

МОВНА ШКОЛА

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LEARNING FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN BEREHOVE: LANGUAGE SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

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Abstract. To know English today is absolutely necessary for every educated person. An essential place in teaching foreign languages is occupied by language schools. They are also becoming more and more popular in Transcarpathia, including Berehove. The main purpose of the present article is to investigate the language school in Berehove to find out the learners' and the teachers' opinion about the "START Language Centre". Findings reveal that students of the language centre are more motivated to learn foreign languages than children in ordinary state-supported schools. In addition, results prove that teachers have excellent opportunities to pursue professional development.

Key words: foreign language learning in Transcarpathia, language schools, "START" Language Centre, motivation.

Барань К. А., Густі І. І. Закарпатський угорський інститут ім. Ференца Ракоці ІІ., Берегове Вивчення іноземних мов у Берегові: досвід однієї мовної школи

Анотація. Вступ. У сучасному світі англійська мова стала найважливішою мовою в політиці, науці, торгівлі та культурних контактах. Понад 300 мільйонів людей розмовляють англійською як рідною. Сьогодні абсолютно кожній освіченій людині необхідно знати англійську мову. Важливе місце у вивченні іноземних мов займають мовні школи. У сучасному суспільстві створено мовні школи та мовні центри, які допомагають людям вивчати мову та оволодіти нею. Мовні школи пропонують різні курси для вивчення іноземних мов. Вони стають все більш популярними і на Закарпатті, зокрема у місті Берегове. **Мета.** Мета статті – дослідити методи навчання у мовній школі в місті Берегове, враження та думки про Мовний Центр "START" у дітей, які там навчаються, та у вчителів, які там працюють. **Методи.** Під час дослідження були використані кількісні та якісні методи аналізу. **Результати.** Результати дослідження показали, що учні мовного центру більш мотивовані до вивчення іноземних мов, ніж діти у звичайних школах, які підтримуються державою. Тому вчителям простіше дотримуватися дисципліни в класі. Результати дослідження показали, що вчителі мають відмінні можливості для професійного розвитку. **Висновки.** Необхідно провести подальші дослідження для отримання глибшого розуміння ставлення учнів та вчителів до мовної школи. Варто було б дослідити і думки батьків про мовну школу. Подальшим напрямком дослідження також може стати вивчення результатів успішності учнів, досягнутих успіхів на міжнародних іспитах з іноземних мов, що дало б можливість визначити ефективність роботи мовного центру.

Ключові слова: вивчення іноземних мов на Закарпатті, мовні школи, мовний центр "START", мотивація.

Барань К. А., Густі І. І. Закарпатский венгерский институт им. Ференца Ракоци ІІ., Берегове Изучение иностранных языков в Берегове: опыт одной языковой школы

Аннотация. Знать английский сегодня абсолютно необходимо каждому образованному человеку. Важное место в обучении иностранным языкам занимают языковые школы. Они также становятся все более популярными и на Закарпатье, в том числе в городе Берегове. Основная цель данной статьи – исследовать методы преподавания иностранных языков в лингвистической школе в городе Берегове,

изучить мнение учащихся и учителей о Языковом Центре "START". Результаты показывают, что учащиеся языкового центра более заинтересованы в изучении иностранных языков, чем дети в обычных государственных школах. Кроме того, результаты доказывают, что у учителей есть прекрасные возможности для профессионального развития.

Ключевые слова: изучение иностранных языков на Закарпатье, языковые школы, языковой центр "START", мотивация.

Introduction (problem statement). Learning a foreign language is not an easy issue. It is a long process that takes much time and efforts. Nowadays it is especially important to know foreign languages. Some people learn languages because they need them for their work, others travel abroad, for the third category of people studying languages is a hobby. Everyone, who knows foreign languages can speak to people from other countries, read works by foreign writers in the original, which makes their worldview wider. It is not surprising that many intellectuals and well-educated people are polyglots.

Nowadays English has become the world's most important language in politics, science, trade and cultural relations. Over 300 million people speak it as a mother tongue. To know English today is absolutely necessary for every educated person, for every qualified specialist. The English language is a global language. It is the language of the great literature. It is the language of William Shakespeare, Jonathan Swift, Walter Scott, Charles Dickens and others. The great German poet Goethe once said, "Who knows no foreign language, does not know his own one." That is why in order to understand oneself and one's environment one has to study and master foreign languages. "Multilingualism is a mandate in today's world. If you want to be part of the 21st century, you need to have the communicative skills and multilingualism to be able to function in this world today and tomorrow" (Jong, 2020).

English language schools and courses are represented in the market today. The level of teaching varies, as well as the goals of teaching. In order not to be mistaken and to understand exactly how to choose the right English courses, learners should clearly set priorities and determine for themselves what goals they pursue and what they expect from studying. To begin with, people can learn a foreign language on their own, at school, university, with a tutor, at language schools or abroad. If a person is busy with studying or working, and needs a foreign language for general development or professional development, then the best option might be to study it at a language school in a learning community.

First of all, beginners need to make sure that there is a state license for the right of the language school. Next they need to find out about this educational centre in more detail, how long courses last, where they are, the duration of future study, the size of groups in class, what document is issued after graduation and most importantly – who teaches the courses, what their qualifications are, what methodology and what tutorials they use in the teaching process.

Basic training is sufficient for travel purposes, but it will clearly not be sufficient if the person is planning to get a job or education in an English-speaking country. In the case that the career is entirely tied to English and the learner is interested in the maximum effect of studying, he or she can immediately place in the last places in the list of priorities such selection criteria as distance of courses or cost. The use of language in the work is also not equivalent. Some employees of foreign companies or joint ventures conduct business correspondence, and prepare documentation, or working materials. They need a thorough knowledge of grammar.

Other specialists are in business negotiations, perform simultaneous interpretation. Broad vocabulary and communication skills are important to them. There are positions in which a person needs knowledge of the language, close to the knowledge of its native speaker in a particular field of business. Obviously, quality training cannot be cheap. It will not be difficult for this person to travel a few extra miles from his or her home or office. However, these parameters cannot be completely ruled out, since for many students they play an important role.

Usually, in language schools:

- special methods are applied in teaching, which are worked out and balanced;
- skilled methodologists and educators with extensive experience work;
- classes are held in well-equipped classrooms;
- modern audio, video equipment, presentation equipment, modern technologies are used.

Stability of the institution is also important, as serious training will take not 2-3 months but several years. A foreign language teaching license is not always required. It is definitely necessary if the learners' plans include obtaining a national or international certificate after completing a foreign language course, i.e. teachers must be eligible to take the TOEFL or IELTS exams, or other standard international language exams.

The process of language learning came a long way in the past years, but there is certainly a lot further for it to go. An essential place in teaching foreign languages is occupied by language schools. In modern society language schools, or language centres are created to help people to study and master languages. These language schools offer different courses, which focus on foreign language teaching. They are also becoming more and more popular in Transcarpathia, including our home town Berehove.

The article gives a detailed analysis of functioning of the "START Language Centre". With the help of an empirical piece of research through questionnaires, pupils of the "START Language Centre" were tested to find out how they like learning at the language centre. Teachers were also included in the research. Questionnaires were prepared beforehand in Hungarian, the mother tongue of the respondents, in order to get insights into the situation.

Before starting the research, the following hypotheses were delineated:

1. The pupils at the language centre are more motivated than the pupils in the state school.
2. It is easier for teachers to keep discipline at the language centre, because they are motivated to learn.
3. Teachers can pursue professional development only at local training courses.

Based on the hypotheses, the below main research questions were formulated:

1. Where are children more motivated to learn foreign/second languages: in state-supported schools or at the language centre?
2. Where is it easier to keep discipline: in state-supported schools or at the language centre? Why?
3. What possibilities are there for the teachers at the language centre to develop professionally?

The analysis of recent research and publications. Game is a natural means for children to understand the world around them. Therefore, it should be part and parcel of their learning, including the learning of foreign languages (FrydrychovaKlimova, 2014). Intonation, gestures, facial expressions, actions and circumstances all help pupils to tell what the unknown words and phrases probably mean. By understanding the message in this way pupils start to understand the language (Halliwell, 1992). The key to a successful language game is that the rules are clear, the ultimate goal is well defined and the game must be fun. All the pupils may wish to play games purely for fun. Teachers need to consider which games to use, when to use them, how to link them up with the syllabus, textbook or programme and how, more specifically, different games will benefit students in different ways (Khan, 1996).

In Vygotsky's view, the most important moment in child's development is that in which the child begins to use the language not only as a social communication system but also as a tool for controlling their own actions and cognitive processes (Vygotsky, 1962). This kind of teaching makes the learning of the material easier. Different useful games are included in the learning process. Pupils usually work in small groups and in pairs. It helps them to memorize the material better. Working in small groups is a good chance to get to know each other closer. A group usually consists of 5-8 pupils. Pupils can make new friends while learning together.

Motivation is another crucial aspect during the learning process. Ilona Huszti proved in her research, that motivation always helps pupils to do their best (Huszti, 2010). Educational psychologists commonly refer to two types of motivation: extrinsic/instrumental and intrinsic/integrative. Extrinsic motivation is the drive to do or learn something for an external reward, such as good school grades. Intrinsic motivation is the drive to do or learn something for its own sake (Nunan, 2011).

During her research, Ilona Huszti interviewed 47 English teachers in Transcarpathia about the level of language knowledge in English in Hungarian schools. Based on the respondents' answers, the researcher has drawn these conclusions: the most effective teacher of English is the teacher whose high level of language skills is coupled with excellent methodological skills; the teacher's fluency in the language is a good example for the students, motivating them to learn more diligently in order to achieve the set goal; the better the teacher knows English, the better the work they can do in the field of teaching, the higher the results they can achieve with their students (Huszti, 2017). Also, intonation of the educators plays an important role during the learning process (Hires, 2005).

Undoubtedly, English is one of the most important subjects in the school curriculum (Huszti & Kacsur, 2016). Pupils study the English language from Class 2 of primary school (Bárány, Huszti & Fábán, 2011). In the ordinary Ukrainian state-supported school, English is taught in large classes. This means that the class can only be divided into two groups with a class size of 28 children. The number of students in a class that does not exceed 27 does not break down into groups. This results in the creation of large classes. However, work in such groups is far from effective, as there is little time to deal with students separately (Huszti, 2005; Máté, 2017). Based on the research by Réka Máté, the state schools lack proper material for language learning. The classes contain a lot of pupils, that makes effective language learning difficult (Máté, 2017).

The purpose of the study was to investigate the language school in our own locality, in Berehove. Through questionnaires we intended to get insights into how pupils were studying the English language at the "START Language Centre" in Berehove. In addition, teachers of the language centre were also asked about their ways and attitudes, as well as perspectives of teaching English at the language centre under analysis.

The results of the study. The situation of the people living in Transcarpathia is unique, as people of different nationalities have been living together during centuries ("START Language Centre", 2020). During this time, people have been able to draw on each other's customs and traditions, thereby enriching their own community and personality. However, knowledge of different foreign languages is essential to build relationships and take advantage of opportunities.

Therefore, a language school was established in Berehove. With this language centre for children, teachers want to provide children with the possibility of gaining multilingualism. The practice and benefits of this are well known to the people of Transcarpathia, as many absorb multilingualism "with the mother's milk", which is the basis for their curiosity, tolerance and love for other cultures ("START Language Centre", 2020).

Characteristics of the language centre:

- It offers courses, which are organized for children aged 4 to 14 in English, German, and Ukrainian.
- Teachers deal with children in small groups (4-9 people).
- Teachers work with the best syllabi available today.
- Teachers prepare interesting activities and also tasks which develop the knowledge of children.
- Teachers always try to make the lessons more exciting with interactive whiteboards and audio materials.
- Teachers use modern textbooks by leading publishers from the target language countries (Oxford, Cambridge, Hueber and others).
- The aim of the language school is to give a good basic knowledge of the English language, as well as that of German and Ukrainian ("START Language Centre", 2020).

The aim of the language centre is to help children discover the beauty of learning a language. In a playful and cheerful atmosphere, the teachers pass on knowledge that can be easily acquired in childhood. It is the heart of the qualified educators that the child will have a good time acquiring and developing solid foundations (“START Language Centre”, 2020). Educators work on the basis of professionally selected, excellent curricula that allow children to learn the vocabulary used in everyday situations. At the same time, the goal of the language centre is to prepare children for taking and passing international language exams.

The participants of the research were the pupils aged 7-12 (in school Classes 1-6) of the “START Language Centre” in Berehove. It was an empirical piece of research. The pupils were asked to fill in a questionnaire prepared beforehand. In this way, 23 pupils were asked in total. Both genders (males and females) were represented by the respondents. The pupils were willing to participate in the research.

There were also five other participants of the research. These were five teachers, who are working at the language centre. Their age range was between 34 and 40 years. The number of years of foreign language teaching experience ranged between 13 and 17. The participants were females. The teachers were asked to fill in the questionnaire prepared beforehand. (See Figure 1)

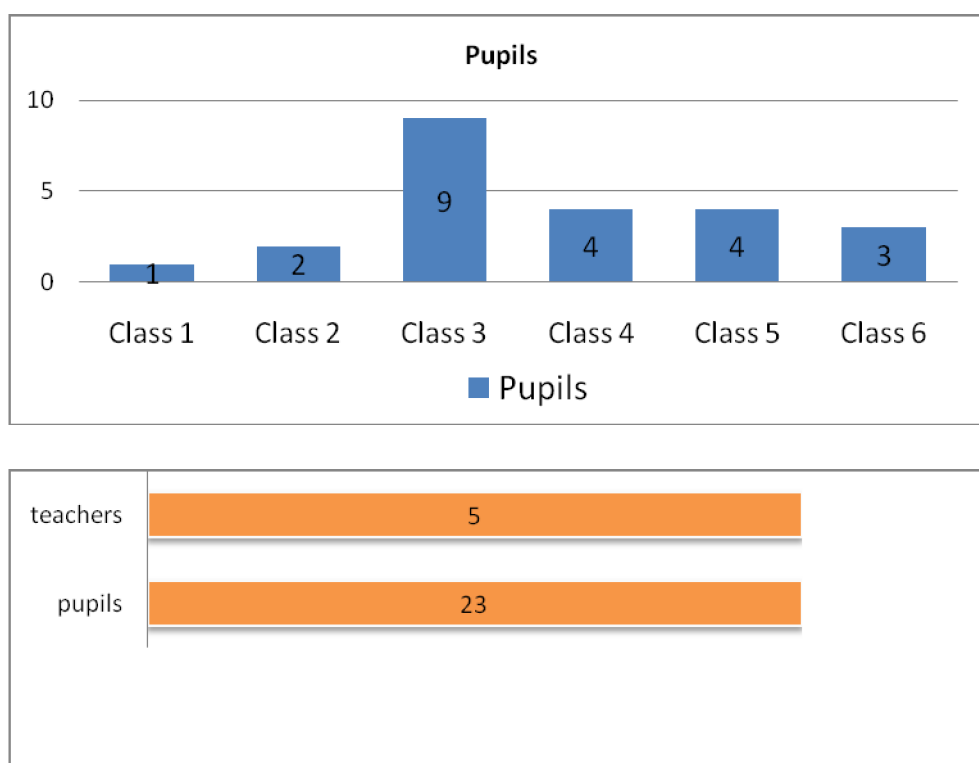


Figure 1. Number of participants

The first instrument that helped with the empirical research was a questionnaire for language learners. The questionnaire was based on questions about English language learning. It consisted of 13 questions. There were closed-ended and open-ended questions. The pupils’ task was to share their thoughts and opinions. There was a space left after each question for the pupils to express their own points of view. The questionnaire was prepared in Hungarian, the mother tongue of the children.

The second instrument was a questionnaire for language teachers. This questionnaire intended to collect data about teachers' ways, attitudes and future perspectives of teaching the English language. The purpose of the questionnaire was to find out how teachers feel about teaching English, and how they perceive their own perspectives in teaching English while working at a non-state governed language school. It contained 25 questions. There were closed-ended and open-ended questions.

Both questionnaires were anonymous.

The research was conducted in spring, 2019 at "START Language Centre" in Berehove, Zakarpatska oblast. The research took place in the institution successfully. The management of the institution and the parents of children agreed to the pupils' participating in the research. At the language centre the research was conducted without any specific issues that would disturb the process of the learning/researching. In total, 23 pupils and five teachers were successfully surveyed during the procedure.

Most of the pupils find the English language very important. Pupils like the English lessons at the language centre very much. They study foreign or second languages like English, German and Ukrainian.

Children have been learning at the language centre for different lengths of time. Most of the participants have been learning at the language centre for one year (seven children), six children replied that they had been learning at the centre for two years, four children replied that they had been learning at the centre for three years, while another four admitted for them the length of studying was only one month. There was one child who had studied at the centre for five years, another one for five months, and the last child who participated in the research had started attending the centre only two weeks before the questionnaire was administered.

The Diagram (Figure 2) summarizes the reasons why children like studying at the language centre.

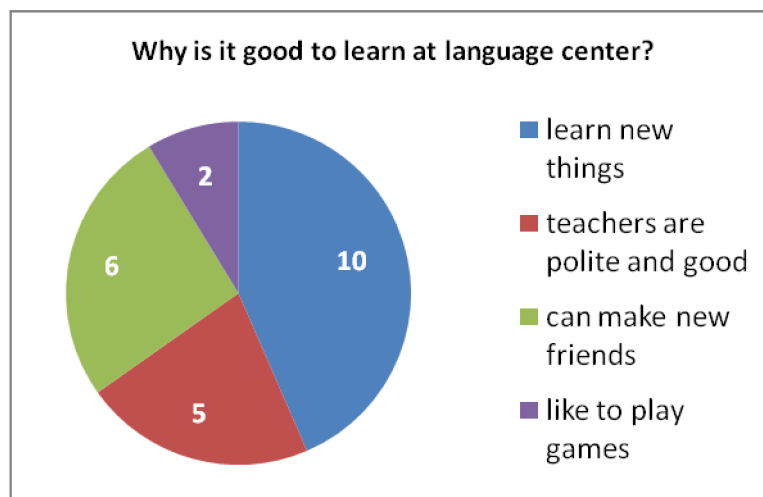


Figure 2. The reason why pupils like the language centre

Pupils like the language centre because they can learn a lot of new things in English, the teachers are good, polite and cheerful, the material is taught in a playful way, which makes the lessons more exciting, pupils can make new friends and learn together, and also, they enjoy the interesting and useful lessons.

The children were asked why they liked the lessons at the language centre. Their answers are summarized in the Diagram (Figure 3).

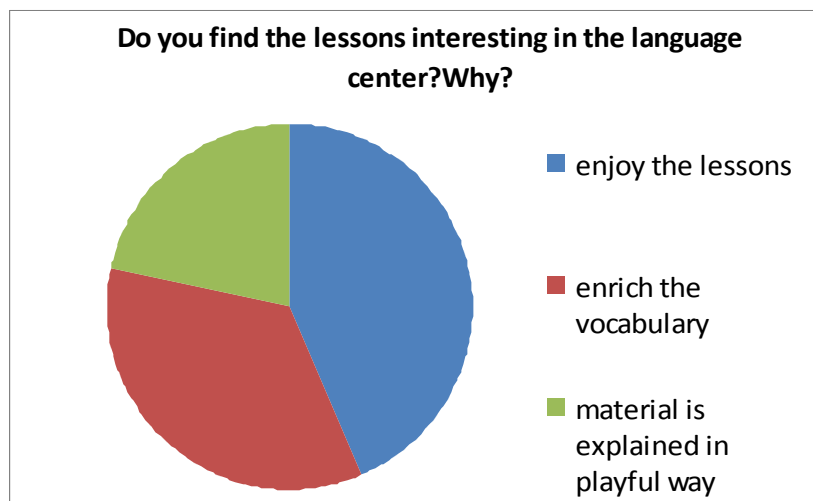


Figure 3. The lessons at the language centre

Children mainly enjoy the lessons at the centre (10 replies). They also believe that it is a positive feature that they can enrich their target language vocabulary (eight replies), while five children also emphasized that they liked that the material was always explained by the teachers in a playful way.

Concerning the size of the study group at the language centre, there were 21 pupils, whose English group contained from six to eight pupils. There were two pupils whose Ukrainian group contained five pupils.

The number of weekly hours at the language centre was usually two (fifteen children gave this answer), while eight children replied that they had one English and one Ukrainian lesson a week.

Children were asked to compare their school foreign language (FL) teacher and their language centre FL teacher. They gave mainly the same answers. There was one pupil who thought that there was no difference between the two teachers. The other 22 pupils liked the teacher at the language centre better than the teacher at school. The teachers at the language centre were known by the children to be polite and pay a lot of attention to all pupils. The teacher at the language centre explained the material better, than the teacher in the school.

For Question 9 (Do you work in pairs?) all of the pupils had the same answers. All of the pupils worked in pairs. For Question 10 (Do you work in small groups?) all of the pupils replied in the same way. All of the pupils worked in small groups. For Question 11 (What kind of learning do you prefer better: working in pairs or working in small groups? Why?) pupils answered differently. There were 20 pupils who liked working in smaller groups. These pupils could get acquainted with each other better. They always helped each other and they found this kind of work exciting. There were two pupils who did not like working in groups or pairs, because they competed with each other and they also argued much. There was only one pupil who found both kinds of work interesting. (See Figure 4)

When asked about what they liked most in the English lessons, children gave various answers. They enjoyed the lesson very much, therefore they liked practically everything: reading in English, learning new words, using the target language, writing in English, singing, working in the work-book, playing, and listening to the tape recorder and doing listening tasks.

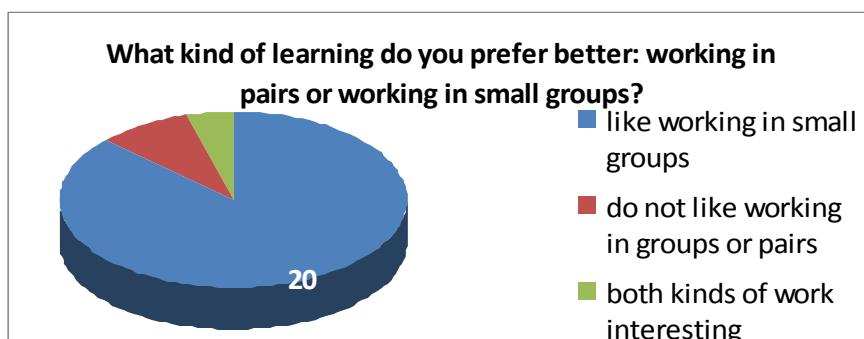


Figure 4. Working in groups or in pairs

Children were requested to express their dislikes about the language centre, if any. There were 19 pupils who claimed they liked everything and did not observe any deficiencies. However, four children were of different opinion. They considered that 45 minutes for a lesson was not enough for them. One child found it problematic to study in a group, they rather preferred to study alone.

Five teachers participated in the research, all working at the “START Language Centre” for two to six years. All the teachers were female, their age range being 34 to 40 years. Their general teaching experience constituted 13 to 17 years. Two teachers had a BA degree as their academic qualification, two teachers had an MA degree and one teacher had the Specialist degree. Four teachers worked at state schools beside the language centre. Their weekly hours ranged between 9 and 20 at the state schools, while at the language centre this range was between 4 and 9 weekly hours. One teacher did not work at a state school. She is the owner and manager of the language centre. Table 1 summarizes the data on teacher participants.

Table 1

Teacher participant data

		Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3	Teacher 4	Teacher 5
Age		37	40	34	36	38
Gender		F	F	F	F	F
Teaching experience	general	16	17	13	13	15
	at language centre	6	2	3	2	2
Academic qualification		BA	Specialist	MA	BA	MA
Weekly hours	in state school	0	19	9	19	20
	at language centre	6	6	6	9	4

In the following, the teachers’ answers to the questions in the teacher questionnaire are synthesized.

The language school is an excellent opportunity to develop professionally, as teachers are encouraged to and have the freedom to try innovative teaching methods for better learning of students. Teachers pursued professional development by doing teacher training courses, mainly locally (meeting and learning from home and foreign experts) and often in the United Kingdom. Teacher 1 admitted that the professional development activities have a positive impact on the teacher's career growth at the centre.

Teachers believed that the pupils at the language centre can also highly develop their personalities and their language skills during the lessons. They said that at the language centre the curriculum is not as limited as in the state school. Teachers have a lot of time for teaching different interesting topics that the pupils enjoy learning.

Teachers stated that they try to create a calm atmosphere for children. The pupils like singing and reading during the lessons, which are always well-structured. Children usually work in small groups, the material is taught in a playful way and the teacher can choose her method of teaching. In this they are helped by the facilities of the language centre that are all up-to-date and meet all the modern requirements. The centre has the latest equipment for language teaching (including good textbooks and interactive teaching materials by Oxford University Press and Cambridge University Press or HueberVerlag). Teacher 4 also added that in the state schools the textbooks are not appropriate for language learning. Teachers do not have a separate room for conducting English lessons, while at the language centre lessons are conducted in specially equipped classrooms.

It is the modern equipment that the teachers see the main difference in between state schools and the language centre. The centre has the best grammar books developed for pupils of different ages by the leading publishers in the UK and Germany. Another difference between state schools and the language centre mentioned by Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 was that it is easier to maintain discipline at the language centre than in a state school. They base this claim on the assumption that the students at the language centre are more motivated than in the state school. This is also a direct reason why they achieve better results in language learning.

Motivating children to learn a foreign language is a central issue at the language centre. Teacher 3 mentioned that she always explains to pupils how important it is to know foreign languages. Teacher 1 admitted that sometimes there is a need to encourage children to learn English and attend the language centre, because the children are not always self-confident. It is crucial to make them believe they can do it, and they are good enough to learn a language. Teacher 2 added that teachers have to show pupils that if they work hard, it will be better and better. It is a long process, but everybody can do it. Furthermore, Teacher 5 emphasized the importance of teacher motivation saying that if the pupils see that the teacher is motivated, the children will be also motivated and more attentive.

The teachers are always in touch with the parents of their pupils at the language centre. At the end of every term at the centre there are parent-teacher conferences where the teachers communicate with the parents about the progress of their children in studying English.

They also discuss the children's attitude to doing homework. Teacher 4 said that there are children who sometimes do not do their homework. In this case, she does not give any small presents to such pupils. Teacher 1 claimed that for homework she usually gives tasks like learning new vocabulary only, and no other tiresome exercises. If she found a pupil who had not done the homework, as a 'punishment', such a child could not get an extra point at the lesson. This meant a real 'punishment' for the child because when they collected five extra points they were awarded a little present.

Teacher 1 mentioned that the main aim of the language centre is to directly prepare pupils for taking international language exams appropriate for their age and proficiency level like the Key English Test (KET) or the Preliminary English Test (PET). Therefore all the teacher-participants recommend the language centre to anyone who would like to develop their language skills with the help of the latest teaching methods in a supporting and encouraging environment.

Teacher 5 was the only teacher who mentioned a problem emerging at the language centre. She said that the only weak point of the language centre was that there were some pupils who did not attend the lessons regularly. However, teachers were trying to solve this problem.

The attitude of the teacher toward the pupils and the subject plays a very important role during the teaching process. There are pupils who love the subject because the teacher in the language centre is kind and polite. Teachers have to appear to like all the pupils equally. Children learning a foreign language or any other subject need to know that the teacher likes them. In the state schools not all the teachers are friendly according to the answers of the pupils. All the pupils enjoy English lessons very much. Most of the students have been attending the language centre for 3-5 years. The lessons are held in a playful way and are very exciting for the young learners.

The pupils like using all four language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking). The learners of the language centre like reading, learning new words, communicating and writing in the target language, singing and playing useful games in English and doing exercises from the workbook during the lessons. There is nothing in the language centre what pupils do not like.

Teachers use innovative methods of teaching. The language centre has the latest equipment, what is necessary for a good language school (good books, interactive materials with the proper electronic devices: interactive board and CD player). Teaching English due to its global nature has a strongly developed methodology and offers free access to a huge variety of educational materials online (Henkel, 2014).

Sometimes there are difficulties which teachers face in the language centre. There are cases when pupils are not prepared for the lessons. In such a situation the pupil is punished in the form of not obtaining a 'present' for doing well. Not doing the homework deprives pupils of the possibility to obtain a little present, which pupils like to get very much. Every half year all the teachers talk to the parents of the children in general and about their progress in English classes at parent-teacher conferences.

The knowledge of the English language is very important nowadays. In Ukraine during the Soviet era, teaching different foreign languages (e.g. English, German or Spanish) was not paid much attention to. It was believed that knowing and speaking Russian as a world language was enough for the nation. After the collapse of Soviet empire the situation changed. More and more people realized the importance of learning the English language (Huszti, 2017). It can be seen that the role of English within a nation's daily life is influenced by geographical, historical, cultural and political factors (Broughton, Brumfit, Flavell, Hill, & Pincas, 1980). According to the answers of the teachers, the language centre has good perspectives in Berehove. Hopefully, it will grow because more and more people realize the importance of learning languages.

The teachers of the language centre are trying to create a perfect atmosphere for learners, to make the learning process effective. The teachers motivate the pupils at the language centre, because the pupils are not always self-confident.

Teachers can see differences in results achieved by pupils of the language centre and pupils at average state schools during a certain period of time. At the language centre, more attention is paid to the learners. The learners at the language centre are more motivated and therefore they achieve better results. Learners usually work in small groups and in pairs, which contain of 5-8 pupils. In this way, it is easier to maintain discipline at the language centre than in a state school.

Teachers observe a significant difference between the language centre and a state school concerning equipment and teaching material. The lack of material, or proper textbooks is a huge problem in the state schools. In the schools of Transcarpathia, learners have access to English, a foreign language only in the classroom, the focus is more on communication (Huszti, Fábíán & Bárányné Komári, 2009). Not all of the students have the opportunity to buy the best and most modern textbooks. Not all the pupils find studying interesting or useful.

One of the main aims of the language centre is to prepare its pupils for taking and passing international language exams. However, whether this aim is achieved or not, can only be stated after the first pupils obtain their language examination results.

Pupils also study the German and Ukrainian languages apart from English. Language learners living in a heterogeneous environment and having contact in their everyday life with more than one language learn foreign languages more easily (Fábián, 2009). It helps them to improve their communication skills and to enrich their vocabulary.

For the teacher, methods prescribe what materials and activities should be used, how they should be used and what the role of the teacher should be. For learners, methods prescribe what approach to learning the learner should take and what roles the learner should adopt in the classroom. The most popular is the audiolingual method, because it advises that pupils should be taught a language directly, without using the pupils' native language to explain new words or grammar in the target language.

Communicative competence in the target language is more demanded now than ever before not only on the pupils' part, but also on the teachers' part (Saaed, 2013). Teachers have high level of education (BA, Specialist and MA degrees). They regularly do in-service training courses, where they can get acquainted with the latest methods of teaching English for young learners. In addition, they practise their own language skills with native speaker trainers.

Conclusion and prospects for further research. The article dealt with the role of language schools in teaching and mastering the English language in the Transcarpathian region, in particular in Berehove.

Nowadays there are many opportunities for learning languages. In addition to school lessons, students can learn languages online, with tutors in private lessons or in language schools. Language schools and centres established in Transcarpathia offer different courses for learning foreign languages. The "START Language Centre" was opened four years ago in Berehove. The peculiarity of the language centre is that there are students of primary school age. Teachers at the language centre have a high level of knowledge and are highly qualified with proper teaching experience. They are trained annually in relevant courses, particularly in the UK, where they can get acquainted with the latest methods of teaching English. Research findings have proven that pupils like visiting the "START Language Centre". According to the survey results, it is revealed that most pupils are motivated to learn a foreign language.

Motivation plays an important role in the learning process. If the child is successful in the lesson, he or she is rewarded with a gift. Some students learn only because they love the teacher's personality. Teachers always try to create a pleasant atmosphere for students, to make the learning process more interesting and fun. Teachers use innovative methods in teaching English. Educational games are applied during the learning process by using an interactive whiteboard. Pupils usually work in small groups or in pairs. Pupils develop their communication skills while working in small groups or in pairs. Another advantage is that teachers pay more attention to each learner. The language centre offers high quality books that are suitable for study. It is also worth pointing out that the teachers at the language centre develop textbooks for their pupils to use during the classes.

The compilers of the textbooks draw on the European experience of preparation for the language exam at different levels. The language centre focuses primarily on preparing students for language exams, textbooks, workbooks and guidelines for teachers have been created according to European standards for teaching foreign languages. The staff believe that the "START Language Centre" will have great perspectives in the future in Berehove. Priorities of the language centre include:

- modern European methods of teaching foreign languages,
- the use of modern textbooks and workbooks,
- use of modern equipment,
- students' motivation for learning,

- a small group teaching (5 or 6 students per group).

The research allows us to draw the following conclusions:

- students are motivated by their parents and teachers to attend classes at the language centre every week;
- modern European methods encourage children to learn foreign languages (in particular, the usage of games and projects during the lessons, working in small groups, the usage of modern textbooks, the usage of modern technical equipment);
- a cosy interior and pleasant atmosphere attract children to visit the language centre;
- the teacher's personality is one of the main motivating factors.

Our initial hypotheses were only partially supported. Research results proved that pupils at the language centre are more motivated than the pupils in the state school. In addition, it turned out that it is easier for teachers to keep discipline at the language centre, because the pupils are motivated to learn. However, our third hypothesis was refuted in that teachers at the "START Language Centre" both at local in-service teacher training courses and abroad, mainly in the UK.

The findings of the research seem to suggest that language schools and language centres are a trendy and reliable option for those who want to learn a foreign language in a community. Further research is needed to gain a deeper understanding of the attitudes of students and teachers towards the language school. Parents' opinions about the language school should also be explored. A further area of research may also be the study of the results of student performance and achievement in international exams in foreign languages, which would determine the effectiveness of the language centre.

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