

»MLADI ZA NAPREDEK MARIBORA 2016« 33. SREČANJE

Foreign languages as a “challenge” for children and foreign languages in their future

Raziskovalno področje: Tuji jeziki

Raziskovalna naloga

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»Mladi za napredek Maribora 2016«

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POVZETEK

Tema pričujoče raziskovalne naloge, je tuj jezik, kot "izziv" za osnovnošolce in pomen tujih jezikov v njihovem nadaljnjem šolanju in poklicu. V teoretičnem delu sem opredelila vse značilnosti jezikov po svetu, potem sem se bolj poglobila v germanske jezike in še kasneje v romanske. Raziskala sem »sleng«, ki je v 21. stoletju eden najbolj uporabljenih, neke vrste jezikov med mladimi ljudmi.

V empiričnem delu naloge bom raziskala, ali učenci uporabljajo tuje jezike v pogovorni obliki, kdaj so se učenci srečali s tujimi jeziki (v katerem vzgojno-izobraževalnem obdobju), in ali menijo, da jim bo znanje tujega jezika pomagalo pri nadaljnjem šolanju. Za empirični del raziskovalne naloge sem uporabila anketo.

Anketo je rešilo 125 učencev (6., 7., 8., 9. razred). Ugotovila sem, da se jih je največ začelo učiti tujih jezikov že v vrtcu, največ učencev se je najprej srečalo z angleščino, na naši osnovni šoli vsak anketiranec govori vsaj 2 tuja jezika.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: tuji jeziki, sleng, germanski jeziki, romanski jeziki,

ABSTRACT

The theme of this research project is foreign languages as a »challenge« for primary school pupils. In the theoretical part, I talked a little bit about languages all over the world, and then I researched German and Roman languages. Then I looked up »slang«, which is one of the most used 'languages' for younger people.

In the empirical part of the project, I wanted to know if children use foreign languages for communicating. When did they start learning any kind of foreign languages and if they think that learning foreign languages will help them in the future.

125 students (6th, 7th, 8th and 9th grade) completed the survey.

I found out that pupils at our school started learning the foreign languages in the kindergarten, the first foreign language that they started learning is for the most pupils English and in their primary school, most of the children learn 2 foreign languages.

Key words: Foreign Languages, German languages, Roman languages, Slang

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I would like to thank my mentor for helping me and directing me through making this research project. I would also like to thank my parents for supporting me through the good and bad while completing this research project. A big thank you to my trainer that excused me from many of my training sessions because the work I put into this research project. I also cannot forget to thank my best friend who told me that I could finish this research project no matter what.

INTRODUCTION

1.1. THE DEFINITION OF THE THEME

I wanted to do this research project, because I absolutely love learning new foreign languages and because I believe I am good in languages. The point of this research is to see if pupils use the foreign languages that they learn in school also outside the school, while communicating and using the social media.

The goal of my research project is to see, what do foreign languages mean to pupils and if they use the languages they learn in school for other purposes. I want to know if pupils think that foreign languages are important. I also find out what languages pupils learn and when and with what foreign languages they have met first. Because a lot of »slang words«, like “cool, hey, what’s up? bye,” come from other foreign languages. I want to know if they use foreign languages while using the social media. If they use foreign languages outside school and where.

Hypothesis:

1. Most pupils learn English as a foreign language
2. Pupils use foreign languages to use the electronic devices mostly
3. Several pupils will use foreign languages in high school and also latter in their jobs
4. Most of the pupils learn 2 foreign languages

Methods of research:

a) Descriptive method:

I have studied Slovenian and foreign literature and electronic publications.

b) Research method:

- I draw up a questionnaire. I used web application 1ka to conduct a survey.
- I will research how pupils of 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th grade of our primary school learn and study foreign languages.
- The researched data is shown in the graphs and the tables

WHAT IS A LANGUAGE?

First I will describe what language is: »It is a system of communication consisting of sounds, words, and grammar, or the system of communication used by people in a particular country or type of work« (<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/language> 04.02.2016, 09:52)

We use foreign languages mostly while travelling abroad, mostly when the used language is the official language of the country. We also use it while reading foreign literature¹.

The most effective way to learn foreign languages is while communicating with other people. Languages are a source of communication after all.

A person's language activity has a sort of way and it does not happen coincidentally.

Through the time, languages were improving. People in the old ages used screaming as a source of communication. A certain sequence of screams were made and used in different opportunities. Through the time, people started using actual words for communicating and that is how the first alphabet came to be.

Languages were differently evolving in other cultures. Several languages were made, and they started improving. The languages we still use are known as **alive languages**, but other languages soon died out and are now known as **dead languages**. Actually, we still use some of the dead languages but not for a communication. For Slovene people the most special dead language is **Church-Slovene language**. In the 20th century, other languages were made like Esperanto² and the **computer language**; do not belong to the natural languages. »**Natural**

¹ For example, English literature is really good for learning new words in English, because it is really well written

² Esperanto is an international, communicating language. Developed in the year 1878

languages are languages that were made within the development of a Human« (Erhartič, V *območju jezika*, 2000)

1.2. GERMAN LANGUAGES

German languages »are a language group found in the bigger group of Indo-European languages« (https://sl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Germanski_jeziki , 10.1.2016, 12:08)

German languages are used in the north, west and middle Europe, America, Oceania and South Africa

We divide them in north German (Swedish, Danish, Norwegian and Icelandic language), West German (German, English and Dutch language) and East German language, that are the dead languages.

a) English

English is one of the West German languages, that was started in England/UK, as a mother tongue of 402 000 000 people (in the year 2002).

English is used in:

- Australia (Australian English)
- Bahamas
- Barbados
- Gibraltar
- United Kingdom
- Anglo-America (the USA, Canada)



Slika 1: https://www.google.si/search?q=english&espv=2&biw=1366&bih=667&site=webhp&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwj_e-Q-L3KAhVBpA4KHd_xC2cQ_AUIBigB#tbm= (10.1.2016, 11:00)

We write English in a Latin alphabet that contains 25 letters
(a,b,c,d,e,f,g,h,i,j,k,l,m,n,o,p,q,r,s,t,u,v,w,x,y,z).

b) German language

German language is a part of the West German languages and is spoken by 140 000 000 people. Mostly in:

- Germany
- Austria
- Lichtenstein
- Swiss Republic
- Luxemburg

German is written in the Latin alphabet or the German Alphabet. One of the early German languages is »Hoch deutch« or high German.

1.3. ROMAN LANGUAGES

Roman languages are a part of the Indo-European languages. They developed from the Vulgar Latin, which was used by soldiers and developed within the development of the classic Latin language and was used in the 100s.

a) Italian

Italian is spoken by 62 000 000 people all over the world, but mostly it is spoken in Italy. Classic Italian was developed from the classic Latin language. Italian is a main language in Italy, San Marino and the Swiss republic (Ticino, Graubünden) and a main language in Vatican with Latin. In Slovenia Italian is spoken in the coastal towns (Koper, Piran, etc.) and it is one of the three official languages in Slovenia.

b) French

French is the most important Roman language in the world. Almost 77 000 000 people use French as their mother tongue and is the 11th in the world. French is the main language in many European organizations, such as the European Union, International Olympic Committee and other. Because they thought that English is overpowering the French language, they made a law, that they have to play at least 40% of French songs on the radio.

SLANG

Young people usually use slang for communication between each other. Slang was made through several international developments of world languages. Slang is usually made out of non-standard words of other world languages. Most of the world slang is made out of English. Still, you can find many pupils that do not use these words, and by that, they honour their mother tongue.

Since slang is a huge thing in a teenager's life, people invented shorter words for usage, especially on social media (wtf, smh, ttyl, hmu, etc.)

LATIN – MOTHER OF ROMAN LANGUAGES

Latin is one of the most used dead languages. It is not new anymore, that we use Latin in several sciences, like medicine and law. If we look closely into learning English, we can see some similarities with Latin. There is no doubt that Latin is one of the most important language in the world, since it was also one of the first languages in the world. If Latin would not exist, also many other languages would not.

Latin was mostly used in the 18th century and then French replaced it.

Latin is still used as the main language of the Rome-Catholic church.

RESEARCH PART

In the research part of my project, I wanted to see where pupils use foreign languages outside school walls and if they actually do. I used the descriptive method with the help of an E-Survey. The goal of my research project is to find out, how much does learning languages mean for pupils and if they use foreign language outside of lessons. I wanted to know if they enjoy learning foreign languages or if do they take it as a duty. Since many “slang” words come out of other foreign languages.

1.4. SHAPE OF THE SURVEY

As a base for getting data, I used an e-survey. I wanted to make the questions as understandable and short as possible, same goes with the available answers.

The survey had 11 questions that were a closed type.

c) Methods used while doing the research

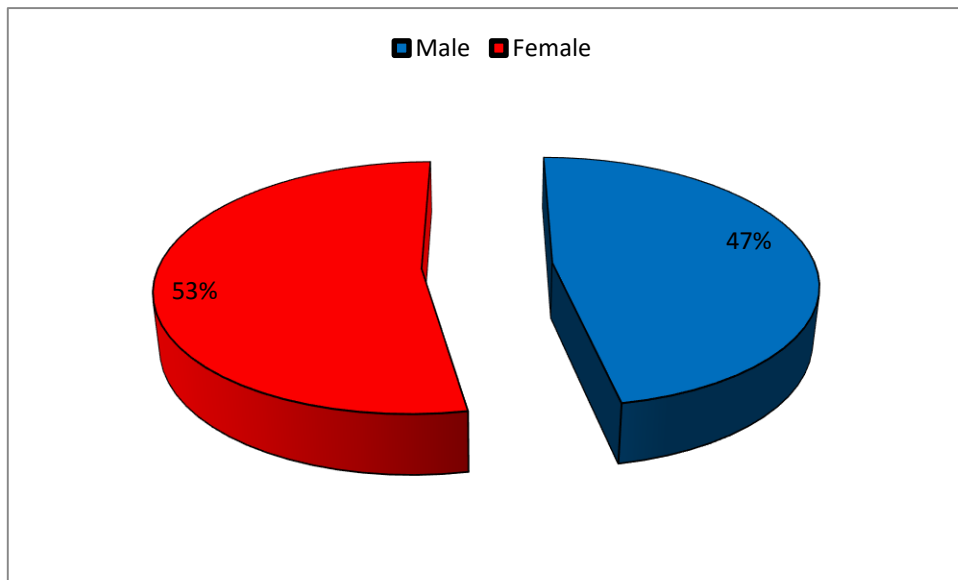
The research was held in December 2015. The survey was completed by 125 pupils, out of which were 31 pupils from 6th grade, 32 pupils from 7th grade, 44 pupils from 8th grade and 18 9th graders.

d) Analysis of the received data

The data I got from the e-survey and a special programme on my computer (Microsoft Excel), I used in the graphic display of the analysis.

RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

1. QUESTION: Gender



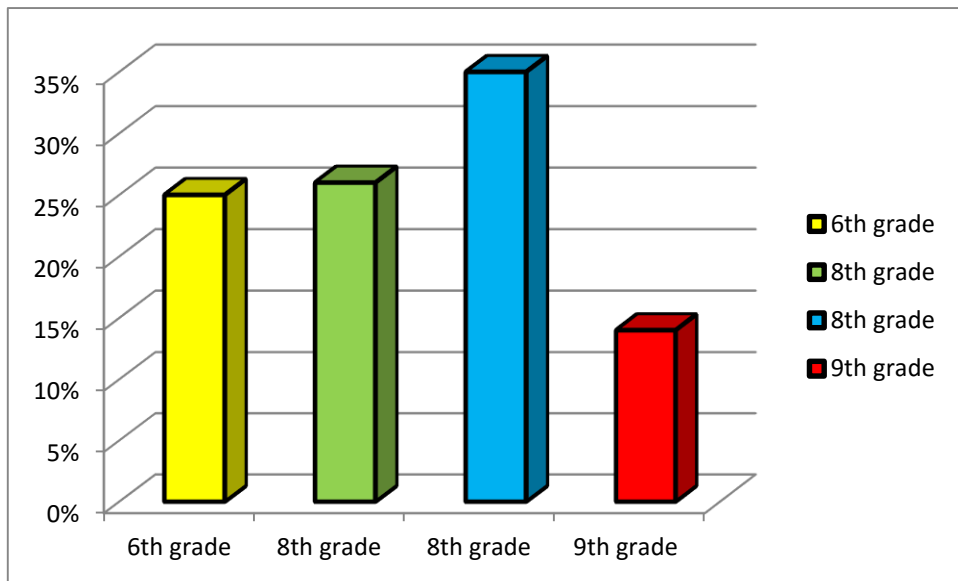
Picture 1: Gender

Resource: Own research, 2016

When I separated the pupils by gender I found out that 66 females (53%) and 59 males (47%) completed the survey.

As you can see by the graphic display, that more women than men completed the survey.

2nd Question: Class



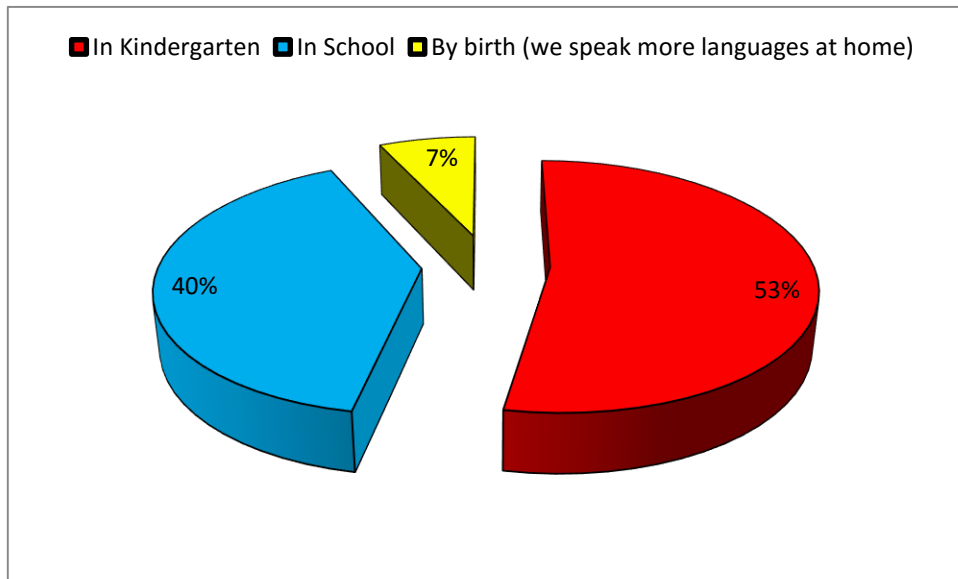
Picture 2: Age

Resource: Own Research, 2016

To get the data I needed for my analysis I asked the 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th graders to complete my survey. The survey was completed by 31 6th graders (25%), 32 7th graders (26%), 44 8th graders (35%) and 18 9th graders (14%)

3rd Question: Your first meeting with foreign languages?

I wanted to know, what language have they met first. I displayed 3 different answers for the pupils to answer with (In Kindergarten, In School, by birth (that the family speaks more languages at home))



Picture 3: First meeting

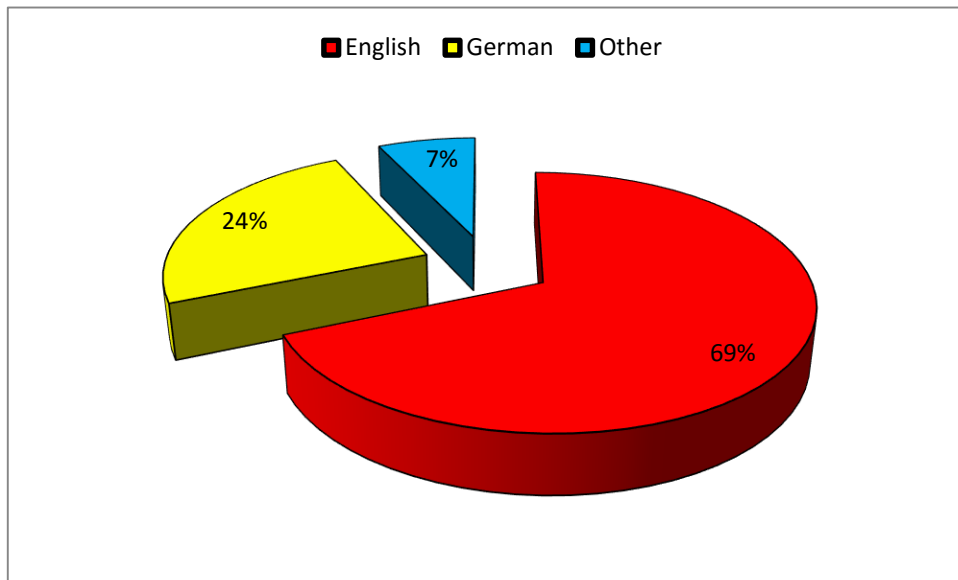
Resource: Own Research, 2016

We can see from the graphic display that the most pupils met with their first foreign language is kindergarten.

66 pupils met with their first foreign language in kindergarten (53%), 50 pupils meet with their first foreign language in school (40%), the smallest amount of pupils met with a foreign language by birth, only 7%.

4th Question: With what language did you meet first?

I gave the pupils 3 answers. I displayed the 2 most used languages and an OTHER option, where they could write another different language.



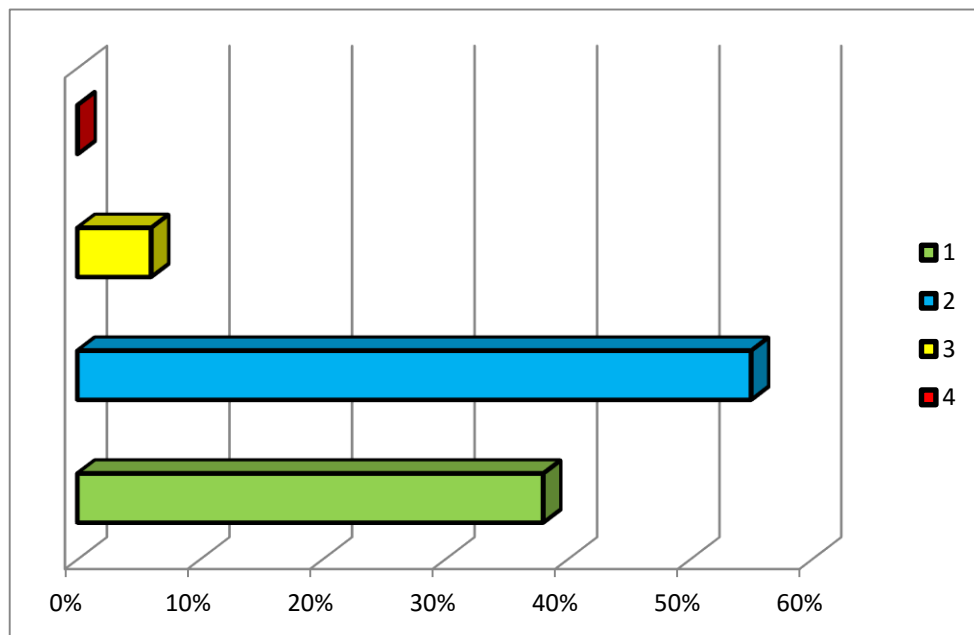
Picture 4: Learning the first foreign language

Resource: Own Research, 2016

Most pupil, 85 pupils answered they met with English first (69%), 30 pupils first met with German (24%), 7% of all pupils meet with other languages.

5th Question: How many foreign languages do you speak?

With the question I wanted to know how many foreign languages, does a pupil at our school learn? I displayed answers from 1 to 4.



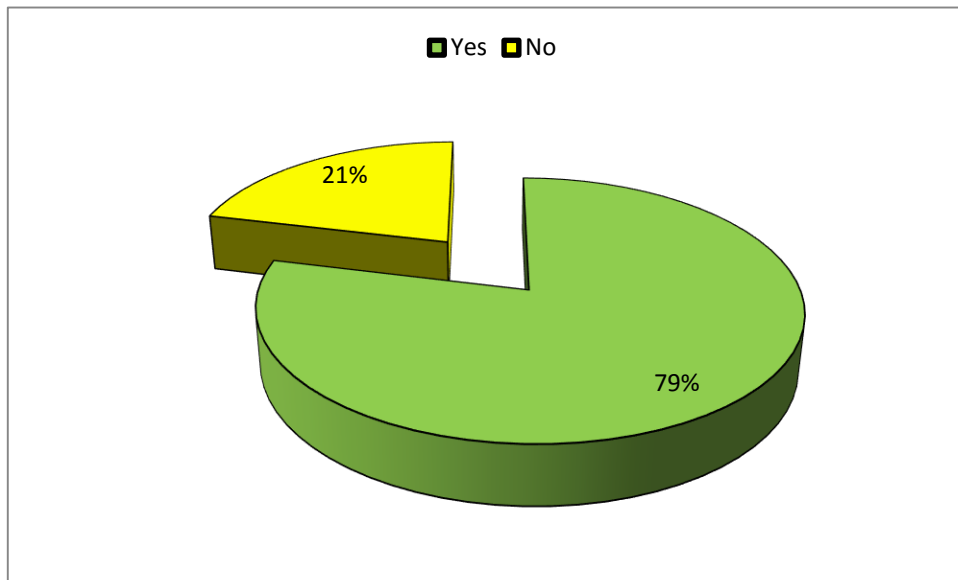
Picture 5: The number of learned languages

Resource: Own Research, 2016

Most of the pupils learn 2 languages (German and English) that is 69 pupils (55%), 47 pupils learn 1 language (38%), 8 pupils only learn 3 languages (6%); no one learns more than 3 languages. The pupils that learn 3 languages, learn beside German and English also French.

6th Question: Do you enjoy learning new foreign languages?

I really wanted to know if pupils enjoy learning foreign languages. The result did not surprise me as much because; pupils usually participate a lot in language classes.



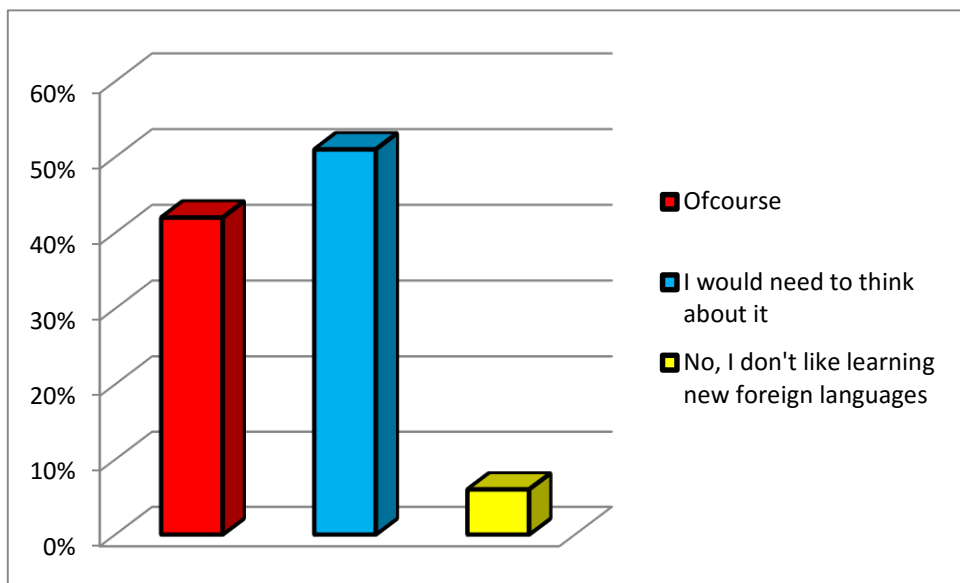
Picture 6: Enjoyment of learning languages

Resource: Own research, 2016

We see that 97 pupils (79%) enjoy learning new foreign languages, while 26 pupils do not enjoy learning and take it as a duty (21%).

7th question: If you had a chance to learn any kind of new foreign language, would you accept this opportunity?

This question was one of the most interesting for me in the survey. I wanted to know their opinion on that question. I gave the pupils 3 possible answers (Of course, I would need to think about it and No, I do not like learning new foreign languages)



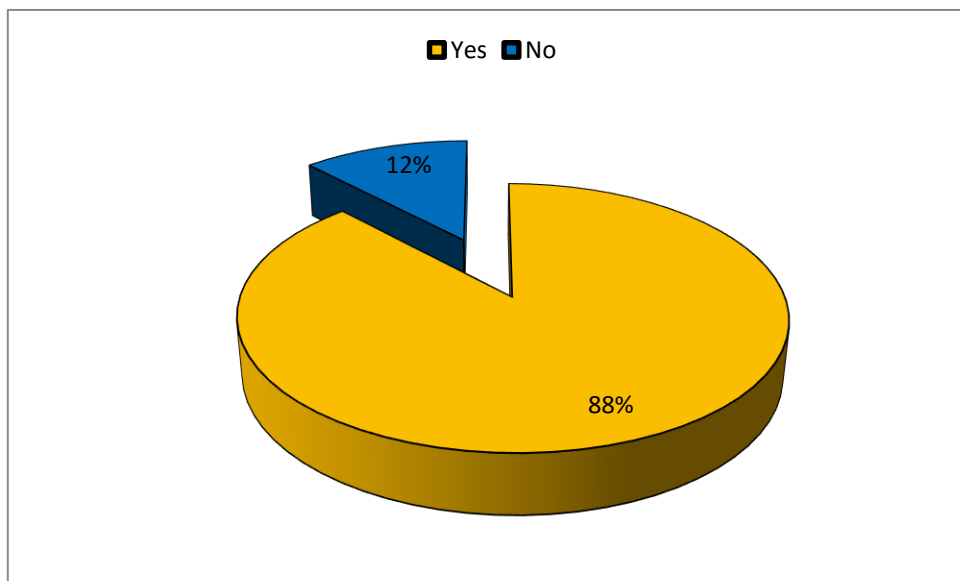
Picture 7: Opinion Research

Resource: Own Research, 2016

Most pupils would need to think before accepting the opportunity that is 64 pupils (51%), 52 pupils would accept this opportunity right away (42%), 6% of the pupils would not accept.

8th and 9th question: Do you use foreign languages also outside of school?

The results of this question also did not surprise me, because Internet is becoming more and more popular lately, and pupils use foreign languages (mostly English) on social media.



Picture 8: Usage of foreign languages outside of school

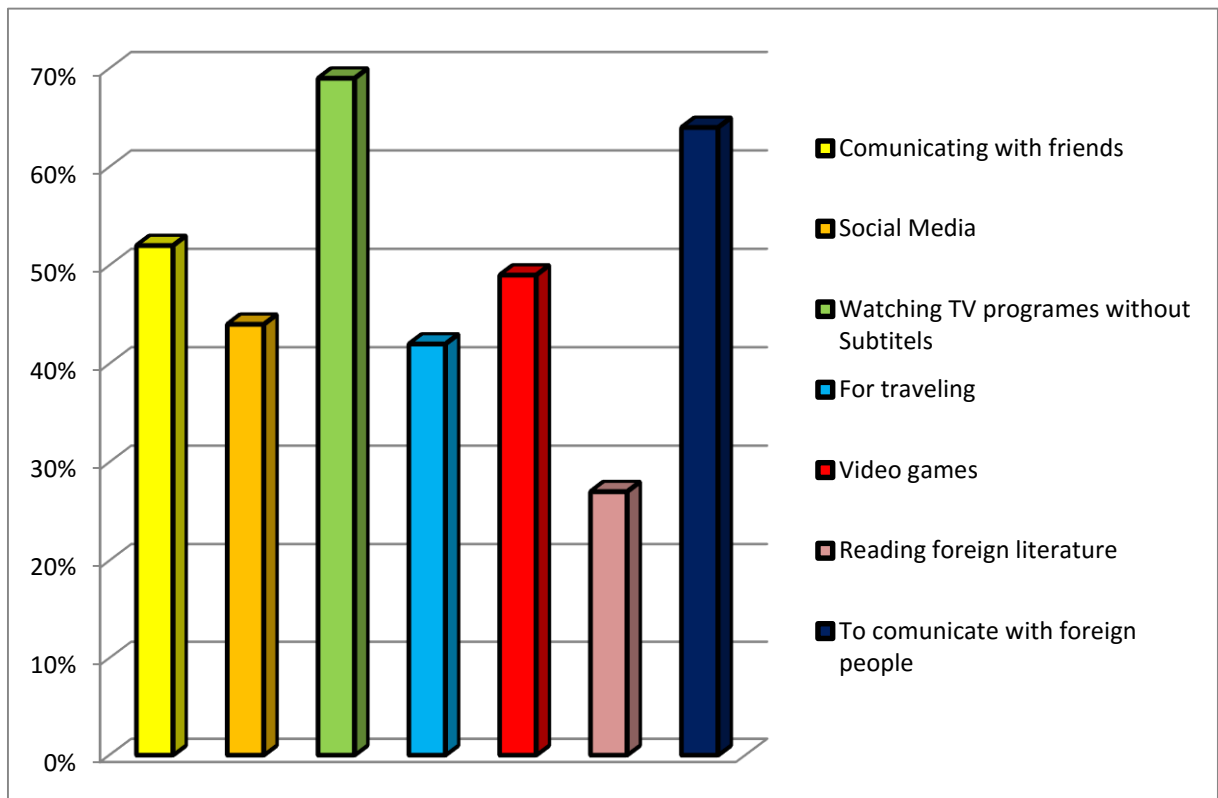
Resource: Own Research, 2016

110 pupils answered with YES (88%), the rest of the 15 pupils answered negatively (12%).

The next graph displays where pupils use languages.

It surprised me that majority of pupils use languages to watch different TV programmes without subtitles and not for social media.

79 pupils use languages to watch different foreign TV programmes (69%); many pupils (74) also use foreign languages to communicate with foreign people. (64%), they also use foreign languages to talk to their friends, that is 60 pupils (52%) ,56 pupils use foreign languages to play video games (49%) they also use foreign languages for traveling with their family and school, 48 pupils answered like that (42%), the smallest amount of pupils use foreign languages to read foreign literature (31 pupils, 27%)



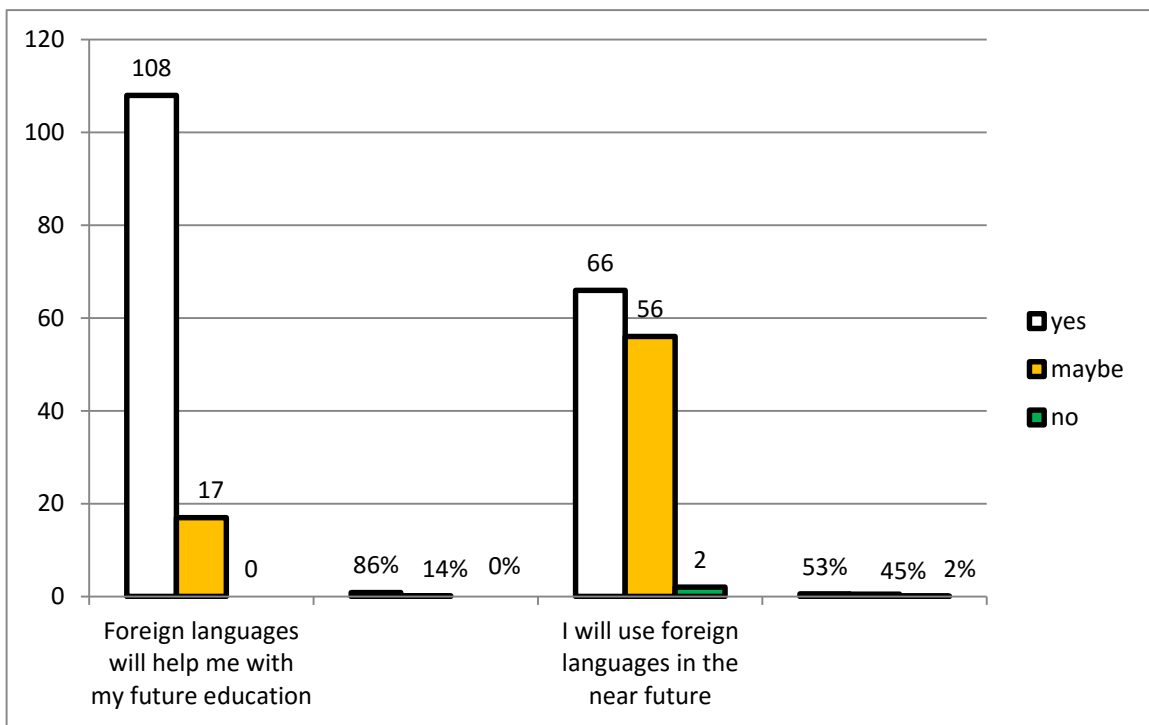
Picture 9: Area of usage

Resource: Own Research, 2016

10th question: Opinion about usage in the future

I prepared the pupils a table with 2 statements

1. Statement: Foreign languages will help me with my future education
2. Statement: I will use foreign languages in the near future



Picture 10: Opinion about usage in the future

Resource: Own Research, 2016

108 pupils agreed with the first statement (86%), 17 pupils answered with »maybe« (14%), no one answered negatively.

At the second statement 66 pupils answered positively (53%), 56 answered with »maybe« and 2 pupils answered with »no« (2%)

11th question: Opinion about learning languages

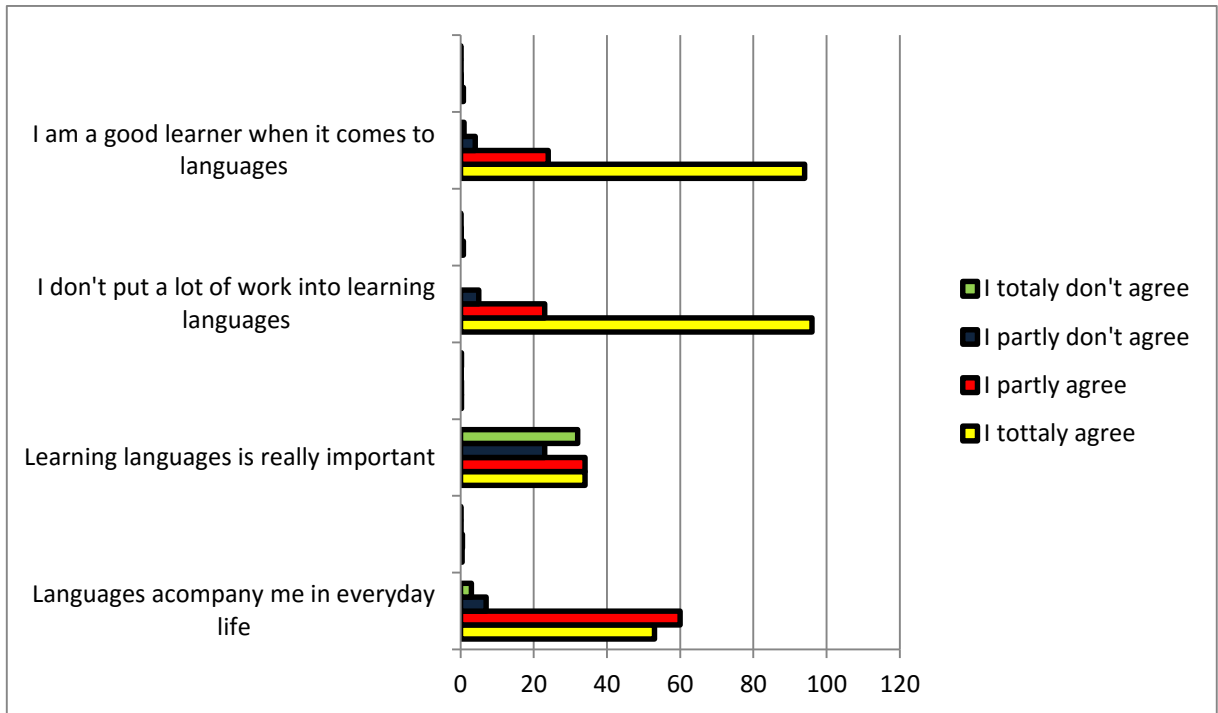
The question was displayed in a table with 4 statements

1st statement: Languages accompany me in everyday life

2nd statement: Learning languages is important

3rd statement: I do not put a lot of work into learning languages

4th statement: I am a good learner when it comes to languages



Picture 11: Opinion about learning languages

Resource: own Research, 2016

Statement 1

53 pupils agreed with the first statement (43%), 60 pupils partly agree with this statement (49%), 7 pupils partly do not agree with this statement (6%), but 3 pupils totally do not agree with this statement (2%).

Statement 2

34 pupils totally agree with this statement (28%), 34 pupils partly agree, 23 pupils partly do not agree, and 32 totally do not agree (26%)

Statement 3

96 pupils totally agree with this statement (77%), 23 pupils partly agree (19%), 5 pupils partly do not agree (4%), no one answered negatively.

Statement 4

94 pupils totally agree with the 4th statement (76%) 23 pupils partly agree (19%), 4 pupils partly do not agree (3%) and 1 pupil does not agree.

Checking Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: English is the most learned language.

From the data I got from the 3rd question, I can confirm this hypothesis. In addition, English is one of the most used foreign language in many European and other countries. Many people underestimate this language but is one of the most used language in the world.

Hypothesis 2: Pupils use foreign languages for work with electronic devices

I confirm this hypothesis with the answers of the 9th question. They mostly use foreign languages for watching foreign TV programmes.

I was surprised that pupils put the use of foreign languages on social media on 5th place. They mostly use foreign languages to watch foreign TV programmes without subtitles.

Hypothesis 3: About 30 % of the pupils will use foreign languages in the near future

Students positively surprised me, because not only some will use foreign languages in their future education plan, but also 86% will use them. On the data I received, I can confirm this hypothesis. I believe the languages that they learn at school will help them with studying in the future and job.

Hypothesis 4: Most pupils learn 2 languages in school

I can confirm this hypothesis, because 55% of the pupils that completed this survey learn 2 languages. Some of the pupils also learn 3 languages, but no one learns more than 3 languages.

CONCLUSION

Making this research project is an honour, I had fun doing it and I am proud of my work. I knew a little bit about languages before, which made my work easier, but as every researcher would say: “ Making and completing a research project is not always Unicorns a roses, you have to put in a lot of work to make a high quality research project, and sometimes the rollercoaster of researching also goes in the drop”.

Many people start and not finish a research project. I believe a research project makes a person learn and is hungry for knowledge and information.

I am happy that I have completed this project and learned many new things while making it.

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<https://sl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angle%C5%A1%C4%8Dina> (11.1., 15:47)

<https://sl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latin%C5%A1%C4%8Dina> (12.1. ,16:59)

<http://www2.arnes.si/~omislinjamb/pomladni/klepet2.htm> (23.1., 12:25)

ATTACHMENTS:

e-SURVEY

Pozdravljeni! Sem učenka 9. razreda osnovne šole in delam raziskovalno nalogo iz področja jezikoslovja. Prosim če odgovarjate dokaj odkrito, nesmiselni odgovori se v analizi podatkov ne bodo upoštevali.

1. Spol
 - a) Moški
 - b) Ženski

2. Razred

- a) 6.razred
 - b) 7.razred
 - c) 8.razred
 - d) 9.razred
3. Kdaj si se prvič srečal/a z tujimi jeziki?
- a) V vrtcu
 - b) V šoli
 - c) Ob rojstvu, doma govorimo več jezikov
4. S katerim tujim jezikom si se najprej srečal/srečala?
- a) Z angleščino
 - b) Z nemščino
 - c) Drugo: _____
5. Koliko tujih jezikov se učiš?
- a) Le 1
 - b) 2 (nemščino in angleščino)
 - c) 3 (poleg nemščine in angleščine še francoščino ali španščino)
 - d) Več kot tri (poleg jezikov v šoli hodim še v jezikovno šolo)
6. Ali se v šoli rad/a učiš tuje jezike?
- a) Seveda
 - b) Niti ne
7. Če bi imel/a možnost, da bi se še učila kakšen drug jezik, bi to možnost sprejel/a?
- a) Seveda
 - b) Moral/a bi malce razmisliti
 - c) Ne, učenje jezikov se mi ne zdi zanimivo
8. Ali uporabljaš tuje jezike tudi izven pouka?
- a) Ja
 - b) Ne
9. Če jih kje? (označi)
- Pogovor s prijatelji
 - Socialna omrežja
 - Za gledanje raznih televizijskih serij brez podnapisov
 - Za razna potovanja z šolo in družino v razne tuje države

- Za igranje računalniških igric
- Za branje knjig v tujih jezikih
- Za sporazumevanje z ljudmi iz tujih držav

10. Ali bodo ti jeziki v nadaljnem šolanju pomagali?

Pri tem vprašanju, je tabela za označitev (da, ne, mogoče).

Trditve pri 10. Vprašanju:

Jeziki mi bodo pomagali pri nadaljnem šolanju

Tuje jeziko, bom 100% uporabljal/a v prihodnosti

11. Se strinjaš z navedenimi trditvami

Trditve imajo več možnosti. (se popolnoma strinjam, se delno strinjam, Se delno ne strinjam, se popolnoma ne strinjam)

Trditve pri 11. Vprašanju:

Učenje tujih jezikov mi gre dokaj dobro.

Za učenje tujih jezikov ne vložim veliko truda, vendar dobim pozitivno oceno

Učenje jezikov je zelo pomembno.

Jeziki me bodo spremljali v vsakdanjem življenju.