammar, reading texts, listening texts, vocabulary, and speaking and pronunciation can the students find there.

Each unit is divided into four parts. The first two parts are devoted to the first topic from the name of the unit, the third and fourth ones to the other topic. Each part fits exactly on one double page. On the left side of the left page there is always a brief summary of what the part tries to teach. For instance, for the very first part of the first unit it is everyday objects in vocabulary section, reading about identity card, word order in questions for grammar and the pronunciation of the alphabet.

After each unit there are always two double pages extra. The first page contains section with functional language (called Function globally), the second one is set aside either for an essay by David Crystal (there are five of them in the textbook) or for a section called Global voices with extra listening with voices from all over the world. The third page is devoted to developing students’ writing. The last page is divided into two sections: Global review and Study skills. In the Global review the most important grammar and vocabulary of the unit are repeated and there is also an extra task for either speaking or writing. The study skills section helps the students to find out their learning styles and offers them some tips on how to use their study time more effectively. This section is often done in form of a quiz or a questionnaire.

After the last page of the last unit the textbook does not end. On four pages there are communication activities for pair work that are used throughout the
whole book. Then, there is some additional material on another two pages, for example a board game and several quotes on America for further speaking practice.

Then the grammar section (here called Grammar focus) comes. Every double page is devoted to one unit and its grammar. The relevant grammar is always explained on the left page and on the opposite one there are additional exercises to practice the grammar so the students do not have to buy the workbook and still get some grammar exercises. The results of this section are not available in the textbook.

The last few pages are devoted, as it is usual with the language textbooks, to the audio-scripts.

The binding of the textbook is quite solid for a paperback, after a year of intensive usage I have not noticed any loose pages neither in my nor in my students’ copies.

The publisher promotes the textbook on their website (www.macmillanglobal.com) as sophisticated and beyond the concept of ‘typical’ general English textbook. They highlight developing critical thinking and put emphasis on using various literary sources. On their website, Macmillan also publishes some of the marvellous reviews Global was awarded with and they do not forget to mention that this series won English Speaking Union Award in
2010. The cover of the textbook also carries information about winning The Duke of Edinburgh ESU English Language Book Award in 2010.

According to Grant’s test of textbooks, *Global* is a communicative textbook since it uses authentic texts (e.g. on page 55 *Profile of an Indian Call Centre Worker*), it provides students with the practice of real-life activities (basically all the function globally sections), it supports the development of fluency (students are often asked to discuss some statements or give opinions – e.g. on page 73) and it emphasises practice more than study (the grammar section is not even part of the units, it is available at the back of the book).

**Design**

The design of *Global* is quite clear and it is easy to see what each double-page offers. The pictures are always related to the topic of the unit and they are not dominating the pages. They are modern and in most cases students can see nice photographs in the textbook instead of unattractive illustrations. The attractiveness of the pictures was also one of the best evaluated parts of *Global* in the viewpoint of design.

The overall layout of the textbook leaves some space for making notes as well, without giving the impress of being empty which is in agreement with Sheldon’s theory stated in the second chapter of the thesis. All the sections in each double-page are clearly marked and the style of this marking is coherent throughout the whole textbook (in fact, it is coherent through the whole series).
Basic grammar rules are always in a light grey box so they can be identified very easily and through the whole textbook a symbol of letter G in a circle can be found to refer to the grammar section in the back of the textbook.

Sometimes the texts are printed on a colourful background which makes reading more difficult, for example on page 28 there is a white text on yellow background which might cause problems to some students; other texts, for example on page 19 and on page 37 are printed on a dark background which makes it impossible to make any notes or highlight the words efficiently.

In the questionnaire *Global* received an average mark of 1.5 in the design section. The worst evaluated part was the amount of free space on the page (2.5). This of course differs with each page, for example on pages 22 and 26 there is plenty of space whereas pages 38 and 60 are full of texts and exercises.

**Reading**

According to the diagram presented on page 25, reading can be divided into two types, oral and silent one. Since there is no definition of what text is suitable for an oral reading and what for silent one, all of the texts can be used in both ways. The choice depends on the teacher.

The silent reading is further divided into two categories again, intensive one and extensive one. Intensive reading is often used for focusing on one specific
feature and it is not widely used in *Global* on the pre-intermediate level. Most functional language and grammar features are presented in a different form.

In contrast to intensive reading, extensive one is used quite often in the textbook. Skimming activity can be found for example in the very first unit on page 12 where the students are asked to read a text very quickly and define the kind of the text they have just read. Only then they are asked to read the text again and answer several questions which can be classified as a part of an after-reading task.

Scanning is also used in this textbook quite often, some examples can be found on page 30, when there is a text about interesting discoveries and students are asked (after the second reading) to complete sentences with specific words from the text. Scanning is necessary in other exercises as well. For instance, on page 60 students are given a text and they are asked to find answers to six questions presented as fast as possible and also on page 66 the students are asked to find some words in a text on happiness to match the definitions given.

There are many more examples of both skimming and scanning but since these two reading strategies are present in the vast majority of reading exercises in *Global*, naming them all would be rather extensive.

One of the things Brown considers to be of great importance is teaching reading not as an isolated skill but in connection with other skills as well. There are not many texts in *Global* where a reading task would not be preceded or
followed by either speaking or writing task. Listening is often a part of the reading itself as lots of the texts are recorded on the class CDs as well and therefore can be played when students follow the text with their eyes.

A good example of an interconnection of the skills can be found on pages 10 and 11. There is an authentic text about six degrees of separation theory. At first, students are asked to read the text and tell each other if they know the theory. Then they are supposed to listen to an explanation of the theory without any visual aid and also to draw lines between people who are, according to the theory, connected. After listening once more their task is to explain the links between several people in a similar way they heard in the listening and only then they are supposed to discuss some question and to apply the theory on themselves. Thus in connection with one short text a lot of speaking and some listening is covered, too.

Another principle Brown states in order to develop reading skills is motivating the students. He also claims that the students are usually more interested in the texts they could encounter in the real life as well. An example of such a text is for instance on page 20 where ten pieces of advice useful in kitchen are presented and students are then challenged to share their own kitchen tips with the rest of the class. According to the questionnaire results, *Global* is one of the textbooks with the highest ratio of authentic texts.

Further on, Brown highlights the importance of pre-reading, during-reading and after-reading tasks. In *Global* there was not found any reading exercise without
pre-reading or after-reading tasks. A nice example of a reading lesson with all the tasks provides the double-page 30-31. It is the first part of the third unit which is focused on art and music.

At the very beginning of the lesson students are asked to match words describing various types of art to the pictures scattered over the double-page. Their next task is to describe the pictures using the words from the previous exercise and phrases provided specially for this task. When they are done with the matching, they move on to reading and listening to several short texts which are presented as true stories of finding valuable works of art in unexpected places. As they process the reading they also match the pictures to individual stories. Since there are eight pictures and only four stories, they cannot use the process of elimination which helps to develop their critical thinking. Gapped sentences follow which make the students to scan the text to find the particular words. The last activity on the double-page is a speaking section where the students can choose one of two tasks and either tell their partner about an object important for his or her family or have a short conversation based on provided questions.

The first two tasks seem to be the pre-reading tasks to get the students involved in the topic of art. Then, the main activity, reading, is presented and the students are given a during-reading task – to match the pictures to the stories. To re-visit the text they are asked to scan it because of the gapped sentences and at the end the after-reading task there is speaking related to the
article yet personalizing the subject a lot due to the questions, such as Have you ever been to an art gallery? and What kind of art do you like?.

Reading was the best evaluated part of the questionnaire for Global as in 88% of answers it received the best mark possible.

**Speaking**

Speaking is really a challenging task for many learners, as Thornbury points out. In order to give the students opportunity to build their confidence they need to practice speaking a lot. Global follows this belief and at least some speaking task can be found on every double-page.

The variety of speaking activities is quite wide in Global. Some of them are rather simple as they involve matching two parts of a question and then asking these questions in pairs (e.g. on page 7), some of them require more students’ invention, such as the activity on page 43 where students are given five topics to choose three they want to speak about and then they discuss them in pairs.

The speaking activity on page 57 is even more elaborated as it involves reading as well. First the students are asked to read several job characteristics and tick the ones which are important for them. Then they are asked to work in pairs, compare their ideas and, most of all, choose only five most important characteristics. Then they are invited to share their five characteristics with another pair and agree with them on five characteristics again. This is what Bailey mentions in her book that students need to do – practice interpersonal
and transactional skills. In this type of exercise they need to get something done (agree on five characteristics) but, at the same time, they need to be polite and use the appropriate language for negotiating.

The information gap exercises that Bailey claims to be one of the best exercises for speaking as students have to negotiate the meaning, have their own section on pages 126-9. There are exactly five exercises which mean there is one information gap activity for every second unit.

In *Global* students are often asked to choose a topic or task they want to talk about. The possibility of choosing the task they want to accomplish is suitable for adult students and it also keeps them motivated as they can speak about what they are interested in, not what the authors think might be interesting.

**Functional Language**

In *Global* there are numerous functional language sections. In fact, the functional language section follows after each unit and the authors always devote it a whole page. Various topics useful in every-day life are covered in these sections, for example eating out, agreeing and disagreeing, making offers, shopping, speaking on the telephone, etc. All of these situations are common in real life and therefore it is very beneficial for the students to try them out in the classroom first.

The sections on functional language usually start with some warm up exercise. In the second unit, for example, the topic is eating out. To warm up, students
are asked to compare and contrast four pictures depicting different places to eat using provided phrases. Then, to personalise the matter, they are encouraged to share their experience with similar places. Next exercise uses listening skills. For the first listening, students are supposed to match three conversations they hear to three pictures from the very first exercise. Again, there is one redundant picture so the students cannot use the method of elimination. After the second listening, they are asked to answer two questions for each conversation. Next task is to put words in the correct order to make more useful phrases and mark those pronounced by a customer with a letter C. Then a drilling exercise comes as they are invited to repeat the phrases after listening to them. Finally, the students practise what they have learned in a speaking activity which is in form of a role-play, which is one of the most suitable activities for practising the functional language, as Bailey points out.

All the Function globally sections in Global follow the same pattern as described above.

In the questionnaire, Global was praised for presenting the functional language in a context. Other two features, the amount of functional language and the number of activities to practise it, both had the average of 1.5.
6.2 New English File

New English File is a seven level textbook series of general English published by Oxford University Press (OUP). As an extra level there is an Intermediate Plus after the regular intermediate and before the upper intermediate ones. The pre-intermediate level materials include student’s book, workbook, multiROM, and student’s website for the students. For the teacher the authors prepared a teacher’s book, DVD video, class audio (available on both CDs and cassettes), iPack, and teacher’s website. The pre-intermediate level corresponds to Common European Framework of Reference and therefore it is between A2 and B1.

The authors of the pre-intermediate textbook are Clive Oxenden, Christina Latham-Koenig, and Paul Seligson. The teacher’s book is by the same authors with Lindsay Clandfield, who is author of Global series.

When a student opens the textbook, first thing he or she can see is the content double-page. There are nine files (which is a special name for a unit here) in total, each of them has different colour coding which is followed through the whole textbook. Surprisingly enough, there are no names for the individual files. Each file (except the last one) is divided into four sections marked with letters A, B, C, and D. Each of the sections has its own name which seems to have nothing in common with the other parts within the files. For example, the individual parts of file four are called From rags to riches, Family conflicts, Faster, faster!, and The world’s friendliest city. It seems that these parts are
linked together more through grammar (in this case it is present perfect tense and comparatives and superlatives) than through the content or topic. For each section of each file there are grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation listed that are taught within the section. The grammar is highlighted in the same way it is in the content section.

After each file three special sections follow. The first one is called Practical English, the second one Writing, and the last one is revision. The only exception to this system is, again, the last file where the overall revision follows.

Each part of a file is fitted to one double-page. In the upper part of the left page there is always a number of the file and a letter indicating the part together with the name of the section in a colourful stripe. Above the stripe there is a list of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation issue the students are supposed to learn from the part. For example, in the first part of the first unit, students should focus on word order in questions, common verb phrases and classroom language, and vowel sounds and the alphabet.

After each file there are those extra parts mentioned above. Namely, it is one page with functional language (here called Practical English), one page with writing as it is not part of the units, and one double-page for revision. This revision double-page is divided into two parts. The first one is called ‘What do you remember?’ and it is pure revision of features taught in the unit. The second one is called ‘What can you do?’ and it contains three tasks practising reading, listening and speaking.
After the 9B section, which is the last one of file nine, four pages of revision follow. On the first double-page basic grammar from all files is revised. Then vocabulary and pronunciation sections follow. After the revision, ten pages of extra communicative activities follow with the first four being intended mainly for student A, the other four predominantly for student B and the last two for both of them. Then eight pages of audio transcript follow and only then students can find the grammar section where there is always on double-page devoted to grammar from one file with the explanations being on the left page and corresponding exercises on the right page. After the grammar bank the vocabulary bank follows. The vocabulary is divided into different categories according to various topics, e.g. holidays, the body, clothes, etc. Finally, the last part of the textbook is a sound bank with well arranged tables and pictures.

The binding of the textbook seems to be rather solid as there are no loose pages although the library copy looks like being used a lot.

According to Grant’s test of textbooks, *New English File* is a communicative textbook since it employs authentic texts (e.g. on page 63 *The New Face of Chess*), it provides students the practice of real-life activities (basically all the practical English sections), it supports the development of fluency (e.g. on page 29 students are asked to tell their partner about their week plans) and it emphasises practice more than study (the study section is not even part of the files, it is available at the back of the book).
Design

The design of *New English File* is quite easy to follow, as each double-page forms a coherent part of the file it can be clearly seen what it offers. Before a student starts studying the double-page, he or she can have a look at a short summary of the content of the double-page. It is always placed on the left page above the name of the section. It states the grammar practiced in the part, vocabulary, and pronunciation issues.

There are many pictures of different styles in the textbook. A student can see not only plenty of photographs of real people and places (e.g. on page 51 a photography of Audrey Hepburn is printed, on page 79 it is Quentin Tarantino and many more) but also some funny illustrations (e.g. on pages 52-3 and 71), and some photos taken for the purpose of being used in a textbook as they are used always in the ‘Practical English’ sections and they depict only a few different people (e.g. on pages 12, 24, and 36). The style of the illustrations is not coherent.

As far as empty space for making notes is concerned, it varies through the textbook. In some parts there is plenty of space (e.g. on pages 43, 44) whereas others are rather crowded with the pictures and text (e.g. the section 5D on pages 58-9, section 8A on pages 88-89). However, those crowded ones prevail as someone has also pointed out in the questionnaire. The problem with textual density reflects Sheldon’s worries concerning the economic pressures stated in the second chapter of this thesis.
In the questionnaire, *New English File* was praised for the distribution of the topics which change quickly as each double-page has its own topic. The worst feature of this textbook is, according to the respondents the lack of free space for making notes. The best evaluated feature is the easy navigation in the textbook pages as each section is clearly marked and numbered.

**Reading**

Extensive reading is used quite widely in *New English File*, especially scanning. It can be found for instance on page 99 where students are asked to scan a text and find words matching the given definitions. In the text on page 51 there are several highlighted words. As a part of after-reading task, students are encouraged to deduct the meaning of these words which is, as Brown and Ur point out, good for the development of reading comprehension. In fact, this encouragement to guess the meaning of unknown words is quite common in *New English File* as it can be found in many other texts (e.g. on pages 27, 43, and 45).

Skimming is rather a unique technique to be found in *New English File*, although it appears on page 17 where the students are encouraged to skim three texts and match them to pictures.

Brown also states that in order to motivate the students it is useful to present them authentic texts they can meet in real life. *New English File* contains
several authentic texts, usually adjusted to the pre-intermediate level. They can be found for example on pages 21, 43, 51, and 63.

Penny Ur advises to activate students’ schemata before engaging in an activity. An example of this technique can be found on page 28 where students are supposed to answer a few questions on meeting someone at the airport which might motivate the students as well as it helps to personalise the topic. As another example of activating the schemata can also be regarded asking students questions about shopping for clothes before they read a text about Zara, a popular clothes shop. Unfortunately, in this reading section students are also asked to cover the text after reading it once and answer several questions from their memory instead of scanning the text to find the answers. Nonetheless, they are encouraged to scan the text afterwards and to find any words connected with clothes.

Some of the reading tasks in New English File are focused on memorising the facts which has nothing in common with developing reading skills. As an example the reading section on page 67 might serve. This section is called ‘Never smile at crocodile’ and it is mainly about surviving attacks of animals. At the beginning of the section there is a quiz to get the students into the topic. In the sixth section reading, there is a text about crocodiles and several pre-reading and after reading tasks are provided here as well. However, the first pre-reading task is a question if the students can remember the best way to survive a crocodile attack. They are not asked to scan the quiz to find the
correct answer but they are asked to recall it from their memory. Then the students are supposed to read the text and decide if given statements are true or false. After reading the text they are asked to cover the text and again, recall from their memory what the numbers given were about. Only then they are invited to scan the text to check their answers.

The same problem with redundant memorising can be found also on pages 56-7 where the students are asked to read the text and then to cover it and answer several questions using their memory. It would be more reasonable if they were asked to scan the text to find the answers first. The after reading task on page 97 has the very same problem – only here are no questions but true or false statements, again.

In fact, true or false statements are the most popular activity in the textbook. It can be found in every file, in many of them twice and in the fifth one and the eighth one even thrice (pages 55, 57, and 63 in the fifth file; pages 96, 97, and 99). In the ninth file there is no such activity; however, this file has only two sections in comparison with four sections in the rest of the files.

Brown emphasises the interconnection of different skills as it is very beneficial for the development of the students’ language. A good example of such interconnection can be found on double-page 34-5, a section focused on dreaming. First, the students are supposed to do the popular true or false statements which serve as a pre-reading task. Then they listen to a conversation between a patient and a psychoanalyst and number pictures
according to what they hear. Afterwards, they complete gaps in the dialogue while listening to it once more. Next task is a prediction of the meaning of dreams with checking via listening again. The last activity lies in looking at the pictures again students ordered in the second task and explaining the meaning of them in dreams. This section demonstrates a nice connecting of three skills: Reading, speaking, and listening.

In the questionnaire the number of texts available for students was the best evaluated feature of *New English File*. Although the results of the remaining questions were all around number two, the worst one was the ratio of authentic and artificial texts with the average of 2.3.

**Speaking**

As was stated in the section devoted to speaking in *Global*, speaking is a challenging task for most of students; thus, it needs plenty of practice. In *New English File*, every part of each file contains at least some speaking task.

Many speaking activities are based on forming questions and then asking and answering them in pairs (e.g. on pages 17, 27 and 39). *New English File* also focuses on developing the pronunciation in each part of a file which is, according to Bailey, essential for pre-intermediate students. They are encouraged not only to practise individual sounds, as in exercises on pages 21, 23, and 89, but also to look for the word stress (e.g. on pages 32, 47, and 53)
sentence stress, as in activities on pages 29, 35, 81, and rhythm of English (e.g. on pages 31, 69, and 71).

In order to keep the students motivated it is helpful to let them choose the task they want to accomplish. However, the speaking activities in *New English File* do not give the students any choice what to speak about. A good example of this problem can be found on page 99. It is a revision section and as all of these sections it also contains a speaking exercise. It is, in fact, divided into two parts. In the first one the students are asked to tick those topics they are able to talk about but in the second part they are not asked to choose one of these topics and discuss it with a partner. Instead, they are invited to talk about a different topic. The act of choosing has already been mentioned in the second chapter, specifically in the sub-chapter devoted to speaking as very motivating for the students and also suitable for adult students. However, there is no choice in *New English File* for the students.

As far as fluency and accuracy are concerned, it seems that the most of activities in *New English File* are focused more on accuracy than fluency, although it does not correspond with the numbers collected in the questionnaire.

According to the questionnaire results, the best feature of *New English File* is the number of speaking tasks as there are ‘plenty of both free and controlled speaking tasks’. The worst feature is, by all means, the ratio between controlled and free speaking practice. As was already stated above, most of the speaking
tasks are controlled as students are often supposed to ask and answer questions only.

**Functional Language**

There are eight sections with functional language in *New English File* as there are eight complete files. Here the functional language sections are called Practical English. Some of the topics covered in these sections are, for instance, At the airport, At the conference hotel, Restaurant problems, Lost in San Francisco, A boat trip etc. Some of them might be less probable to occur in the life of the students, especially the boat trip, but others, such as the problems in a restaurant and being at the airport, are definitely useful.

The practical English section is always divided into three parts. First, a listening task comes together with either some questions to answer, ordering sentences according to the listening, underlining correct word, or true or false statements. Then the students are exposed to further listening. In this exercise they are provided with the clear division of statements they hear and say. Nonetheless, there are gaps in these phrases they are supposed to complete. In the next task they are asked to drill the phrases and then used them in a role-play. The very last section of the practical English is devoted to social English which is presented through listening, again.

The best assessed question in the questionnaire was the one on presenting functional language in a context – *New English File* received an average of 1.7.
The worst result had the last question concerning the amount of the functional language. With mark 2.5 it is well behind the overall average, which was 2. In general, functional language is a weaker section of the textbook in comparison with others.
Chapter 7: Comparison of the Selected Textbooks

Although the two examined textbooks come from different publishers, they resemble each other in some features and differentiate in others. The number of materials available for each of the textbooks is in fact the same but it is structured differently. Both packs of materials contain the student’s and teacher’s book, workbook and audio CDs. The multiROM available to New English File is comparable to e-workbook which is a part of Global. Similarly, DVD and iPack for teachers in New English File series might be compared to the resource disc which comes together with Global teacher’s book. The advantage of Global is that teachers pay only for the teacher’s book and get the resource disc with videos and plenty of extra activities as a bonus.

The distribution of individual sections is similar in both textbooks. The difference lies in the beginning of the textbook. Whereas in Global students can learn something about both the author and the book itself, in New English File there is the content section and then the first file starts. Both of the textbooks are well organized into double-page content sections. However, in Global, these are connected through the topic, whereas in New English File grammar seems to be the connecting component. In both textbooks, sections on functional language, writing, and revision follow after the four double-pages. The organization of the last part of the textbooks is comparatively similar as in both of them extra communication activities, audio-scripts, and grammar reviews are
to be found. *New English File* also contains vocabulary and pronunciation banks.

As far as four Grant’s tests are concerned, both of them are clearly communicative textbooks.

### 7.1 Design

In both textbooks individual parts of the double-page sections are distinctly marked and this marking is coherent throughout the textbook. Design of *Global* gives the impression of being clearer than the design of *New English File* as photographs are used predominantly in *Global* and the few illustrations present are in the same style. The pictures in *Global* are also modern and timeless. In comparison to *Global*, the design of *New English File* looks rather old with photographs of celebrities and illustrations in a not unified style.

In the questionnaire *Global* received better marks in all aspects of design. It is interesting that in both textbooks the worst evaluated part was the insufficient amount of free space for making notes.

One of the problems that were mentioned in the questionnaire by a respondent was that the texts in *New English File* are sometimes printed on a colourful background which makes reading the text quite difficult. However, this is a problem in *Global* as well, as was pointed out in the chapter on design of *Global*. 
7.2 Reading

*Global* is similar to *New English File* in employing more scanning tasks than skimming ones, although in *Global* skimming is used in more instances than in *New English File*.

In both textbooks reading is taught within other skills, it is often interconnected with both listening and speaking. In *Global* the intertwining is more evident than in *New English File*.

As far as pre-reading, during-reading, and after-reading tasks are concerned, *Global* definitely employs more varied exercises than *New English File* where true and false statements can be found very often together with comprehension questions.

In general, *Global* exploits the texts more. In *New English File* there is often the same type of after-reading tasks. Furthermore, in *New English File* memorising is often an after-reading task which does not help the students to develop their reading skills.

In both textbooks attempts to personalise the subject through personal questions were found, for example in the first part of the third unit in *Global* through the questions such as What kind of art do you like? and Do you have any art in your house?; in *New English File* using questions such as Do you have any photos in your bedroom or living room? and Do like being in photos? in section 2B.
Although authentic texts are used in both textbooks, the ratio of authentic and artificial texts is more pleasing in *Global* which corresponds with the questionnaire results as well – *Global* had the average mark 1, while *New English File* had 2.3.

According to the questionnaire, reading was the best evaluated feature of both *Global* and *New English File*. However, *Global* gained the average 1.1 whereas *New English File* 1.9. Nonetheless, both of them are above the overall average of reading, which was 2.2.

### 7.3 Speaking

Even though many speaking tasks can be found in both textbooks, the variety is certainly wider in *Global*. Students who are taught with *Global* also experience more free speaking practice than those who use *New English File* in their course.

However, *New English File* puts more emphasis on various aspects of pronunciation, such as word stress, sentence stress, and rhythm. In *Global* students can often choose what task they want to accomplish which increases their motivation while in *New English File* the tasks are simply given. *New English File* also stresses accuracy over fluency as students are often given patterns of statements they are supposed to produce. *Global* follows the opposite path and puts more emphasis on developing fluency than on accuracy.
*New English File* denies the students the chance to pursue an activity they want to do, which might be slightly demotivating for the adult students. *Global*, on the contrary, offers them plenty opportunities to choose the most fitting activity for them.

Although speaking is the second best assessed feature of *New English File*, it is slightly behind the overall average of corresponding section of the questionnaire whose mark was 2. In contrary, *Global* is well in advance with its average of 1.5. The best evaluated question for both textbooks was the last one concerning relatedness of the speaking activities to the real world. The worst evaluated feature of *Global* was the lack of vocabulary and phrases presented before speaking activities, whereas for *New English File* it was the ratio between free and controlled speaking activities.

### 7.4 Functional Language

The location of the sections with functional language is same in both textbooks – after the four parts of the unit or file. Some of the topics are similar, although in *New English File* some of them, e.g. A boat trip, seems to be remote to real world. In *Global* all of the topics are perfectly applicable to the real life situations, e.g. making offers and decisions and finding things in common.

The activities in the functional language sections are more varied in *Global*. In *New English File* an emphasis is put on listening whereas *Global* stresses the connection of listening and speaking. In both textbooks drilling tasks occur
which are necessary to reinforcing the useful phrases in the minds of the students. In *Global* role-plays are often used as they are one of the most appropriate activities for practising the functional language, as Bailey points out in the chapter 2.5 Functional Language.

In the questionnaire the best evaluated parts were the same for both textbooks: Presenting the functional language in a context. However, the average mark of this section for *New English File* is 2.1, which is, again, behind the average of 1.9. *Global* received the average mark of 1.3.

### 7.5 Overall Summary

To sum it up, *Global* received better marks than *New English File* in all aspects except providing the students enough vocabulary and phrases before engaging them in a speaking activity.

The diversity of activities is wider in *Global* in all aspects and due to the presence of the possibility to choose the task students want to accomplish. *Global* seems to be more suitable for adult students.
Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to analyze and compare English language textbooks on pre-intermediate level used in language schools in Brno. In order to choose the textbooks that are most widely used in this area, a research questionnaire was employed and published at Google Sites. Based on the results, *New English File* and *Global* are the most popular textbooks and thus they were chosen for the detailed examination in the thesis.

The first chapter deals with the role of textbooks in English language courses. First, textbooks are compared to the teacher-developed materials and, second, descriptions of advantages for both teachers and students are provided.

The following chapter is dedicated to several aspects of textbooks, namely design, reading, speaking, as well as to functional language. All of these features are then analyzed in both *Global* and *New English File*.

Since the focus of the thesis was on adult students at pre-intermediate level only, a description of this age group and level of English was necessary and thus these features (and also some more) were described in the third chapter.

The fourth chapter deals with the process of choosing an appropriate textbook to match needs of both teachers and students. Two different methods are described and compared: The chart method by Fred Chambers and the checklists employed by Leslie E. Sheldon with the graded version by David Williams.
With the next chapter the thesis starts to be more concrete as it deals with the questionnaire which was sent to teachers in Brno area. First, it is described and then the results are analyzed together with the graphs representing the outcomes for individual questions. The best evaluated categories were speaking and functional language, both with the average mark 1.9. The worst assessed category was reading with the average mark 2.2. As can be seen from the numbers, they do not differentiate very much as both of them are close to 2.

The sixth chapter is devoted to the analysis of the features described in the second chapter in two textbooks chosen on the basis of the questionnaire: *Global* by Macmillan and *New English File* by Oxford University Press.

In *Global* the best assessed feature was by all means reading with the average of 1.1 which stands far above the average (2.2). The worst mark received both speaking and design, mainly because the insufficient space for making notes and because of the lack of vocabulary necessary for assigned speaking tasks.

As far as *New English File* is concerned the best evaluated feature was, similarly to *Global*, reading. The feature with the worst mark was design as there is almost no space for making notes. In all cases except reading the average mark for *New English File* is below the overall average of a question.

In the final chapter these two textbooks are compared and contrasted. The conclusion is that in *Global* the tasks are more varied and it is also more suitable for adult students as it provides them with the opportunity to choose
what task they want to accomplish whereas in *New English File* they do not have any choice.
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Czech Resume

Tato práce se zabývá analýzou učebnic pro dospělé na úrovni pre-intermediate. Práce je zaměřená pouze na některé aspekty těchto učebnic. Jmenovitě to jsou design, čtení, mluvení a funkční jazyk.

Práce je založena na výsledcích dotazníku, který byl elektronicky rozeslán učitelům z brněnských jazykových škol. Z výsledků dotazníku jasně vyplývá, že nejpoužívanější učebnicí angličtiny v této oblasti je New English File (OUP), neboť ji používá 66% respondentů. Druhou nejběžnější učebnicí je Global z nakladatelství Macmillan, kterou používá 22% dotázaných učitelů. Obě tyto učebnice jsou analyzovány v aspektech zmíněných výše a poté jsou porovnány nejen s výsledky dotazníku, ale i mezi sebou.

Práce je rozdělena do sedmi kapitol, z nichž první čtyři poskytují nezbytný teoretický základ pro následující tři, ve kterých jsou analyzovány výsledky dotazníku a poté porovnány s učebnicemi. Některými z témat prodiskutovanými na začátku práce jsou například role učebnic v kurzech angličtiny, vliv věku studentů na jejich schopnost učit se cizí jazyk a také například jak vybrat vhodnou učebnici.

Dále je popsán dotazník, na jehož základě byly vybrány dvě učebnice, které jsou analyzovány, Global a New English File. Jak v dotazníku, tak následně v analýze učebnic jsou rozebírány pouze relevantní aspekty zmíněné výše.
Závěrem práce je porovnání diskutovaných učebnic. Výsledkem analýzy je, že aktivity v *Global* jsou mnohem rozmanitější než v *New English File* a také, že učebnice *Global* je vhodnější pro dospělé studenty, neboť jim poskytuje možnost vybrat si sami úkoly, kterým se chtějí věnovat.
English Resume

This thesis deals with the analysis of textbooks for adults on pre-intermediate level. It is focused only on some features, namely design, reading, speaking, and functional language.

The thesis is based on the results of a questionnaire which was published at Google Sites and the link was sent to teachers of English language in Brno. According to the questionnaire the most widely used textbook is *New English File* (OUP) as it is used by 66% of respondents. The second most common textbook is *Global* (Macmillan) used by 22% of the respondents. Both of these textbooks are analyzed in the aspects mentioned above and then they are compared with and contrasted to not only the results of the questionnaire but also to each other.

The thesis is divided into seven chapters where the first four chapters provide the theoretical background for the following three chapters which are devoted to the analysis of both the results of the questionnaire and the textbooks. Some of the topics discussed in the beginning chapters are, for example, the role of textbooks in an English course, the impact of age of students on their ability to learn a foreign language, and also how to choose an appropriate textbook.

Further on, the questionnaire which served as a basis for choosing the analyzed textbooks, *Global* and *New English File*, is described. Both in the questionnaire and in the analysis only the relevant aspects stated above are discussed.
In the conclusion the textbooks are compared to each other. The outcomes of the analysis are that the activities in *Global* are more varied than in *New English File* and that *Global* is more suitable for adult students as it gives them the chance to choose the task they want to accomplish.
Appendix - Questionnaire

Thank you for coming to this webpage! The following questionnaire serves the purpose of writing a diploma thesis focusing on textbooks. It consists of 7 pages, maximum of questions per page is five and most of them are in form of a checklist or multiple choice, so completing the questionnaire is very quick and it should not take you more than 10 minutes. Please note, that all the questions concern pre-intermediate level of adult EFL textbooks only.

* Required

Do you use a textbook in your course? *

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

**General information**

Why do you use a textbook? *

Tick your reasons for using a textbook. You can tick more than one answer.

- [ ] I do not have time to devise my own teaching material.
- [ ] I think that using a textbook is beneficial for the students.
- [ ] Teaching without a textbook is not possible.
- [ ] It is the school policy.
- [ ] I like textbooks.
- [ ] It gives me an outline for the syllabus.
- [ ] I was taught with a textbook as well.
What textbook do you use? *

You can tick more than one answer.

- [ ] Angličtina pro jazykové školy
- [ ] Clockwise
- [ ] English Unlimited
- [ ] Face2face
- [ ] Face2face (2nd edition)
- [ ] Global
- [ ] Innovations
- [ ] Language Leader
- [ ] Move
- [ ] Natural English
- [ ] New Cutting Edge
- [ ] New English File
- [ ] New Headway (2nd edition)
- [ ] New Headway (3rd edition)
- [ ] New Headway (4th edition)
- [ ] New Inside Out
- [ ] Speak Out
- [ ] Straightforward
What were your main reasons for choosing this textbook? *
You can tick more than one answer.

- I had no choice.
- There are nice pictures.
- It is up-to-date.
- It provides students with enough speaking practice.
- There are instructions in Czech.
- It contains a key to the exercises.
- There are lots of grammar exercises.
- There are interesting texts.
- It has good online support.
- It is popular.
- Other: 

Choose the textbook you will comment on. *
From now on, the questions are more specific. Please choose only one textbook you will comment on.

Which textbook do you choose?
Design

Is the design of the textbook attractive for students? *

1  2  3  4  5

Very attractive. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Not attractive at all.

Are the pictures in the textbook modern? *

1  2  3  4  5

Pictures are modern. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ The pictures are not modern.

Is there enough free space for making notes? *

1  2  3  4  5

Yes, plenty of space. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ No, not at all.

Is the layout of the pages easy to follow? *

1  2  3  4  5

Yes, very easy. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ No, it is not.

Your comments on design.

If you have any comments on design, please write them down.
**Reading**

Does the textbook contain enough reading material? *

1 2 3 4 5

Yes, enough. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ No, not enough.

Are the texts authentic or artificial? *

1 2 3 4 5

Authentic ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Artificial

Are the texts interesting for students? *

1 2 3 4 5

Interesting. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Not interesting at all.

Is there enough pre-reading and after-reading tasks? *

1 2 3 4 5

Plenty of them. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ None.

Your comments on reading.

If you have any comments concerning reading, please write them down.
### Speaking

Does the textbook contain enough materials for speaking practice? *

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<th>1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, enough.</td>
<td></td>
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Are the students given more free speaking activities or controlled speaking activities? *

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<tr>
<td>Free.</td>
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Are the students presented with enough vocabulary and patterns before engaging in a speaking activity? *

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, enough.</td>
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Are the speaking tasks related to real world? *

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, they are.</td>
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Your comments on speaking.

If you have any comments regarding speaking, please write them down.
**Functional language**

Does the textbook contain enough functional language? *

1  2  3  4  5

Yes, enough. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Not enough.

Does the textbook present the functional language in a context? *

1  2  3  4  5

Yes, it does. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ No, it does not.

Are there enough activities to practice the functional language? *

1  2  3  4  5

Yes, plenty. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ No, not at all.

Your comments on functional language.

If you have any comments concerning functional language, please write them down.
Your comments

What is the strongest point of the textbook? *

You can tick more than one answer.

- Attractive and modern design.
- Clear design.
- A lot of texts.
- Authentic texts.
- Good pre-reading and after-reading tasks.
- Lots of speaking activities.
- Real world speaking activities.
- Plenty of functional language.
- Presenting functional language in context.
- Other: [ ]

What is the weakest point of the textbook? *

You can tick more than one answer.

- Unattractive or old design.
- The design is difficult to navigate.
- Not enough texts.
- Artificial texts.
- Not enough pre-reading or after-reading tasks.
- Not enough speaking activities.
- Not enough functional language.
• □ Missing context for the functional language presented.
• □ Other: 

Thank you for completing the questionnaire!