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AND LITERATURE**

***A Grammar Practice Book
for Adult Beginner Learners of English***

Bachelor Thesis

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Declaration

I declare that I have worked on the present thesis on my own and used only the sources listed in the reference.

I agree that the thesis be deposited at Masaryk University in the library of the Faculty of Education and made accessible for study purposes. I also agree that the thesis be stored in the university retrieval systems and used for the same purposes.

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Introduction

There are many books, workbooks, and additional materials that are intentionally made for adults. These books usually offer rather a fast speed and wide range of vocabulary so that the learners make significant progress and are able to use English fluently as soon as possible.

But what if there is an adult learner who learns English despite the fact that they have never been really bright, or is just not apt at languages? A learner who wants to speak English and read in English so that the life in the modern anglicised society is a bit easier for them? A learner who is still a beginner and tries hard to absorb at least something, and still finds English very difficult? I believe there are many learners who fit these characteristics, and I assume that they need to make slow progress, with a good practice of anything they learn. They need well-prepared, slow-going materials that would enable them to practise English even out of classes. Of all the systems and skills these learners need to practise, I chose to devote the present thesis to the investigation of grammar practice.

I have not found self-study grammar practice materials that would really meet needs of the adults described above. These learners need to practise the target language item thoroughly before they proceed to the next one but the traditional materials usually dedicate just one page to practice. They need to be motivated to work with the self-study materials but the materials are usually not very attractive, as they do not include many game-like exercises and activities. And lastly, learners want to learn to speak and read, but the self-study materials usually do not practise these skills very much. Generally speaking, it seems that the traditional approach on its own cannot be very effective with these learners, and it might be a good idea to combine it with the communicative approach.

The absence of a wanted grammar practice book was the main reason why grammar became the topic of the present thesis. Its aim is to provide adult learners who are beginners or elementary learners with well-structured slow-going materials which they could use out of their general English classes. These materials should – besides traditional exercises – contain something more interesting, more communicative, and hopefully more useful. As a means to this goal, the present thesis offers theoretical background and a few example units that can help grammar book authors create the missing materials one day.

1 Theoretical part

1.1 What is grammar?

According to Thornbury, grammar is not only the study of what forms (sounds, words, sentences, texts) are possible in a language, but also the study of the meanings these forms convey (1999, 1, 3). These two parts of grammar can be simply called ‘grammatical structures’ and ‘grammatical meaning’ (Ur 1996, 75-6).

Grammatical structures

Grammatical structures are texts, sentences, words and sounds. In linguistic metalanguage, these are called morphology and syntax, where morphology means a study of the form of words and syntax means a study of the way words and phrases are put together to form sentences (Hornby 2000, 827, 1319). Here are some examples of grammatical structures: plurals of nouns (e.g. *house* – *houses*, or *mouse* – *mice*), countability (e.g. *How much money?* but *How many coins?*), present simple tense, and others.

All EFL and ESL teachers need to be aware of the fact that “not all languages ... have the same structures” (Ur 1996, 75). To illustrate this, let me compare English and Czech. Whereas Czech nouns have seven cases, English nouns have just two: common and genitive (terminology by Quirk and Greenbaum 1990, 102), and where Czech distinguishes things of feminine, masculine, or neuter gender, English uses only the neutral pronoun *it*. Moreover, there are also structures that are present in English and absent in Czech, such as perfect tenses, or the use of articles. Moreover, it is not only the question of existence or non-existence of various structures in a language; it is also their distribution that makes a significant difference. A conclusion that Ur makes then is that those structures that are not present, or just less frequent, in a mother tongue tend to cause any learner more trouble than those structures he or she is used to (1996, 75).

Grammatical meaning

As mentioned above, the other part of the broad term ‘grammar’ is grammatical meaning. As Thornbury puts it, meanings can be communicated even without grammar if there is enough context in the situation (1999, 3-4). For example, if a foreigner is thirsty, it is a part of their present situation. Therefore, if they say something like *Thirsty! Drink!* they will probably be given a drink even without knowing the structures needed.

Yet with almost all written (and sometimes even with spoken) utterances, there is not enough context, and therefore, grammar needs to be used to communicate the meanings we

mean. This can be illustrated on the example of the foreigner mentioned above. If he or she had a wish to talk about this experience the next day and used the same words, the meaning would be out of the context of the situation. In this case he or she would probably be just given a drink again and would be upset about not being able to communicate their ideas. He or she would have needed to use the correct sentence structures (with sentence elements in their proper places) and the correct forms of the verbs (in this case the past tense form). In other words, sometimes it is essential to use correct grammatical structures and to use those structures that convey the right meaning. Otherwise it would not be clear what the message of the communication was.

1.2 Grammar teaching throughout history

From what has been said so far, it seems obvious that grammar is an essential part of language learning, and that no one can have a claim against teaching it. Still, the position of grammar teaching has changed a lot over the years. The present chapter gives a brief summary of the changes and lists several opinions connected with grammar teaching.

1.2.1 The changing position of grammar

The position of grammar in language teaching was stable for quite a long period of time. Rutherford even says that “teaching grammar has been central to and often synonymous with teaching foreign language for the past 2,500 years” (In Celce Murcia 1988, 1).

This grammar teaching approach used especially to teach and learn Latin and Greek (Thanasoulas, EnglishClub.com 2002), and it focused on teaching reading and writing. As a classical language, Latin was not often spoken, so there was no need to pay much attention to teaching listening or speaking. However, with learning modern languages, the situation is different. It is strange that linguists and then teachers started emphasizing the communicative skills only as late as in the last two decades of the nineteenth century (ibid.).

With many changes in technology, science, arts, and many other fields, people were fonder of trying new ways of doing things than they were in the earlier centuries. Even though with some students the old method worked well, there was a good chance of finding a new method that would work for more students, and maybe even better (less stress, faster progress, etc.) It was a revolutionary time. And soon the revolutionary changes took place in language learning theories as well.

Linguists discovered that natural language acquisition could be applied to learning a foreign language. Both teachers and linguists had many new ideas. They were trying to find the best way to teach languages. During the second half of the twentieth century more methods (including Total Physical Response, Suggestopedia, The Silent Way, etc.) came into existence than ever before. Numerous methods just came and went. Some methods gained stable popularity. Approaches that became very popular in the last century are called the Communicative and the Natural approach and, as Thanasoulas says, they “transcend the boundaries of concrete methods” (ibid.). It is these approaches that detest grammar

teaching as a means of language learning: “The effects of grammar teaching ... appear to be peripheral and fragile” (Krashen In Thornbury 1996, 14).

Thornbury aptly captured the changes in language teaching by saying that its history “is essentially the history of claims and counterclaims for and against the teaching of grammar (ibid.)”. It seems that at first the role of grammar was stressed (one extreme) and later it was underestimated (the opposite extreme). Extremes are usually not worth following, because the truth is often somewhere in between. Therefore, the current position of grammar is influenced by attempts to find the right balance between grammar-based approach and grammar-omitting approach.

1.2.2 Learning from the history

It is usually very difficult to create something completely new and be conscious of all the aspects that need to be taken into account. An old saying assures us that this is normal: “No man is born wise or learned.” Fortunately, we do not need to figure everything out just by ourselves. We can use other people’s ideas and experiences. Therefore, not even a grammar book author needs to anticipate and guess all the problems that might affect the learning process of the people using his or her book. He or she can look into the history and read about what other language teachers viewed as important, and consequently, what the author needs to consider.

This subchapter deals with opinions on grammar teaching, taken out of the descriptions of several language teaching methods and approaches of the past. These descriptions were chosen according to their relevance to the topic of the present thesis. It is to function as a source of inspiration and as an impulse for serious thought about what is vital to consider when presenting and practising grammar.

Before methods

In the nineteenth century, Seidenstrücker, German author of language books, “divided his text carefully into two parts, one giving the rules and necessary paradigms, the other giving French sentences for translation into German and German sentences for translation into French” (Richards and Rodgers 2001, 5). The separation of presentation and practice seems a vital decision and most grammar books nowadays follow this pattern, some even dedicate one entire page to explanations and another page to exercises (although, unlike those by Seidenstrücker, these exercises are not just translations).

The Grammar-Translation Method

This was the first method that emerged, and in fact it was rather just systematized version of the old approach to language teaching. However, it is worth pointing out the following two aspects of Grammar-Translation Method. The first one is, that “grammar is taught deductively – that is, by presentation and study of grammar rules, which are then practiced through translation exercises” (Richards and Rodgers 2001, 6), and the second one is, that “the student’s native language is the medium of instruction” (ibid.).

The Direct Method

The Direct Method was the best known method based on the Natural Approach (a paragraph on this approach is included later in the text). This method taught grammar inductively, and instruction was given only in the target language (Richards and Rodgers

2001, 12). Although this method “rejected explicit grammar teaching”, it followed “a syllabus of grammar structures” (Thornbury 1999, 21). In this method, the learners “picked up the grammar in much the same way as children pick up the grammar of their mother tongue, simply by being immersed in language” (ibid.).

Situational Language Teaching

Situational Language Teaching is an approach based on applied linguistics of the 1930s to 1960s. Sometimes it is also called the Oral Approach. Palmer, a language teaching specialist, “viewed grammar as the underlying patterns of the spoken language” (Richards and Rodgers 2001, 37). In real teaching this meant adhering to a grammar syllabus which had the grammatical structures ‘hidden’ behind “sentence patterns, which could be used to help internalize the rules of English sentence structure” (ibid., 38). It cannot be doubted that sentence that carries certain meaning is sometimes easier to internalize, than an emotionally uncharged rule. Therefore, is highly recommendable for a grammar book to include a clearly visible sentence structure (written in different colour, bold print, unusual font or font size, or used next to or within a picture). On the other hand, this structure does not need to replace the grammar rule.

Communicative Language Teaching

In Britain, Situational Language Teaching (SLT) was the major approach to teaching until the 1960’s. After the principles of SLT were questioned, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) started to be largely accepted. (Richards and Rodgers 2001, 153-4)

This approach allows grammatical explanation, if it helps the learners. This varies according to the learners’ age, interest, and similar criteria. The approach also accepts “judicious use of native language where feasible” and “translation may be used where students need or benefit from it” (Finocchiaro and Brumbit In Richards and Rodgers, 156).

Thornbury distinguishes between ‘Deep-end CLT’, which rejected both grammar syllabuses and grammar instruction, and ‘Shallow-end CLT’, where “grammar was still the main component of the syllabus”, only it was “dressed up in functional labels” (1999, 22). He also points out that Chomsky’s idea that “language, rather than being a habit structure, was instead rule-governed creativity” (ibid., 51) was absorbed by the Shallow-end CLT, and “grammar rules reappeared in coursebooks, and grammar teaching re-emerged in classrooms, often, it must be said, at the expense of communicative practice” (ibid.). It cannot be doubted that communicative practice is more useful than knowledge of rules. However, sometimes the rules can help us choose more effective ways to communicate our ideas. The present thesis tries to combine both approaches.

The Natural Approach

The Natural Approach was an attempt to put researcher's studies of second language acquisition into practice. The principles of the approach were formed by Terrel and Krashen, and appeared in their book *The Natural Approach* (Richards and Rodgers 2001, 178). The approach consists of five hypotheses, which "have obvious implications for language teaching" (ibid., 183). One of the implications is, in the wording of Richards and Rogers, that "as much comprehensible input as possible must be presented" (ibid.). In the case of a workbook, such an input can be offered by texts to read. A grammar-book author should consider this, and might like the idea of inserting pages with stories (or other text types) that would use the grammar points presented on the preceding pages as a form of their consolidation. Another possibility is to include a CD with listenings.

Task-Based Language Teaching

Chapter on Task-Based Language Teaching in the book by Richards and Rogers presents the idea that "activities and tasks can be either those that learners might need to achieve in real life, or those that have a pedagogical purpose specific to the classroom" (2001, 224). Nonetheless, it should also be borne in mind that "language that is meaningful to the learner supports the learning process" (ibid., 223). To sum up, teacher can use whatever he or she feels students will benefit from, but it is vital that learners see the purpose of the presented language point or activity. In a grammar book this could for example mean that the language used reflects real life situations in which learners can find themselves in the future, or that it contains a good preface explaining some of the reasons why the book is useful for its users.

1.3 How to present grammar

Grammar is usually presented orally. As a result, books on grammar teaching discuss techniques suitable for oral presentation but unsuitable for a grammar workbook. Therefore, the present chapter does not deal with individual techniques. It only summarizes the most important presentation principles and offers a brief insight into two grammar teaching approaches.

Both Thornbury (1999) and Harmer (1987) distinguish three basic ways to present grammar: from rules, from examples, and through texts. The first two ways are two different approaches to explain grammar. The third way often accompanies the first two. Teaching grammar through texts is often used in general English coursebooks. The learners read a text which gives examples of the grammar point. It is a good opportunity to see the grammar point in its context (Thornbury 1999, 69-73). Teaching grammar from rules and from examples is discussed in a separate subchapter (1.3.2).

1.3.1 Grammar presentation principles

The following presentation principles are a choice of principles stated in Harmer's book *Teaching and learning grammar* (1987, 18) and Thornbury's book *How to teach grammar* (1999, 25-27).

Efficiency

One of the most important factors, mentioned by both authors, seems to be efficiency. This means to present the grammar item so that the students get to using it on their own as soon as possible. As Thornbury puts it: "prolonged attention to grammar is difficult to justify" (1999, 25). We should not try to cover a whole page in a grammar book with explanations, as the exercises and activities are more important for effective learning.

Clarity

"A good presentation should be clear," says Harmer (1987, 18), and adds that "students should have no difficulty in understanding the situation or what the new language means" (ibid.). This is a very important factor – according to Thornbury, presentation without understanding "is probably a waste of time" (1999, 26).

Attention and motivation

The item needs to be presented in a way that the students do not find it difficult to concentrate on it and feel motivated to learn it. "Tasks and materials that are involving, that are relevant to their needs, that have an achievable outcome, and that have an element of challenge while providing the necessary support, are more likely to be motivating than those that do not have these qualities." (ibid.) In a grammar workbook, this is truer than in a face-to-face presentation as written presentations tend to be tedious to read. Any grammar book author should consider choosing some techniques and aids to make their presentation as lively as possible (e.g. dialogues, pictures, time lines, highlighting, or some discovery techniques).

Appropriacy

Finally, the presentation needs to be appropriate for the grammar point explained and for the target group. The present thesis aims on adult learners at beginner and elementary levels of English (more on the target group is in Chapter 1.5) and the grammar points covered at the respective levels are listed in the practical part of the present thesis (in Chapter 2.1).

1.3.2 Deductive and inductive approach

This subchapter tries to investigate an issue that seems to have been important since the Grammar-Translation Method (see Chapter 1.2): How to teach grammar – deductively, or inductively?

‘Deductive’ way of grammar presentation is comfortable for the teacher and “helpful to older or more analytically-minded learners” (Ur 2000, 83). The other way to present grammar is usually called ‘inductive’. It means that the students are given example sentences and are expected to derive the rules themselves. Ur points out that what students “discover themselves they are more likely to remember”, but warns that with students who find such discovering difficult, it might mean wasting time “on sterile and frustrating guessing, or on misleading suggestions” (ibid.). Moreover, as Thornbury puts it, inductive approach demands that the teachers “select and organize the data carefully so as to guide learners to an accurate formulation of the rule, while also ensuring the data is intelligible” (1999, 55).

However, he offers an example of such a well guided discovery (ibid., 53), which he took from a course book called *New Wave 1*. In the example, the basic rule for present simple is introduced. All the verbs in the example sentences are highlighted; the students are given a list of pronouns, and are told that the verbs take final -s only with certain subjects. Their task then is to tick the pronouns that represent the correct subjects. This kind of discovery is not very difficult, and shows a way how to use inductive approach even with students who find English difficult. One reason to use inductive approach is connected with some of the characteristics of students with learning difficulties (see Chapter 1.5.2). All in all, both approaches have their advantages and disadvantages, and if done with the respective target group in mind, they can work for the students.

Harmer admonishes teachers to “use a variety of techniques” (1991, 23). “Sometimes this involves teaching grammar rules; sometimes it means allowing students to discover the rules for themselves.” (ibid.) The variety also helps liven up the learning process. Whether it is a deductively or inductively taught unit, I believe it is a good idea to let the students write and think also during the presentation part of it.

1.4 How to practise grammar

Practice is usually more important for the learners than the presentation. As Thornbury points out, “simply knowing what to do is no guarantee that you will be able to do it, or that you will be able to do it well” (1999, 91), but this is exactly what the learner needs to know: Am I able to use the item I am supposed to know? As a result, Scrivener observed that “language practice activities are arguably the most important part of any grammar lesson” (2005, 255).

The present chapter is devoted to ways in which to practise grammar. It focuses on those kinds of exercises and activities that are applicable in self-study materials. This means that most of the exercise will need to be accompanied with a key. Although this need often cannot be met in freer activities and oral practice, the present thesis does not omit them as they are very useful for learners. They move learners from just thinking about the language to using it.

There are basically two types of grammar practice. Exercises and activities that pay a lot of attention to form and teach the learners to use correct structures try to achieve accuracy, whereas exercises and activities that pay attention to meaning and teach the learners to use the language easily and without hesitation intend to teach fluency (Thornbury 1999, 92-93). These two types form a range with awareness raising activities being the most controlled, form-oriented practice and with free discourse being the least controlled, meaning-oriented practice (Ur 1996, 84).

The following chapter tries to briefly summarize the individual stages of this range together with the most common written practice exercises. It starts with the most controlled exercises and ends in freer exercises. This order reflects the order of exercise types usually used in the lessons. However, this order does not need to be strictly followed. Sometimes it is good to make the learners pay attention to the form after they have worked with the grammar point in different ways.

1.4.1 Types of exercises

Awareness raising

Awareness raising exercises are exercises that focus learner's attention on "form and/or meaning" (Ur 1996, 84). Thanks to exercises of this type, "there is no immediate need to produce the item" (Thornbury 1999, 105), and the student's attention is not distracted away "from the brain work involved in understanding and restructuring" (ibid.).

These characteristics can be attributed to exercises in which the student has a text and only underlines instances of a given grammatical item (Ur 1996, 84), exercises with answers "already written in, some right some wrong" for the students to correct them (ibid.), exercises with several alternatives to choose from (Thornbury 1999, 107 and Scrivener 2005, 261), exercises with matching answers to the questions (Scrivener 2005, 261), and other types of matching (sentence to a response, pictures to sentences, parts of sentences, etc.).

Most of the awareness-raising exercises are easier than other exercises in that the students need to think just about grammar rules and nothing else. They also help the student quickly find out whether they understood the explanations well. Hence, these exercises are a good option for the first exercise of the practice section in any grammar unit.

Controlled practice

Learners manipulate the language following the rules they have learnt. They sometimes do not even need to understand the content. The most often used controlled practice exercises are fill-ins, drills, word order, and sometimes even translations. These exercises can be made more interesting "by the introduction of piquant or amusing subject matter, or some game-like techniques" (Ur 1988, 9). The controlled practice can become more meaningful by letting the learners use some words of their own choice (Ur 1996, 84). This is usually done through personalization.

Fill-in the gap is a type of exercise with blanks instead of some words. Students are usually given a choice of words to fill in. Harmer claims that "the fill-in is a favourite technique for practising and testing writing" (1947, 52). These exercises already demand writing. However, students write just one or two words per sentence, which makes the exercises rather fast, time-saving, sometimes almost drill-like practice. As Harmer puts it: "Fill-ins are fairly easy to write and are useful for quick practice of specific language points." (ibid.)

In written drill exercises, "students show that they can make correct sentences with the new item" (Harmer 1947, 41). These sentences are "predetermined by the teacher

or textbook” (Ur 1996, 84). A model sentence is usually followed by cues which the learner has to use in his or her sentences, following the pattern of the model. These are called substitution drills (term used by Scrivener 2005, 257). Scrivener also offers several more kinds of drill, some of them being suitable also for written practice: transformation drills (students need to use their own words to express information given by the textbook using the grammatical item), true sentences (students answer questions with sentences that are true for them; again they are told what grammatical item or items to use), transformation into a different grammatical structure (e.g. change into questions, or change into the past perfect), and substitution drills with pictures. (ibid., 258-9)

Both fill-ins and written drills are very much controlled and “not very creative” (Harmer 1947, 41) types of exercises. Written drills mean a lot of writing but, as a result, they help the learner to become aware of the structure of the sentence. If they are too easy, they can become boring and dull. “It is the difficulty and the sense of achievement that make drills worth doing.” (Scrivener 2005, 256) On the other hand, it may be vital to insert practice that is ‘too easy’, just to raise the confidence of the beginner learner. However, this should not be done too often, rather just from time to time, and preferably with those grammatical items that many a learner struggles with.

Word order exercises have jumbled sentences with words and phrases to put in their original position. These exercises are very much controlled, as all the words are given. Yet they are very useful because they practise something that “is a problem for most non native speakers of English” (Harmer 1947, 53), moreover, “this is especially so in writing” (ibid.). These are very straightforward exercises and do not leave many choices to their author. The only choices are where to put the full stop (at the end of the line or at the end of the sentence) and which parts of the sentence to mix as individual words and which to leave rather as whole phrases (e.g. *plays / Dominic / every Saturday morning / the piano*).

Guided (meaningful) practice

The output language is not much controlled. “Learners form sentences of their own according to a set pattern, but exactly what vocabulary they use is up to them.” (Ur 1996, 84)

An example of this type of exercise might be parallel writing. It is an exercise where a text of certain type (postcard, e-mail, brochure, etc.) serves as a model and students are asked to write something similar (Harmer 1947, 54). This type of exercise expects a teacher to read the text afterwards and correct it. Therefore, it is not very suitable for a self-study grammar workbook. However, as the workbook only supplements a general English course, it should be possible for the learners to hand in the writing to their general English teacher.

Free sentence composition

In free sentence composition, learners get a situation, a picture, a questionnaire or some other cue and try to write sentences about it (Harmer 1947, 54 and Scrivener 2005, 265). Another kind of sentence composition expects the learners to deliver correct questions to given answers. The composition is usually structure-based, which means that the students are directed to use a particular structure. The present thesis includes both written and oral tasks of this type. Suggested answers can be found in the key.

Discourse composition and free discourse

In free discourse exercises and activities, “learners hold a discussion or write a passage according to a given a task” (Ur 1996, 84). The type of grammar practice where the students are directed to include certain structures in their discourse is called discourse composition (term used by Ur, *ibid.*). Several exercises and activities of these types are included in the workbook that is a part of the present thesis. There is no key to them.

Growing stories are activities in which the first sentence of a story is given and the students are asked to continue either completely on their own, or with the aid of pictures and/or selection of words to use (Scrivener 2005, 265). They represent a meaningful and vital part of grammar learning. Stories, as it was with parallel writing, expect a teacher to read them afterwards and correct them.

1.5 The characteristics and needs of the target group

As already mentioned in the Introduction and alluded to throughout the previous chapters, the present thesis will include a grammar workbook, or at least a few representative parts of it. The grammar workbook is created for those who need to understand grammar, because, for some reason, they fail to acquire the rules they are expected to or want to use in their general English course or a self-study process.

The target group chosen for this thesis is adult learners who are beginners, or have just reached an elementary level of English. An author might like to take people with special needs into account when creating materials such as the intended grammar workbook. This chapter will therefore look into the needs of adult learners, and into the special educational needs of students with SLD.

The present thesis attempts to meet the needs of as many adult learners as possible, including adults with specific learning disabilities (SLD).

1.5.1 Adult learners

Adults learn in ways different from children. Young children are immersed in the language, their mothers talk to them every day in much the same way, and children naturally pick up the language. Till about 7 years old, they are able to absorb the language without even being aware that they are learning something. They learn words, structures, pronunciation, intonation, usage, all at once. Yet, as Swan argued at a conference in Harrogate, “you can’t get the natural conditions of language acquisition (full-time exposure at an early age) in the language classroom. Our job as teachers is to compensate for the absence of these conditions, not to try insanely to recreate them” (Oxford Teachers’ Club 2006). As Thornbury puts it, children “are better at picking up language implicitly, rather than learning it as a system of explicit rules. Adult learners, on the other hand, may do better at activities which involve analysis and memorisation” (1999, 27). This characteristic of adult learners represents an important reason for teaching grammar.

Lieb (1991) describes several other characteristics of adult learners. Here are two of them – those that may influence creation of a grammar book.

Seeing reason and purpose

The author claims that teachers “must show participants how the class will help them reach their goals (e.g., via a personal goals sheet)”, and later in the article he points out that “adults are relevancy-oriented”, which means that they “must see a reason for learning something” (ibid.).

These needs can be satisfied in several ways. The grammar book can provide a well-structured preface, in which all the advantages of the book would be mentioned. It would be vital for the most crucial advantages to appear at the back of the cover, too.

Another way to make learners aware of the usefulness of the workbook as a means of achieving their goals is to include a portfolio. The citation above suggests personal goals sheet. In a book, the sheet, or portfolio, can hardly be personal, as the book is not aimed at just one particular person. Rather, the book is to be used by as many learners as possible. The solution to this can be to anticipate the goals of learners and create a portfolio that reflects the most common goals, or to create more than one portfolio (e.g. one for learners whose goal is to speak fluently, next for learners whose goal is to read books and articles in English, and another one for learners who need English for writing).

It cannot be doubted that the most important way to make learners see the reason in using the grammar book is to make sure that the content itself is relevant to what the learners

need. In the short term, they probably need to understand and practise the grammatical items covered in the coursebooks they are using. In the present thesis, this need will be met by using several general English coursebooks and workbooks to

- 1) find out what points are usually covered in the books (this is done in Chapter 2.1)
- 2) include the same or similar kinds of exercises and sentence structures
- 3) use the vocabulary (and maybe even the names) used in the books.

In the long term view, learners usually need to make themselves understood in English. This need can be met by consulting conversational handbooks or Everyday English sections in the coursebooks, and including examples from a real life communication the grammar book. Another way to reach the goal is to make the learners speak (see Chapter 1.4).

Using life experiences and knowledge

Leib claims that “adults have accumulated a foundation of life experiences and knowledge that may include work-related activities, family responsibilities, and previous education” (1991), and that “they need to connect learning to this knowledge/experience base” (ibid.). Book writers cannot much rely on readers’ knowledge because they can never know who will read their book. However, they can offer space for learners where it will be possible to use their experiences. In a grammar exercise book, this may be done through exercises where the learner completes sentences in such a way that the result is true for him or her (e.g. *My _____ didn’t eat _____ but now _____* _____ can result into *My son didn’t eat apples, but now he eats them*, or *My mother didn’t eat cheese but now she eats it*, or anything else), or through any other personalized activities.

1.5.2 Students with SLD

“Most people do not outgrow learning disabilities” (Gerber and Reiff In ERIC Digest 1998), although they usually stop having problems. Some of them because they finish their studies and no longer learn anything. Others because they adopted certain strategies that help them deal with the difficulty. However, when adults start learning a foreign language, the difficulties might re-emerge. Dinklage, who was trying to find out why some of the best Harvard University students have problems in their language classes, pointed out that even students not previously diagnosed as having learning difficulties showed up as having them in the foreign language classroom (Schwarz 1997). The arguments in the present paragraph have shown that even adults can have SLD and it is worth taking this into account when teaching foreign languages. The question is how.

Ideas relevant to the creation of a grammar book will be listed below. However, it should be borne in mind that “as with any aspect of learning for any learning disabled student, no single solution is good for everybody” (ibid.).

Multisensory approach and learning strategies

Leib claims that teachers should not forget that “in some people, one sense is used more than others to learn or recall information”, and should try to stimulate “as many senses as possible” (1991). Multisensory approach is frequently mentioned in connection with learning difficulties. For example, in her article on teaching adults with SLD Lowry proposes to “use multisensory techniques when teaching groups” and to “use color coding whenever possible” (1990). Schwarz (1997) names three areas of multisensory stimulation: visual (using eyes), tactile (using touch), and kinaesthetic (using movement). He does not mention aural stimulation, which seems to be very important to the authors of *Anglický nápadníček (Ideas for English)*. They claim that the more a dyslexic student listens to the spoken language whilst watching the text, the faster he or she learns the language (Hurtová et al. 2006, 5). They also add to the idea of colour coding. It is explained as a tool to help dyslexic people orientate themselves in a text, and, numbering the lines, or covering the text with a transparent colour plastic film are two more tools helping the same purpose (ibid.).

All these suggestions should be mentioned in the preface to any book that tries to meet the needs of people with SLD. Moreover, texts can be numbered by lines, and all exercises should be numbered. Clear layout of the pages seems essential. This can be supported by using colours where feasible. In addition, a really good book for language learners, even

a grammar book, should have a CD with things to listen to (either audio CD, or computer CD/DVD with a lot of listening) enclosed.

The multisensory approach reflects on the fact that each person learns in a different way. By helping students to use the ways that fit them, we help them to learn effectively. This idea is connected with the theory of learning styles. According to Wikipedia, “Learning Style Theory proposes that different people learn in different ways and that it is good to know what your own preferred learning style is” (Wikipedia In Skalová 2007, 19). As Gadbow and DuBois put it, “using activities that represent a variety of learning styles” is one of techniques that help students to cope with a learning disability (In Kerka 1998). “The basic learning styles are the visual learning style, the auditory learning style, and the tactile/kinesthetic learning style” (Skalová 2007, 19). The classification is the same as in multisensory approach. Therefore, it would be vital for the preface with suggestions on foreign language learning to be based on both the practical implications of multisensory approach and the practical implications of the Learning Style Theory. Questionnaires can be inserted to help the students find out what kind of learner they are may also be included.

Concrete and abstract

It is vital to “teach new concepts concretely because it is often easier for LD students to learn the theory after learning its practical applications”, to “make abstract concepts more concrete by ... relating new information to everyday life”, and to “make directions specific, concrete, and understandable” (Lowry 1990). It is easier to understand abstract rules if it is possible to see a model of how it works first. This piece of information supports the idea of inductive grammar teaching (see Chapter 1.3.2).

To relate the rules to everyday life there can be comic pictures and pieces of real life communication in the workbook. The clarity and comprehensibility of directions can be helped by use of examples.

Vocabulary

Schwarz proposes to reduce the vocabulary demand (1997) and Kerka suggests minimizing distractions (1998), which, in the case of a grammar book, may refer to the vocabulary demand, too. However, the higher amount of words the students know, the better they can communicate their ideas. For these reasons, in some exercises only words from beginner and elementary materials are used, whereas in other exercises rich vocabulary is used.

Grammar rules

An effective strategy to cope with grammar rules is to prepare a list of example sentences, one sentence for each rule (Hurtová et al. 2006, 5). The purpose of these sentences is to learn them by heart so that they help the learner create his or her own sentences. Recorded on a tape or CD, they are a perfect way of using the multisensory approach (ibid.). A list like this could be prepared by the author of the grammar book and put at the beginning or the end of the book. In such case, recording the sentences onto the CD goes without saying. Another possibility is to tell students about this strategy in the preface with suggestions on learning languages, and advise them to make the list on their own. In the latter case, the rules are made personal, especially if they are accompanied by miniature drawings made by the student himself or herself.

Reviews

A very important characteristic of a grammar book is the way it reviews the points covered in the previous chapters. “Providing constant review” is, as Schwarz claims, a principle “known to be effective for LD students” (1997). When a book wants to meet the needs of students with SLD, it is vital to include more revision pages than usual. I propose including sections that review just one particular point, sections that include several related points (e.g. present simple together with present continuous before teaching to distinguish them), and sections that include a mixture of relatively unrelated points (they would have in common just the fact that they were dealt with in the several preceding chapters).

2 Practical part

So far, the present thesis has offered theoretical starting points, often with more than one suggestion or solution. Every grammar-book author needs to make his or her own decision about a particular issue. Chapter 2.2 is a summary of my own choices; a few selected example units of a grammar workbook for adult beginners can be found in the subsequent chapters. However, first of all we need to find an answer to the following question: Which grammar points should the grammar book cover?

2.1 Grammar for beginners

This chapter investigates which grammar items are usually taught at the early levels of English (beginner and elementary). Before doing so, it is worth mentioning that what makes a grammar book suitable for beginners is not only the choice of grammar items, but also the way it is segmented into small bits of knowledge (e.g. the forms of *to be* are not introduced all at once in all types of sentences, but segmented into: positive, negative, and question, each practised on its own and then practised together), and the way it is explained and practised. The exercises should always be ordered from the easiest to the most difficult ones.

Harmer wrote: “Luckily there is consensus about what grammar should be taught at what level. ... While there may be variations in the actual order of grammatical items taught ... a glance through the majority of currently available teaching materials will show how strong the consensus is.” (1991, 23) My own findings, as will be shown below, confirms Harmer’s conclusions.

Which grammar points are taught at the early levels of English then? To answer this question, several student’s books and workbooks have been consulted, namely *New Headway Beginner: Workbook with key* by Falla, Soars and Soars (2002), *Reward Starter: Practice Book* by Pye and Greenall (1997), *Lifelines Elementary: Workbook* by Hutchinson (1999), and *Angličtina pro samouky* (Self-study Book of English) by Kollmannová (1997). These were chosen with consideration of what materials adult beginner learners most often use. The following list orders the first thirty grammar items, given in the order in which they usually appear.

- a/an
- to be – am/is/are – singular

- nouns – forming plural
- a/an/-
- pronouns and possessive adjectives – singular
- to be – am/is/are – plural
- pronouns and possessive adjectives - plural
- possessive 's
- this/that/these/those
- prepositions of place – in/on/under
- to have got
- the imperative (both affirmative and negative)
- prepositions of place and movement – in/to
- prepositions of time – in/at
- present simple – negative (don't)
- present simple – question (do)
- present simple – affirmative (all persons)
- adverbs of frequency
- present simple – question and negative (all persons)
- present simple – wh-question
- there is / there are
- modal verbs – can (some books also teach would, must, have to or may)
- past simple (was/were)
- past simple (regular verbs)
- past simple (irregular verbs)
- present continuous
- present continuous – negative and question
- future (present continuous)
- adjectives – superlatives and comparatives
- future (will or going to)

The grammatical items taught in the chosen materials are almost the same, and their order differs only slightly (except *New Headway Beginner* which teaches *have got* much later than all of the other materials). Should the order be completely the same in all of the materials, it might be useful to follow it while creating the grammar workbook. Under these

circumstances, the author need not feel committed to follow any given order but may choose to order the grammar items as they wish, preferably in a way that the user of the grammar workbook easily finds what he or she needs to practise.

Furthermore, the organization can be made clearer by changes of the names of individual chapters. One of the ways to accomplish this is to use numbers instead of some lengthy descriptions (the topic then might be specified in brackets after the title), for example *Present simple 2 (don't)* instead of *Present simple – negative (don't)*. Another option grammar books use sometimes, is to title the chapter with an example of the grammatical structure going first, for example *I don't... (present simple negative)*.

2.2 The organization of the grammar workbook

The workbook is to serve as an additional material to any general English course. It is written in such a way that the learners can work with it at home. Its aims are to introduce grammar items step by step, practise them in many different exercises (accuracy to fluency, both traditional and game-like), and to make the learners feel that they are able to communicate their ideas and that the English grammar is not overwhelming.

2.2.1 Decisions regarding the whole workbook

Materials

The same beginner and elementary materials are going to be used as were used in Chapter 2.1, and several other materials, too. The majority are going to be materials for adults with only several books for children or teenagers.

Names of units

The individual grammatical items will be called with their grammatical name, or with a name used in the sources. In case of grammatical name, example of the structure will follow in brackets, so that even those who do not remember the grammatical names will be able to find what they need. Moreover, it will give the abstract concept a concrete form.

Czech vs. English

Except the portfolio, L1 will not be used at all. Grammar book authors can afford to use English only, as their book just accompanies general English courses. In those courses then, the teacher can explain things the students did not understand when using the grammar book. Moreover, the students should learn to use a dictionary and enlarge their vocabulary consequently. To make things easier for self-study learners using materials written in L1, a list of the most common instructions can be included at the front or at the back of a full-length grammar book.

Vocabulary

Preferably, the same words will be used in the majority of exercises of the grammar workbook as in the elementary sources. However, these do not need to be only the words used in the respective units of the sources, but also words of some of the higher units. In exercises where students work with above their level materials (e.g. BBC news), the vocabulary of the source will be left without changes. The aim of such materials is not only to practise English grammar, but also to expose the students to authentic materials. Students do not need to

understand all the words, but they have a unique chance to relate their knowledge to something real.

Grammar presentation

The usual practice of one page for explanations and one page for exercises will not be followed. Reading a whole page of theory might be tedious. I believe it is a good idea to let the user write and think already during the presentation stage. Therefore, in the present thesis the presentation and the practice will merge a little. A clear and airy layout seems vital.

Grammar practice

All exercises will be numbered or marked with letters to help SLD students orientate in the text. In a full-length grammar book, the interest and orientation can be heightened by the use of colours. In the present workbooks various writing styles are used in their stead. Bold type is used to visually separate the instructions from the exercises.

A revision unit should follow after every several units, consolidating the new grammatical items. Here and there, a revision exercise consolidating one grammar item might be inserted into a unit that practises a different item.

Pictures

A grammar book consisting of text only might look boring. To make it more interesting, pictures or comic pictures can be added. Each unit of the present thesis is, therefore, enlivened by a picture. Most of these pictures are accompanied by an example of a structure taught in that particular unit, so that the eyes of the reader are attracted to it and the explanations are then easier for him or her to internalize. I must apologize here for the quality of some of the pictures used. Their quality is far from professional due to the fact that they are drawn in my own hand.

Key

A key is an indispensable part of any practice book that is intended for self-study. Most of the exercises are accompanied with a straightforward key, freer exercises are accompanied just with suggested answers, and some free exercises are left completely without key as checking free discourse with a key might make the learners pay attention more to the form than to the content and so the practice might result in another accuracy exercise. The present key is written with regard to SLD students, who would easily get lost in a key written in lines, should they work in columns or other alternative shapes in the exercises. Thus the key needs to reflect (at least to some degree) the layout of the actual exercises.

Portfolio

The present thesis contains just an example of a portfolio. It serves recoding progress and success of learners who have just gone through the first units of the workbook. The usefulness of the portfolio is explained to the learners at its beginning. It might be better to insert the portfolio after a revision unit than to have all the portfolios at the back of the book, where they could easily escape the learners' notice.

The form of the portfolio was inspired by *Upstream Elementary* (Evans and Dooley 2005) and by *Deníček: Soubor podpůrných materiálů k učebnici Chit Chat 1* (Little Journal: A Collection of Support Materials to Chit Chat 1) by Hartingerová, et al. (2005). The former source is all in English, the latter is in Czech. I assume that Czech is more appropriate for the target group, especially when they are talking about learning grammar. A practical feature of both materials is that they give the learner opportunities to remember the piece of knowledge in discussion by reading, writing or working with a practical example of it.

2.2.2 Decisions regarding individual units

Unit 1

The present unit deals with the two different forms of the indefinite article. The presentation begins with a dialogue between a teacher and a student, where the student gets the article wrong. The users of the workbook learn why this was wrong in the following exercise. The rule is to be induced from examples in a table. The teacher can advise the students to circle the article and the first letter in the pronunciation with the same colour. This can help the learners to make the rule even easier to recognize. The students do not need to formulate the rule on their own. They just complete sentences.

Most of the exercises in this unit are awareness-raising and accuracy oriented. Some of them are traditional (exercises 4 and 8), some of them are more game-like (exercises 5-7). The last part of exercise No. 6 is a guided meaningful practice of the parallel-writing type (see Chapter 1.4). The exercise was inspired by *Timesaver Grammar Activities* (Degan-Veness 2001, 58). The last exercise of the unit uses an authentic material, namely a BBC article on back pain. The article was chosen so that many examples of the target grammar are present and the topic is relevant to adult learners at the same time.

Other sources used for writing this unit were *New Headway Beginner: Workbook with key* by Falla, Soars and Soars (2002), *New Headway Elementary: Workbook with key* by Soars, Soars and Wheeldon (2006), *Lifelines Elementary: Workbook* by Hutchinson (1999),

Cutting Edge: Workbook by Moor and Cunningham (2001), and *Angličtina pro samouky* (Self-study Book of English) by Kollmannová (1997).

Unit 2

The second Unit focuses on forming plurals of nouns. A deductive approach seems more appropriate for this item than an inductive one, as the many exceptions make the rule difficult to identify and formulate. The presentation is combined with practice so that the result is livelier. The practice in the presentation part of the unit consists only of awareness raising exercises that are very easy and therefore do not need to be accompanied with a key.

Exercise No. 6 is to serve as a revision of what irregular forms students know from their general English course. The pronunciation of the words is supplied as students often mispronounce them. Exercise No. 7 is an accuracy-oriented exercise, which – besides grammar – also practises students' knowledge of numbers. The following exercise is a difficult awareness raising exercise but on the other hand it is fun. Although the form of the exercise would be more appropriate for small children, I decided to use it because so far all the exercises of the unit have been traditional and I felt that it needs some refreshment. It also consolidates the usage of indefinite articles taught in Unit 1. Exercise No. 9 is a free composition based on pictures. Although the learners are not expected here to use whole sentences, the example indicates that the learners use adjectives to describe the pictures. The instruction to the exercise tells the students to compose their answers both orally and in writing. This is to help them develop also their speaking skills. The answers in the key are only suggested answers, not the only correct solution. Exercise No. 10 is a two-in-one game. It practises singular and plural forms of several words. The eleventh exercise is a creative writing at the level of words. The card on the left is a guided meaningful practice, whereas the card on the right represents a freer practice. There is no key for the last two exercises. Some of the words of Unit 1 reappear in this unit to reinforce the students' knowledge of them.

The major sources for writing this unit were *Grammar Practice Activities: A practical guide for teachers* by Ur (1988), *Reward Elementary: Student's Book* by Greenall (1997), *New Headway Elementary: Student's Book* by Soars and Soars (2006), *New Headway Elementary: Workbook with key* by Soars, Soars and Wheeldon (2006), *Lifelines Elementary: Workbook* by Hutchinson (1999), and *Angličtina pro samouky* (Self-study Book of English) by Kollmannová (1997).

Unit 3

Affirmative forms of the verb *to be* are introduced in this Unit, both singular and plural. The rules are introduced through a combination of guided discovery (in exercise No.1) and deductive approach (in exercise No.2).

The discovery technique used in the first exercise is inspired by Hutchinson, who tries to introduce grammar analytically in all of his books, for example in *New Hotline Starter* (1998). The same sentences are used in the exercise as in the introductory picture. This helps the learner to relate the picture to the grammar item and prevents puzzlement about what sentences to read. Some puzzlement might arise about what to fill in into the table. The students are helped with this by the forms of the verb *to be* being written in bold print in the sentences. Moreover, a completed table is included in the key for students who need to be reassured that their solution is the right one. Short forms are treated separately in exercise No. 2. The exercise combines grammar presentation with awareness-raising grammar practice and I assume students will find this very easy, almost tedious. Therefore, a key to this exercise is not included in the workbook.

Exercise No.3 is a fill-in the gap exercise with a limited choice of forms. The students are immediately confronted with sentences with names in the place of pronouns. Exercise No.4 is a creative awareness-raising activity. Students write their own sentences using a choice of words from a table. A key is not included for this exercise. The following exercise is a typical fill-in the gap exercise but the forms to choose from are not indicated. Exercise No. 6 is traditional word order exercise. Exercises 7 and 8 are oral free discourse exercises. Learners are not told what structures to use. The students will use exactly those structures they feel confident about, and after they gain even more confidence, they will probably try to use more complicated structures. A similar idea is present in the following exercise. This is a free sentence composition based on four pictures. Here the students are given an opportunity to learn some more complicated structures when consulting the key with suggested answers. Exercise No. 10 is oral practice again, but this time it is more game-like and an example structure is shown. The last exercise is an awareness-raising game-like exercise. It looks easy, but it is not. The learners will need to re-think some of their choices to complete the exercise successfully.

The major sources used for writing this unit were *Lifelines Elementary: Workbook* (Hutchinson 1999), *Reward Starter: Practice Book* (Pye and Greenall 1997), *New Headway Beginner: Workbook with key* (Falla, Soars and Soars 2002), and *Angličtina pro samouky* (Self-study Book of English) by Kollmannová (1997).

Unit 4

The fourth unit of the present thesis is devoted to pronouns and possessive adjectives. The presentation of this topic is treated in a very similar way to Unit 3. This means that an inductive approach was chosen and the discovery is realized with the aid of a grammar chart. It consists of just one exercise accompanied with a key. The exercise might sound a bit stilted. The reason for this is that all pronouns as well as possessive adjectives need to be there. Moreover, I believe that it is student friendly when the explanations manage to relate to the picture used in the unit.

The rest of the unit deals with practice. Exercises 2-3 and 5-7 are awareness-raising and accuracy-oriented; exercises 4 and 8-12 are freer.

The first two exercises practise limited choice of forms. The next exercise is a free writing activity similar to growing stories. Students are given first two sentences of a paragraph about an imaginary man. They are told to use four chosen words in their writing. Exercise No. 5 is difficult but students need this kind of practice as this type of exercise appears in many of the consulted materials. The following exercise was taken from Falla and Soars (2002, 13) and adapted to practise the respective grammar item more intensively than in the source. In the original version, students are to complete the text with many different words. Here the blanks are spread so that they are all just pronouns and possessive adjectives. Exercise No. 7 is an imaginative activity by Kollmannová (1997, 5). It represents a list of people who attended a party. It was slightly modified, so that it is not boring for students who learn English from Kollmannová's textbook.

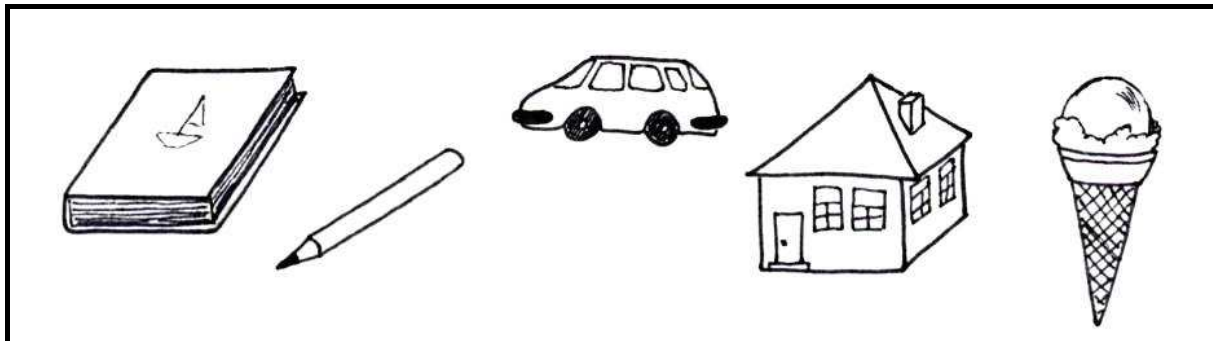
Exercise No. 8 is a free sentence composition based on information about an imaginary person, Sarah Green. Exercise No. 9 is a personalized version of the same exercise. The following two exercises are meaningful oral activities. The first of them is guided (examples of the language are shown) and the second one is completely free. There is no key for exercises 9-11. The last exercise is a free writing exercise taken from Ur (1988, 165). The pictures are taken from Ur, too (ibid., 65). It is difficult, as the learners need to limit their ideas to the structures they know. However, they might know more than has been covered in the grammar workbook. Suggested answers can be found in the key.

Besides Ur, the sources used for writing this unit were *Reward Elementary: Student's Book* by Greenall (1997), *Reward Starter: Practice Book* by Pye and Greenall (1997), *New Headway Elementary: Student's Book* by Soars and Soars (2006), *New Headway Beginner: Workbook with key* by Falla, Soars and John Soars (2002), and *Angličtina pro samouky* (Self-study Book of English) by Kollmannová (1997).

2.3 The grammar workbook

2.3.1 Unit 1 – a/an

1 Read the dialogue.



Teacher: What is in the picture, Peter?

Student: A book, a pencil, a car, a house, and a ice-cream.

Teacher: AN ice-cream!

Student: An ice-cream?

Teacher: Yes, an ice-cream.

2 Look at the table and read the words. What is the rule?

spelling	pronunciation
an ice-cream	[əˈaɪskriːm]
a book	[bʊk]
an umbrella	[ʌmˈbrelə]
an apple	[ˈæpl]
a teacher	[ˈtiːtʃə]
a uniform	[ˈjuːnɪfɔːrm]
a sandwich	[ˈsænwɪtʃ]

3 Write a/an to form the rule.

_____ → We pronounce the following word with a vowel at the beginning.

(*ə, æ, e, ʌ, ɪ, ai, ei*, etc.)

_____ → We pronounce the following word with a consonant at the beginning.

(*b, d, f, j, m, s, t, v*, etc.)

4 Use the rule to choose the correct alternative.

1) This is _____.

a) a pencil

b) an pencil

2) He is _____.

a) a actor

b) an actor

3) She is _____.

a) a good doctor

b) an good doctor

4) Jack is _____.

a) a old man

b) an old man

5 Write the words onto the correct lines. (Pište slova na správné řádky.)

actor [ˈæktɹ], man [mæn], woman [ˈwʊmɪn], address [ˈdres], American [ˈmerɪkən]

a

an

6 Complete the shopping lists with *a/an*. Then write your own shopping list.

Wendy's shopping list

_____ chocolate
 cake
 _____ apple juice
 _____ Madonna CD
 _____ pink T-shirt
 _____ school
 uniform

Nick's shopping list

_____ chicken burger
 _____ orange juice
 _____ Offspring CD
 _____ Arsenal
 Football Club T-shirt

Your shopping list

7 Match the grey rectangles to the correct circle.

A

AN

English lesson

green apple

good actor

architect

ice-cream

e-mail

sales manager

old ink pen

8 Complete the BBC news on back pain with a/an. All you need to know is the pronunciation of the words after the blanks.

Back pain

Back pain is one of the most common ailments in the UK.

It is thought more than 17 million Britons suffer from the problem, and the Health and Safety Executive estimates that it is responsible for nearly 5 million lost working days a year.

How is the back made up?

The major feature is the spine. This is ____ highly complex and delicate structure which is made up of 33 small bones called vertebrae. In between each vertebra is ____ disc which acts as ____ shock absorber, and stops the bones rubbing together. The discs are made up of ____ jelly like substance, which is protected by ____ tough, fibrous outer casing. The spine is supported by specialised back muscles, and ____ array of ligaments, nerves and tendons.

Why is back pain on the increase?

Experts believe that ____ major factor is the modern tendency to lead ____ sedentary lifestyle, both at work and home. Spending long stretches of time sitting in one position - often with the back not properly supported - is not good for the spine. The reliance on comfy soft furnishing may seem appealing - but often it encourages us to adopt ____ poor posture. Back pain is much less common in places such as India, where many more people are used to sitting on the floor, which is thought to allow the back muscles to find their own natural position.

How can you minimise the risk?

The spine is naturally curved into ____ S shape. The best way to keep it healthy is to try to maintain this shape as much as possible. This is particularly important when performing tasks, such as lifting, that carry ____ increased risk of injury. Strengthening the back muscles, keeping fit by taking regular exercise, and maintaining ____ healthy weight can all help to minimise the risk of back pain. It is also important to have ____ mattress that properly supports the body while you are asleep. If you do have ____ bad back probably the worst thing you can do is take to your bed. Experts believe that it is best to stay as active as you possibly can.

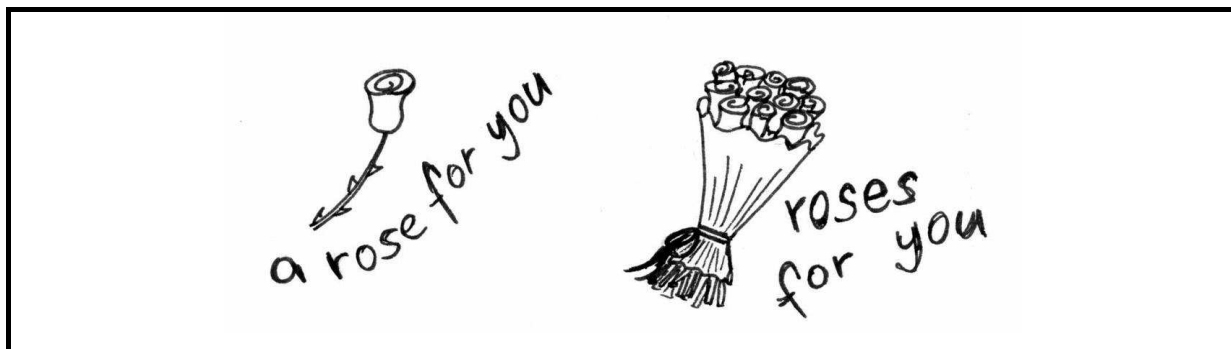
Could there be another explanation for back pain?

Some lumbar and lower spinal pain is caused by patients having one leg longer than the other. This puts the pelvis out of alignment causing pain, which without correction leads to long term compensatory problems such as back pain. In this case it might be wise to consult ____ podiatrist who will measure the patient's limbs and if required provide either ____ orthoses - ____ orthopedic appliance used to support, align, prevent, or correct deformities - or arrange to modify the patients shoe to correct the difference.

Source: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/medical_notes/4722017.stm

Note: The text was shortened to fit the page (several paragraphs were left out).

2.3.2 Unit 2 – plurals of nouns (car/cars)



1 Add –s to form plurals.

Example: a rose – roses a key – keys a teacher – teachers

(Notice there is no *a/an* with the plurals.)

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1) an actor – _____ | 4) an apple – _____ |
| 2) a bag – _____ | 5) a pencil – _____ |
| 3) a book – _____ | 6) a message – _____ |

2 Try to say these sounds. Which are easier?

-s [s]	ss	ʔs	ʔs	kss
-es [ɪz]	sʔz	ʔʔz	ʔʔz	ksʔz

3 Add –es to form plurals.

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1) a watch – _____ | 4) a box – _____ |
| 2) a glass – _____ | 5) a bus – _____ |
| 3) a wish – _____ | 6) a class – _____ |

4 Write –s/ –es.

- | | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| a) two ice-cream _____ | c) four sandwich _____ | e) six apple _____ |
| b) three book _____ | d) five e-mail _____ | f) seven watch _____ |

5 Final –y (but not final –ay, –ey, –oy, –uy) changes into –ies.

- | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| a baby – babies | a dictionary – _____ | a family – _____ |
| a party – parties | a country – _____ | a lady – _____ |

6 Write irregular plurals. Read the pronunciation.

a man – _____ [mæn – men] a woman – _____ [wʊmən –
a child – _____ [tʃaɪld – wʊmən]
[tʃɪldrən] a person – _____ [pɜːnsən –
piːpl]

7 Write numbers and the plural forms.

a) a car (2) two cars f) a pen (8) _____
b) a game (6) six games g) a person (12) _____
c) a baby (3) _____ h) an address (2) _____
d) a rose (10) _____ i) a friend (5) _____
e) a watch (4) _____ j) a day (7) _____

8 Colour two correct alternatives in each line.

six coutries	a countries	a country	three countrys
an umbrella	an umbrellas	two umbrellas	six umbrellases
two uniformes	six uniforms	a uniform	an uniform
one sandwiches	one sandwich	three sandwichs	three sandwiches
a e-mail	two e-mails	an e-mail	eight e-mailes
six orangees	a orangees	an orange	five oranges

9 What is in the pictures? Say and write.



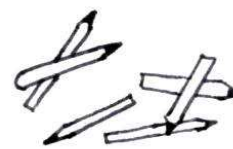
a ...a short pencil.....



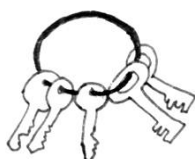
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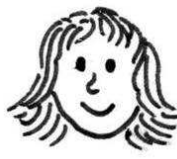
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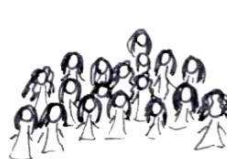
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e



f



g



h

10 Work with a partner or partners.

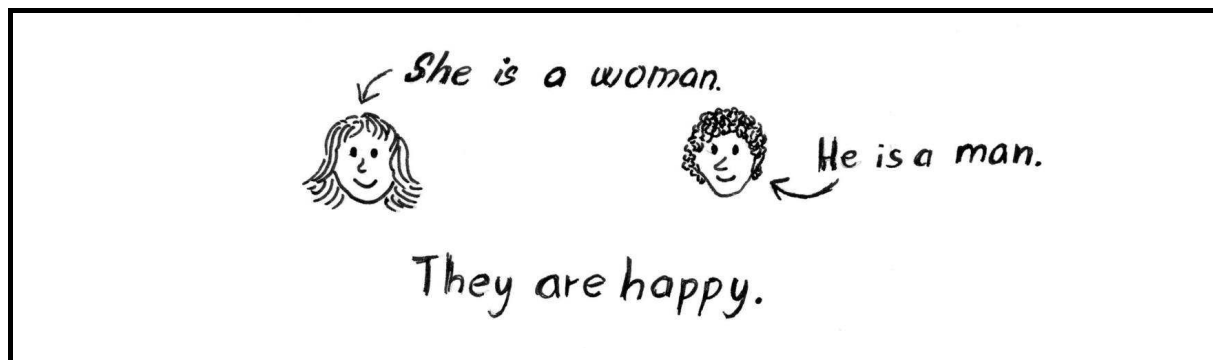
- a) Cut the cards from Appendix 1 and play dominoes.
- b) Cut the cards in halves and play pelmanism (find a pair / memory game).

11 Look around you. What do you see? How many? Complete the lists. Use a dictionary.

one	_____
two	_____
two	_____
three	_____
four	_____
five	_____

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

2.3.3 Unit 3 – forms of to be (am/is/are)



1 Read the sentences. Then complete the table.

She **is** a woman.

He **is** a man.

They **are** happy.

You **are** here now.

We **are** old.

I **am** a student.

I	a woman. a man. a student. happy. here now. old.
He	
She		
It		
You	
We		
They		

2 We often use short forms in English.

I'm from Britain. = I **am** from Britain.

She's from the Czech Republic. = She **is** from the Czech Republic.

We're from France. = We **are** from France.

I'm Peter. =

He's a student. =

It's a nice house. =

They're Italian. =

3 Write *am/are*.

a) I _____ happy.

b) We _____ from Germany.

c) Jack and Jill _____ from Britain.

d) Jim and I _____ from the USA.

4 Use the table to write sentences. How many different sentences can you write in just thirty seconds? Set a countdown and try.

I	am 'm	an actor. a manager.
He She It	is 's	young. from Spain. Spanish. American.
You We They	are 're	in Prague. here.

You're young.

5 Write the correct form.

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| a) Mary _____ happy. | e) Mary and Sue _____ American. |
| b) She _____ from the USA. | f) They _____ doctors. |
| c) John _____ in Paris. | g) You _____ an architect. |
| d) I _____ a waiter. | h) Rachel _____ a teacher. |

6 Write the words in the correct order.

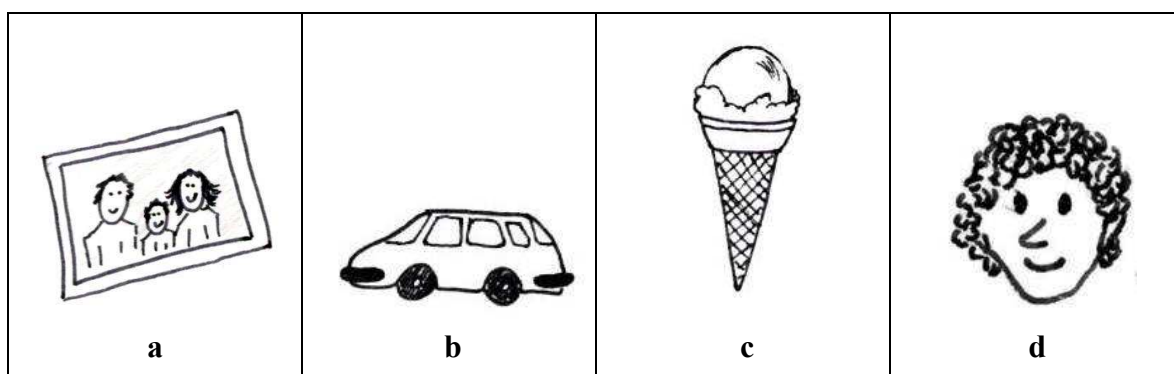
- a) an / actor / is / she
- b) are / they / London / from
- c) am / the / from / Czech republic / I
- d) Mary / Peter / Paris / are / in / and
- e) student / Katrin / a / is
- f) friends / are / we
- g) teacher / my / from / is / London
- h) taxi / driver / John / a / is /

7 Look at Appendix 2. Colour cards 5-8. What is in the pictures? Try to describe the pictures in different ways.

8 Make similar cards. What is in the pictures?

You can draw for example: *a tree or trees, a glass or glasses, a bed or beds.*

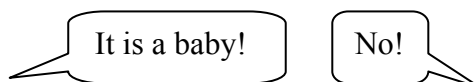
9 What is in the pictures? Write sentences.



- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)

10 Talk with a partner or partners. Look at cards 1-4 in Appendix 2. What is in the pictures?

- a) Use: sad, happy, small, big.
- b) Don't show your card to your partner. Let him or her guess.



- c) Play with cards from exercise 7 and 8.

11 Match.

This is

good books.

She is

a famous actor.

He is

an exercise.

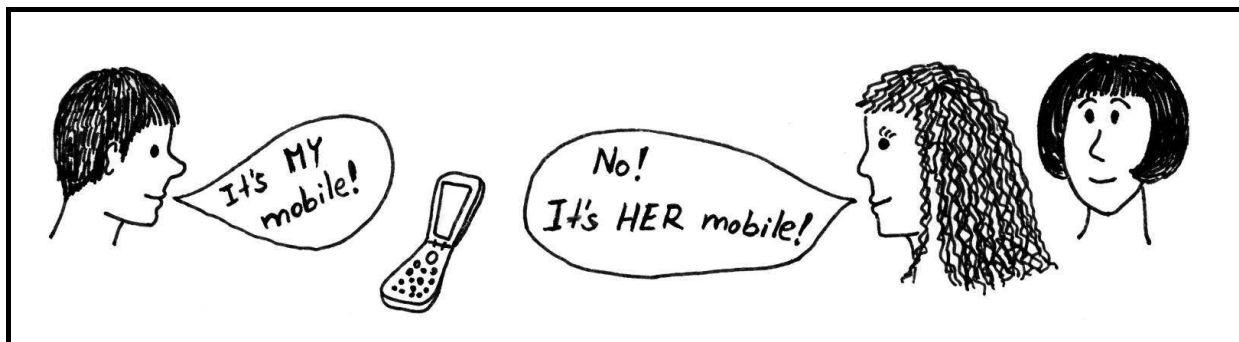
Tom and Gwyneth are

famous actors.

These are

an elegant woman.

2.3.4 Unit 4 – possessive adjectives (my, your, her ...)



1 Read the sentences and complete the table.

I am John. This is **my** mobile.

It is new. **Its** colour is white.

You are Kate. **Your** mobile is black.

We are friends. Helen is **our** friend, too.

She is a happy woman. **Her** husband is a happy man.

They are happy. **Their** son is happy, too.

He is 3. **His** name is Sam.

Pronouns	Possessive adjectives
I	<i>my</i>
you	
we	
they	
he	
she	
it	

2 Write *she/her*.

Mandy is an architect. _____'s 26 and _____'s married. _____ husband is thirty-two and _____ son is one. Mandy likes flowers. _____ favourite flowers are roses.

3 Write *his/her/they/their*.

Paul is an actor. He likes _____ job. _____ wife, María, is a shop assistant. She also likes _____ job. _____ are both 40. _____ are from Brazil. _____ daughter is in the USA now.

4 Read about David. Continue. Use: *wife, sons, clever, busy*.

David is an old man. He is 60 and he lives in Dublin with his family...

5 Choose the correct form.

- a) *Their/They* are from Italy.
 b) *Her/She* 's name's Sally.
 c) *His/He* 's from the USA.
 d) *His/He* 's teacher is in Russia.
 e) Where are *you/your* from?
 f) What's *she/her* name?
 g) Is *you/your* teacher good?
 h) Rachel is *I/my* teacher.

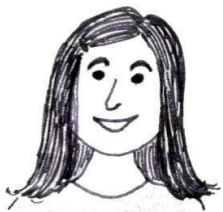
6 Complete the conversations.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1 <i>Andy</i> Hello. _____ name's Andy.
 _____ What's _____ name?
 <i>Suzi</i> _____ name's Suzi.
 <i>Andy</i> Where are _____ from,
 Suzi?
 <i>Suzi</i> I'm from Hamburg, in
 Germany. And _____?
 Where are _____ from?
 <i>Andy</i> _____'m from Boston.</p> | <p>2 <i>Tom</i> Hello, Andy! How are _____?
 <i>Andy</i> Very well, thanks. And
 _____?
 <i>Tom</i> _____'m fine, thanks.
 Who's that girl over there?
 <i>Andy</i> _____'s my new friend.
 _____ name's Suzi.
 <i>Tom</i> Where's _____ from?
 <i>Andy</i> _____'s from Germany.</p> |
|---|--|

7 Who was at the party?

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ✓ we and _____ three children | ✓ we and _____ neighbours |
| ✓ Miss Brown and _____ brother | ✓ Paul and _____ wife |
| ✓ Jane and _____ friend Sarah | ✓ four students and _____ teacher |
| ✓ Mr and Mrs Hill and _____ daughter | ✓ a French woman with _____ husband |
| ✓ Peter and _____ friend Andy | ✓ you and _____ sister Kate |

8 Look at the table. Write sentences about Sarah.

	Name: Sarah Green
	Country: the USA
	Age: 29
	Job: nurse
	Family: father – 61, architect mother – 54, teacher brother – 27, actor

9 Fill in the table about you. Then write sentences.

Name:
Country:
Age:
Job:
Family:

.....

.....

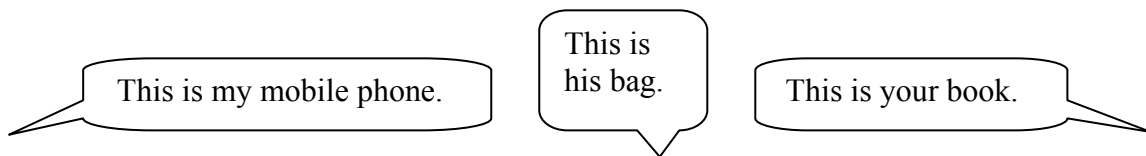
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.....

.....

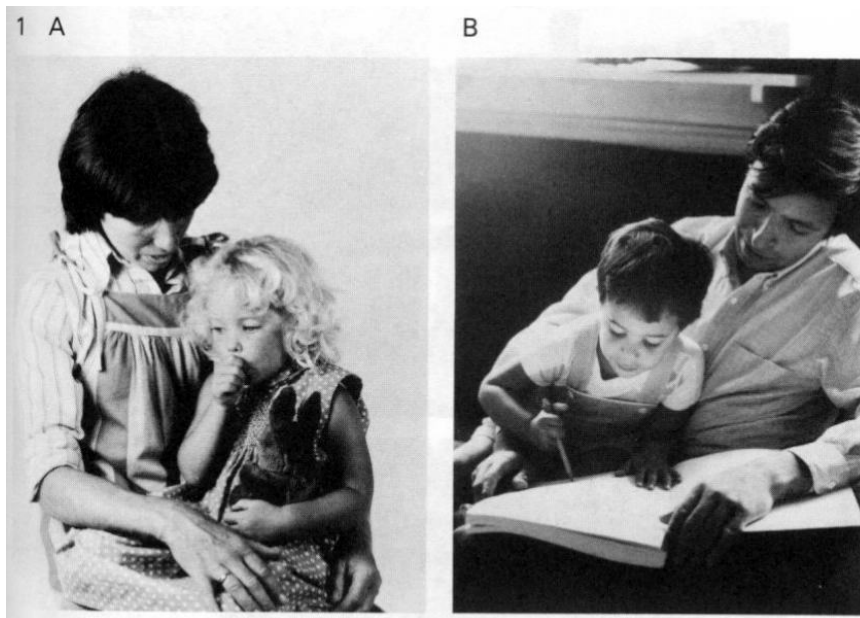
.....

10 Talk with a partner or partners. Put your pens, pencils, books, mobile phones, etc. on the table.



11 Take a photograph of your family. Talk about them. Say as much information as possible.

12 Compare the pictures. Write sentences.



The girl in picture A is blonde, but ...

.....

.....

.....

.....

2.4 Portfolio

Toto portfolio slouží k zaznamenávání Vašich úspěchů a pokroků při zvládání jednotlivých gramatických jevů. Také Vám pomůže si uvědomit, jaké strategie při učení používáte.

Portfolio k lekcím 1-4

1 Rozumím většině instrukcí ke cvičením. **ANO** **NE**

2 Když nějaké slovíčko ze zadání neznám, najdu si ho ve slovníčku. **ANO** **NE**

3 Víím, podle čeho se určuje, zda napíšeme „a” nebo „an”. **ANO** **NE**

Zakroužkujte správnou odpověď: a ice-cream – an ice cream.

4 Chápu, jak se v angličtině tvoří množné číslo. **ANO** **NE**

Sem si napište několik příkladů: _____

5 Víím, kdy použijeme „am”, kdy „is” a kdy „are”. **ANO** **NE**

Zakroužkujte správnou odpověď: He *am/is/are* a boy.

I *am/is/are* clever.

You *am/is/are* from Pakistan.

6 Znáím přivlastňovací zájmena (possesive adjectives). **ANO** **NE**

Sem si napište několik příkladů: _____

7 Umím mluvit o obrázcích použitých v lekcích 1-4. **ANO** **NE**

8 Cvičení jsem vyplňoval(a) **a) všechna cvičení lekce v jeden den.**
b) postupně – každý den několik cvičení.

9 V budoucnu se chci ještě vrátit k těmto lekcím a cvičením: _____

2.5 Key to the grammar workbook

Unit 1 – a/an

Exercise 3

AN → We pronounce the following word with a vowel at the beginning.

A → We pronounce the following word with a consonant at the beginning.

Exercise 4

1a, 2b, 3a, 4b

Exercise 5

a – man, woman

an – actor, address, American

Exercise 6

Wendy's shopping list

__a__ chocolate
cake
__an__ apple juice
__a__ Madonna CD
__a__ pink T-shirt
__a__ school
uniform

Nick's shopping list

__a__ chicken burger
__an__ orange juice
__an__ Offspring CD
__an__ Arsenal
Football Club T-shirt

Exercise 7

a – green apple, good actor, sales manager

an – English lesson, architect, ice-cream, e-mail, old ink pen

Exercise 8

Back pain

Back pain is one of the most common ailments in the UK.

It is thought more than 17 million Britons suffer from the problem, and the Health and Safety Executive estimates that it is responsible for nearly 5 million lost working days a year.

How is the back made up?

The major feature is the spine. This is a highly complex and delicate structure which is made up of 33 small bones called vertebrae. In between each vertebra is a disc which acts as a shock absorber, and stops the bones rubbing together. The discs are made up of a jelly like substance, which is protected by a tough, fibrous outer casing. The spine is supported by specialised back muscles, and an array of ligaments, nerves and tendons.

Why is back pain on the increase?

Experts believe that a major factor is the modern tendency to lead a sedentary lifestyle, both at work and home. Spending long stretches of time sitting in one position - often with the back not properly supported - is not good for the spine. The reliance on comfy soft furnishing may seem appealing - but often it encourages us to adopt a poor posture. Back pain is much less common in places such as India, where many more people are used to sitting on the floor, which is thought to allow the back muscles to find their own natural position.

How can you minimise the risk?

The spine is naturally curved into an S shape. The best way to keep it healthy is to try to maintain this shape as much as possible. This is particularly important when performing tasks, such as lifting, that carry an increased risk of injury. Strengthening the back muscles, keeping fit by taking regular exercise, and maintaining a healthy weight can all help to minimise the risk of back pain. It is also important to have a mattress that properly supports the body while you are asleep. If you do have a bad back probably the worst thing you can do is take to your bed. Experts believe that it is best to stay as active as you possibly can.

Could there be another explanation for back pain?

Some lumbar and lower spinal pain is caused by patients having one leg longer than the other. This puts the pelvis out of alignment causing pain, which without correction leads to long term compensatory problems such as back pain. In this case it might be wise to consult a podiatrist who will measure the patient's limbs and if required provide either an orthoses - an orthopedic appliance used to support, align, prevent, or correct deformities - or arrange to modify the patients shoe to correct the difference.

Unit 2 – plurals of nouns (car/cars)

Exercise 6

a man – men

a woman – women

a child – children

a person – people

Exercise 7

a) two cars

f) eight pens

b) six games

g) twelve people

c) three babies

h) two addresses

d) ten roses

i) five friends

e) four watches

j) seven days

Exercise 8

six coutries	a countries	a country	three countrys
an umbrella	an umbrellas	two umbrellas	six umbrellases
two uniformes	six uniforms	a uniform	an uniform
one sandwiches	one sandwich	three sandwichs	three sandwiches
a e-mail	two e-mails	an e-mail	eight e-mailles
six orangees	a orangees	an orange	five oranges

Exercise 9 – suggested answers

b) an orange / a red orange / a big orange / a tasty orange / a juicy orange

c) a key / a golden key / a small key / a rusty key

d) pencils / colouring pencils / strange pencils / six pencils / six cheap pencils

e) keys / five keys / five important keys / new keys / old keys

f) a woman / a happy woman / a young woman / a blond woman

g) women / dark-haired women / eighteen women

h) men / eleven men / people / eleven strange people

Unit 3 – forms of to be (am/is/are)

Exercise 1

I	am	a woman. a man. a student. happy. here now. old.
He She It	is	
You We They	are	

Exercise 3

a) am b) are c) are d) are

Exercise 5

- a) Mary is happy.
b) She is from the USA.
c) John is in Paris.
d) I am a waiter.
e) Mary and Sue are American.
f) They are doctors.
g) You are an architect.
h) Rachel is a teacher.

Exercise 6

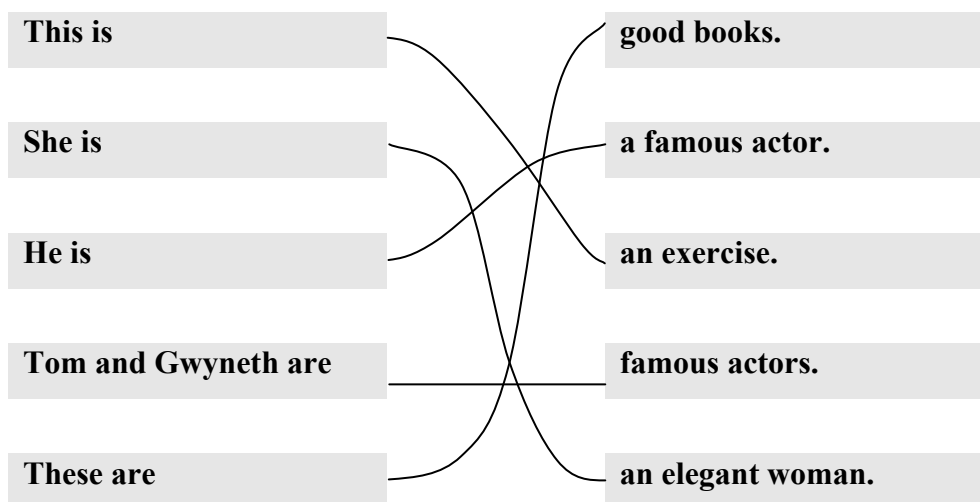
- a) She is an actor.
b) They are from London.
c) I am from the Czech Republic.
d) Mary and Peter are in Paris.
e) Katrin is a student.
f) We are friends.
g) My teacher is from London.
h) John is a taxi driver.

Exercise 9 – suggested answers

- a) It's a photograph. / This is a photograph. / There is a photograph in the picture. / There is a family in the photograph. / It's a photograph of a family. / The photograph is nice.
b) It's a car. / It's an old car. / This is a car. / There is a car in the picture. / There is a good car in the picture. / The car is big
c) It's an ice-cream. / It's a vanilla ice-cream. / This is a tasty ice-cream. / There is an ice-cream in picture C. / In picture C there is an ice-cream. / The ice-cream is cold.

d) It's a boy. / It's a young man. / This is a head. / There is a boy in the picture. / In picture D there is a young man. / The man is young.

Exercise 11



Unit 4 – possessive adjectives

Exercise 1

I – my

you – your

we – our

they – their

he – his

she – her

it – its

Exercise 2

Mandy is an architect. **She's** 26 and **she's** married. **Her** husband is thirty-two and **her** son is one. Mandy likes flowers. **Her** favourite flowers are roses.

Exercise 3

Paul is an actor. He likes **his** job. **His** wife, María, is a shop assistant. She also likes **her** job. **They** are both 40. **They** are from Brazil. **Their** daughter is in the USA now.

Exercise 5

a) *Their/They* are from Italy.

b) *Her/She's* name's Sally.

c) *His/He's* from the USA.

d) *His/He's* teacher is in Russia.

e) Where are *you/your* from?

f) What's *she/her* name?

g) Is *you/your* teacher good?

h) Rachel is *I/my* teacher.

Exercise 6

1	<i>Andy</i> Hello. My name's Andy. What's your name? <i>Suzi</i> My name's Suzi. <i>Andy</i> Where are you from, Suzi? <i>Suzi</i> I'm from Hamburg, in Germany. And you ? Where are you from? <i>Andy</i> I'm from Boston.	2	<i>Tom</i> Hello, Andy! How are you ? <i>Andy</i> Very well, thanks. And you ? <i>Tom</i> I'm fine, thanks. Who's that girl over there? <i>Andy</i> She/That 's my new friend. Her name's Suzi. <i>Tom</i> Where's she from? <i>Andy</i> She 's from Germany.
----------	--	----------	--

Exercise 7

- | | |
|---|--|
| ✓ we and our three children | ✓ we and our neighbours |
| ✓ Miss Brown and her brother | ✓ Paul and his wife |
| ✓ Jane and her friend Sarah | ✓ four students and their teacher |
| ✓ Mr and Mrs Hill and their daughter | ✓ a French woman with her husband |
| ✓ Peter and his friend Andy | ✓ you and your sister Kate |

Exercise 8

Her name is Sarah Green. She is from the USA. She is 29. She is a nurse.

Her father is 61. He's an architect. Her mother is 54. She's a teacher.

Her brother is 27. He's an actor.

Exercise 12 – suggested answers

The girl in picture A is blonde, but the boy in picture B is dark-haired.

The girl in picture A is with her mother and her toy.

The boy in picture B is with his father and his book.

In picture A there is a mother with her daughter.

In picture B there is a father with his son.

The mother is dark-haired. The father is dark-haired, too.

The child in picture B is nice, and the child in picture A is pretty.

The child in picture A is cute, and the child in picture B is clever.

Conclusion

The aim of the present thesis is to learn how to create grammar practice materials for beginner and elementary learners who find English difficult and are willing to spend some time practising it even out of their English classes.

The theoretical part of the thesis investigates the ways to teach grammar and the needs of adults. First of all, I have searched for and presented a definition of grammar. Then I have described changes in the popularity of grammar teaching, and collected interesting and important ideas from various methods and approaches. Only ideas that were somehow connected with grammar teaching were chosen. Next I have summarized ways to present and practise grammar in a self-study material. The last chapter of the theory deals with adults and their characteristics as learners. A subchapter on learners with specific learning difficulties has been included as the aim of the thesis is to help adults who find English difficult.

The practical part of the thesis represents a sample material of a self-study grammar book that could be created one day. It tries to use the knowledge gained in the theoretical part. It consists of four example units with a key to most of the exercises, and a portfolio to the presented grammar units.

All the collected data and practical examples are just a beginning. A first step made on a long journey leading to a full-length grammar book, preferably colourful, and accompanied with a CD. A grammar-book that would help the lost learners find their way through the many traps of English grammar, give them opportunities to speak and read in English, and allow them to experience success. I hope that the first step I have made helps some author or authors one day, and that the grammar book I envision will emerge.

Resumé

Tato práce se zaměřuje na výuku gramatiky prostřednictvím domácí cvičebnice. Cílem práce je nabídnout dospělým lidem, kteří jsou v angličtině úplnými či falešnými začátečníky, dobře uspořádané materiály, které by – kromě tradičních cvičení – obsahovaly také zajímavější a komunikativnější cvičení.

Teoretická část zkoumá různá fakta a názory spojené s výukou gramatiky a výukou dospělých. Zahrnuta je i podkapitola nabízející krátký pohled do oblasti výuky studentů se specifickými poruchami učení. Praktická část obsahuje seznam gramatických jevů, které se začátečníci obvykle učí, a dále nabízí několik gramatických lekcí vytvořených tak, aby vyhovovaly potřebám těchto začátečníků. Každá lekce je doplněna komentářem a klíčem. Práce navíc obsahuje portfolio shrnující látku těchto lekcí.

Summary

The present thesis focuses on teaching grammar through self-study materials. The aim of the thesis is to provide beginner and elementary adult learners of English with well-structured materials that would – besides traditional exercises – also contain more interesting, and more communicative exercises.

The theoretical part explores various facts and ideas connected with grammar teaching and teaching adults; a subchapter offering a brief insight into teaching students with specific learning difficulties is included. The practical part lists grammar points usually taught to the target group and offers a few grammar units created to meet their needs. Each unit is accompanied with a commentary and a key. A portfolio to the present units is included.











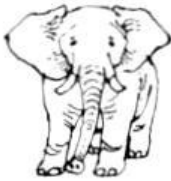
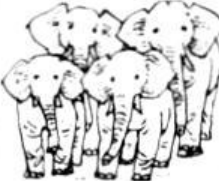
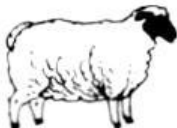

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Dominoes with plurals

	(some) oranges		a man
	(some) men		a child
	(some) children		a woman
	(some) women		a foot
	(some) feet		an elephant
	(some) elephants		a sheep
	(some) sheep		an orange

Adapted from Ur (1988, 87)

Appendix 2 – Practice cards

1



2



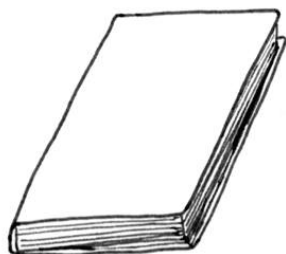
3



4



5



6



7



8

