Bc. Martin Pašek

Contemporary Attitude to Teaching English Pronunciation in Classes of English at Primary and Secondary Schools in Třebíč

Bachelor thesis

Supervisor: PhDr. Jaroslav Ondráček, PhD.

Brno 2015
I declare that I have worked on this thesis independently, and used only the sources listed in the Bibliography.

Třebíč, 18th March 2015
BIBLIOGRAFICKÝ ZÁZNAM


ANOTACE

Bakalářská práce pojednává o výuce anglické výslovnosti na vybraných školách v Třebíči. Teoretická část nabízí základní přehled o fonetice a fonologii angličtiny, jakož i organizační strukturu a klíčových kurikulárních dokumentech se zaměřením na výuku výslovnosti cizího jazyka. Praktická část je založena na výzkumu vyučovacího procesu na vybraných školách, čehož bylo dosaženo pomocí dotazníků pro učitele, testů pro studenty a souborem nahrávek subjektů vybraných ze všech činitelů zúčastněných ve vzdělávacím procesu. Veškerá získaná data jsou následně analyzována a interpretována na základě rozličných faktorů, které se na vzdělávacím procesu podílejí.

ANNOTATION

This bachelor thesis deals with teaching of English pronunciation at selected schools in Třebíč. The theoretical part presents an elementary summary of English phonetics and phonology, as well as organizational structure and key curricular documents with focus on teaching pronunciation of a foreign language. The practical part is based on research of teaching process at selected schools, which was achieved with questionnaires for the teachers, tests for the learners and a set of recordings of subjects selected from all agents involved in the teaching process. Afterwards, all data are analysed and interpreted on a basis of several factors which contribute to the teaching-learning process.

KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA

Řeč, výslovnost, foném, samohláskový systém, souhláskový systém, suprasegmentální fonologické jevy, vzdělávací proces, výuka výslovnosti, základní škola, střední škola, Třebíč.

KEYWORDS

Speech, pronunciation, phoneme, vowel system, consonant system, suprasegmental phonological features, teaching-learning process, teaching of pronunciation, primary school, secondary school, Třebíč.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my deepest thanks to all the people involved in production of this thesis, namely PhDr. Jaroslav Ondráček, PhD., who provided me with valuable advice and sources of information and whose encouragements and enthusiasm helped me complete this thesis. I thank many other academic workers of the Department of the English language and literature, who supported my work and gave me enough energy and will to complete my study. I also appreciate the teachers who were willing to cooperate with me during my research and whose names shall be hidden and unknown due to their privacy. The students and pupils involved in the research helped me significantly, as well as my family and friends who supported me all the time.
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ABBREVIATIONS

CEFR — Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
CZ — Czech
CZK — Česká koruna (ISO 4217)
EN — English
FEP — Framework Educational Programme (Rámcový vzdělávací program)
FEP EE — Framework Educational Programme for Elementary Education (see Bibliography)
FEP G — Framework Educational Programme for Grammar Schools (see Bibliography)
FF — Faculty of arts (Filozofická fakulta)
GE — German
HIPA — Handbook of the International Phonetic Association (see Bibliography)
IPA — International Phonetic Alphabet (or International Phonetic Association)
LDAL — Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics (see Bibliography)
MEYS — Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy)
MU — Masaryk University (Masarykova univerzita)
NIFE — National Institute for Further Education (Národní institut dalšího vzdělávání)
QT — questionnaires for the teachers
RL — recordings of the learners
RP — received pronunciation
RT — recordings of the teachers
RU — Russian
SEP — School Educational Programme (Školní vzdělávací program)
SEP-6 — School Educational Programme for sixth grade (primary school)
SEP-7 — School Educational Programme for seventh grade (primary school)
SEP-8 — School Educational Programme for eighth grade (primary school)
SEP-9 — School Educational Programme for ninth grade (primary school)
SEP-I — School Educational Programme for first grade (secondary school)
SEP-II — School Educational Programme for second grade (secondary school)
SEP-III — School Educational Programme for third grade (secondary school)
SEP-IV — School Educational Programme for fourth grade (secondary school)
TL — tests for the learners
TV — television
UK — United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
USA — United States of America
COMMENTS ON PRIVACY

All actual names of the people involved in the research are hidden in the thesis due to the privacy of both teachers and learners. We will use specific codes instead of names.

Coding the names of the teachers: P or S for primary or secondary school and a number for particular teacher (P-1, P-2, P-3, P-4, S-1, S-2, S-3, S-x)

Coding the groups of learners: 8 or 9 for corresponding grade of a primary school or 1, 2 or 3 for corresponding grade for a secondary school; A, B, C, G, M or S for particular class and the code for the teacher (P-1, S-2, etc.)

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¹ A native speaker whose learners completed the test but no further cooperation continued since lack of time.
² First means fifth of the eight-year programme which corresponds with first of the four-year programme. Code 5G would be rather confusing in the context of our thesis.
TYPOGRAPHIC AND LEXICAL EXPLANATIONS

We follow standard typographical rules for text in English, such as capitals in a title of the thesis, long dashes and upper quotation marks. We decided to use the British variant sometimes called reverse commas (‘quote’) rather than American (“quote”) because of the fact British English and British pronunciation is standardly taught and learnt at primary and secondary schools in the Czech republic.

In addition to the standard rules, we set our own typographical and lexical rules special for this thesis. Thus, the words in a normal text (apart from titles of chapters and subchapters) written in:

**bold** — orthographical form of text

*italics* — emphasized words

‘quotations marks’ — quotations

[square brackets] — phonetic transcription (rare usage) or ellipsis [...] in quotations

/slashes/ — phonemic form of text (English in IPA, Czech mostly in Czech orthographical form)

азбукa (Cyrillic) — Russian orthographical form of text (in Chapter 4 only)

**ten of us** — linking of words

Finally, two crucial terms widely used in the thesis have to be explained:

Learner — any learner of English regardless of type of school (united expression for words ‘pupil’ and ‘student’)

Teacher — anyone who teaches English regardless of a position, the type of school, qualification, academic degree, etc. (united expression for words ‘primary school teacher’, ‘secondary school teacher’, ‘language school teacher’, ‘lector’, etc.)
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INTRODUCTION

English is one of the most common native languages in the world and is widely learnt as a second language. Since English is considered to be a global language or *lingua franca*, it is advisable that it is taught properly with all important features. Thus, it is hardly understandable that relatively large amount of learners do not speak properly. Czechs are not the best English speakers, as becomes obvious very often when some of our state representatives present a speech in English or when we see commercials for products with English names on television.

Generally, poor pronunciation of English by the Czech speakers might be attributed to relatively low interest in reading newspapers or books written in English, not listening to programmes in English or paying no attention to lyrics when listening to music. Another very important and influential source of our poor pronunciation is the fact that the teaching of it is often neglected and the main point of learning language is seen in vocabulary and grammar. The purpose of this thesis is not to glorify or praise pronunciation at the expense of other aspects of language, such as grammar, vocabulary or literature. The thesis attempts to examine the attitude of the teachers and learners to teaching (learning of) pronunciation.

The thesis does not aim at criticism of the system or particular teachers. It only intends to describe what actually occurs in the classes of English. We will observe what the teachers think about pronunciation and its role in learning a foreign language. We will examine the speaking and listening skills (productive and receptive abilities) of the learners. In the end, all results will be analysed and interpreted using statistical methods. We will search for relations between different factors (such as length of learning, class and school, teacher, visiting an English speaking country, etc.) and the quality of pronunciation of the learners.

We hope this thesis will contribute to expand awareness of how English pronunciation is taught, what the primary and secondary school learners sound like and what to be aware of when teaching/learning pronunciation.
I) THEORETICAL PART

1. Learning of English as a foreign language

Education and teaching-learning process in the Czech Republic is in competence of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and curricula for individual schools are stated in a variety of key documents.

1.1. Curricular documents

The essential documents for all types of schools in the Czech Republic are *Framework Educational Programmes* (FEPs) and *school educational programmes* (SEPs). FEPs are created and codified by the Ministry and there is a variety of programmes depending on the level of the education (e.g. primary schools, secondary schools, higher education institutions, etc.). On the basis of the relevant FEP, each school is obliged to create its own SEP. Individual SEPs can vary, however the goals and requirements stated in the FEP must be met.

*Framework Educational Programmes*

If we look closer at the curricular documents, we can identify the passages related with English and recommendations for quality of the language studied. Since our thesis is focused on pronunciation, here is a list of several citations from the FEPs:

- ‘The learner shall pronounce and read with correct pronunciation in an appropriate vocabulary range, [...] distinguish between the written and spoken forms of a word, [...] understand the content and meaning of a simple, slow and carefully pronounced conversation between two people with sufficient time for understanding.’

- ‘The learner shall read simple texts containing familiar vocabulary aloud fluently and respecting the rules of pronunciation.’

- ‘The learner shall make himself/herself understood in a simple manner in common everyday situations.’

- ‘The learner shall present a coherent speech on an assigned topic.’

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3 FEP EE, 2007, p. 23
4 ibid., p. 24
5 ibid., p. 25
6 FEP G, 2009, p. 17
• ‘Educational content: [...] phonetics — the phonetic structure of a word, the phonetic aspect of a sentence, phonetic reduction, phonetic features’

As can be seen above, the formulations in the FEPs are usually very general and vacuous. The crucial points of outcomes in the foreign language are vocabulary, grammar and intelligibility in the broadest sense. However, any attempt to concretize and standardize the outcomes in the field of pronunciation seems to be unsuccessful.

**School Educational Programmes**

Our intention in the following paragraphs is to introduce the fundamental passages from SEPs of the observed schools that are connected with phonetic aspects of a foreign language as well as productive and receptive skills which are intended to be obtained in the particular grades. Since our research was performed in the eighth and ninth grades of the primary school and four other classes of the grammar school, we shall focus on the programmes for the grades included in the further research.

**Primary school**

Before we start to analyse the SEP, we should provide elementary information about structure of the school and English classes. The school observed contains nine grades, while foreign language (English or German) is taught since the third grade. There are three lessons of foreign language per week in each grade. On account of an obligation to teach second foreign language at primary schools since 2013/2014, the second foreign languages (German and Russian) are taught at the observed school since the seventh grade.

In addition to the standard programme, the school offers specialized classes. ‘The secondary level [sixth—ninth grade] includes specialised classes in each year of study. The A and B/C classes offer standard education. The M class (since 1984) specialises in Maths and Sciences. The S class (since 1971) has an extensive number of Physical Education lessons.’

Since 2010 the school has been, as one of the first, participating in the *EU money for schools*, which is a tool for supporting the improvement of fields of study which have been considered problematic for a long time. Concerning teaching English, the finances (hundreds of thousands of

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7 FEP G, 2007, p. 17
8 The term *second foreign language* is used in the English version of FEP EE.
9 http://www.zstgmtrebic.cz
CZK) have been used for establishing the specialised language classroom and for improving the skills of the more talented pupils. In practice, it means that there is a placement test sat in the beginning of the sixth grade. Then the pupils with the best score (within all classes) are granted special higher-level lessons (one per week), whilst the others have normal lessons and can do more exercises and activities to score better at the standard level. The output level of language is A2 after the ninth grade. One of the teachers of English language is a native speaker. He refused cooperation due to lack of time, though. We performed the research with help and cooperation with four other teachers.

The SEP is updated to some extent each year and we use SEP for 2013/2014. The outcomes connected with pronunciation are presented in a very general manner. The learners are supposed to:

• ‘…strengthen the rules of pronunciation and phonetic phenomena […] search required pieces of information in simple authentic everyday materials […] understand the content of simple and clearly pronounced speech or conversation connected with known topics…’ (receptive skills)

• ‘…read aloud fluently and phonetically correct texts of adequate length […] understand the content of simple and clearly pronounced speech or conversation on usual topics […] distinguish between formal and informal speech or conversation…’ (receptive skills)

• ‘…pronounce using correct phrasing, word and sentence stress, pitch and power of the voice and tempo of speech to provide a speech fluency of adequate content…’ (productive skills)

The list of the outcomes seems to be insufficient itself, but there is a prerequisite of completing the previous grades. To be more concrete, we should add some quotes from SEP for sixth and seventh grades. The learners should:

\[\text{SEP-8}\]
\[\text{SEP-9}\]
\[\text{Ibid.}\]

\[\text{We decided not to list the skills mentioned above (e.g. ‘understand the content of simple and clearly pronounced speech or conversation about usual topics’) and repeated in SEPs for the previous grades.}\]
• ‘…learn word […] and sentence stress, linking, rhythm and intonation of elementary sentence types…’ (receptive skills)\textsuperscript{16}

• ‘…word stress, past tenses — pronunciation, weak forms…’ (curriculum)\textsuperscript{17}

• ‘…silent letters, phonetic alphabet (consonants and vowels)…’ (curriculum)\textsuperscript{18}

\textit{Secondary school}

The observed secondary school offers two study programmes: four-year and eight-year, while the higher grades of the eight-year programme correspond with the four-year programme and the differences are negligible. All learners at the secondary school (except lower grade students of the eight-year programme) are obliged to study two foreign languages, whereas one of them has to be English. The main foreign language (English or German) is taught in three (first and second grade) and four lessons a week (third and fourth grade). The increased number of lessons in the two final years correlates with the obligatory maturita exam from a foreign language supposing the main foreign language. The second foreign language (English, German, French and Russian\textsuperscript{19}) is taught three lessons a week during all the four grades.

In addition, the learners enrol in three or four seminars in third and fourth grade, which means two more lessons per each. One of the offered seminars is English seminar which is divided into three groups according to level of the learners. Learners entering the school as first graders of the eight-year programme are sitting a placement test in the very beginning of their study. They are divided into two groups (higher level/lower level) according to their results and the division remains for all the eight years.

The output level of English is B2\textsuperscript{20}. Teachers use recordings and contact with correct model of pronunciation is ensured by listening to native speakers (recorded), guests (learners from foreign countries, debates and discussions, etc.). There are ten teachers of English language at that school, one of them is a native speaker. Only three teachers were engaged into the research, however the native speaker refused the cooperation because of the lack of time, as well as the native speaker from the primary school.

\textsuperscript{16} SEP-6
\textsuperscript{17} ibid.
\textsuperscript{18} SEP-7
\textsuperscript{19} We can add Latin to the list as an optional subject (seminar) in third and fourth grade.
\textsuperscript{20} according to CEFR
The SEP for the higher grades (four-year programme) was approved in 2009 and is being revised currently. The expected outcomes are again defined very broadly. Each skill and each grade operates with ‘being understandable/intelligible’ which means that the learners are expected to speak fluently and pronounce correctly. In addition, the speaking skills and right manners of pronunciation should be learnt at the primary school and deepen at secondary school. There are prerequisites (such as knowledge of phonemic symbols, distinguishing the minimal pairs, using proper rhythm and intonation, etc.) considered to be an accomplished goal from primary school.

The only explicit expression about pronunciation in the SEP is following:

- ‘phonetics, orthography[,] intonation’ (instruments of language)

1.2. Training of teachers in the field of phonetics and phonology

Standard training of teachers of the English language is carried out by accredited study programs at state universities, particularly at faculties of education or arts, respectively. Every accredited study program connected with linguistics contains courses of phonetics and phonology, one or two semesters are compulsory and further courses are optional. On the other hand, rather little attention is paid to methodology of teaching pronunciation. Moreover, there is a large offer of courses led by the MEYS, NIFE, etc.

2. Learning foreign language pronunciation

As has been mentioned, pronunciation is one of the most important skills in learning of a foreign language. In some situations, it is not relevant whether one uses the right expression or tense, unless the meaning of a sentence is still clear. For example, if one uses past simple tense instead of present perfect, the intelligibility of the sentence is not much affected. The same situation may occur when the speaker is not sure about the right expression and simply replaces the intended word by another with similar meaning. The information is still clear, especially when the ideas are written.

On the other hand, wrong pronunciation may cause not only problems with understanding the meaning of a sentence but also change the meaning completely and cause extremely uncomfortable situations (e.g. when a representative in the United Nations replaces /iː/ in a word peace with /ɪ/).

21 SEP-I, SEP-II, SEP-III, intonation only in SEP-IV
The reason why we learn right models of pronunciation is to speak in a way that decreases the possibility of being misunderstood to a minimum. Speaking in that manner is called *comfortable intelligibility* and is the main and only purpose of teaching English pronunciations in obligatory courses at standard schools.

Another level of pronunciation is an imitation of a particular type of native-like type of pronunciation, RP or dialect which is neither the purpose of learning pronunciation at standard schools, nor the subject of this thesis, because we performed our research at standard schools. It should be mentioned that teachers at that schools are trained in British English and British pronunciation or RP, respectively.

### 2.1. Factors that affect pronunciation learning

This chapter is based on a chapter from Kenworthy (1990) with the same title. We shall add some comments according to the environment of our research.

**The native language**

Since all of the observed speakers (teachers and learners) are native Czech speakers, there are not expected any difficulties caused by different native language. What may affect the pronunciation of English is the second foreign language that learners learn simultaneously. If the second foreign language is German, some problems are expected (see Chapter 4).

**The age factor**

The age of the learners does not play any significant role in the research, for all of them are in relatively same age (13—18). The experience with English (length of learning) as well as the length of teaching practice of the teachers are more important for us than the age itself.

**Amount of exposure**

Amount of exposure to the language and its pronunciation is the only variable factor in the research. We shall examine whether the learner\(^\text{22}\):

- has been to an English speaking country (and for how long)
- watches films or programmes in English (with or without subtitles)

\(^{22}\) The teachers were asked similar questions (see Chapter 2.1 of the Practical part).
The remaining subchapters from Kenworthy has been omitted since the hearing ability, attitude and motivation cannot be determined or proved on a basis of our research.\textsuperscript{23}

2.2. Types of learning problems

Kelly (2000) states, ‘There are two key problems with pronunciation teaching. Firstly it tends to be neglected. And secondly when it is not neglected, it tends to be reactive to a particular problem that is arisen in the classroom rather than being strategically planned.’

The teachers involved in our research confirmed that statement and added the main reason why little attention is paid to pronunciation in the classes of English. The lack of time. The curricula does not deal with pronunciation to that extent as in a case of vocabulary and grammar, although there is a strong requirement of good speaking skills. Thus, the teaching of pronunciation is minimized to one exercise per unit in a textbook. The exercises usually focuses on distinguishing of minimal pairs (e.g. ‘Circle the word you hear.’).

Another widely used method at observed schools is drill connected with learning a new word. Unfortunately, very little or no time can be dedicated to suprasegmental features of pronunciation (exceptions exist), such as stresses, linking and intonation. Some of the questions for the teachers shall be:

- How important is pronunciation in comparison with the other aspects of language (grammar, vocabulary, literature, etc.)?
- How do you assess pronunciation?
- What percentage of the final grade does pronunciation roughly represent?

3. Phonemic system of English

In order to deal with numerous terms and expressions in the research itself, it is more than appropriate to explain them in the theoretical part. There exists a large variety of definitions and explanations. Our intention is to generalize the theory presented by many authors to make this thesis suitable as a complementary material for teachers and learners of English pronunciation.

\textsuperscript{23} This statement is not absolutely true. During the recording sessions, some of the learners expressed both extremely positive and negative attitude toward English and/or learning itself.
Then (in Chapter 4) we shall look more precisely at the differences between English, Czech and other usually taught languages that may affect the correct pronunciation of English.

The most suitable, though not universal, division of the features of pronunciation is presented by Kelly:

![Image of features of pronunciation (Kelly, 2000)]

As can be seen in Fig. 1, the very fundamental is distinction between phonemes (individual sounds) and suprasegmental features (features at the level of syllables, words or sentences). Then, phonemes can be divided into consonants and vowels. This distinction is clear, but more problematic division follows. We will discuss it more thoroughly in the next two subchapters, as well as examine the suprasegmental features in the Chapter 3.3.

3.1. Consonants

Consonants are sounds in which there is an obstruction to the flow of air as it passes from the larynx to the lips. The problem with further distinction is connected with the fact, that there are at least three criteria for distinguishing the consonants which are based on the VPM characteristics.

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24 Roach, 2000
25 voicing-place-manner
**Voicing**

Some of the consonants, though not all of them, can create pairs (minimal pairs) that do not differ in place or manner of articulation but in the voicing. Voiced consonants are created when the vocal folds vibrate. These consonants can be called *lenis* as well.

On the contrary, unvoiced (voiceless or *fortis*) consonants are pronounced without vibration of the vocal folds. Unvoiced plosives /p/, /t/, /k/ in the initial position within a word or a syllable are aspirated, which means that a short /h/ sound is added right after in the post-release phase ([pʰ], [tʰ], [kʰ]). As has been said above, there are eight pairs of voiced-unvoiced consonants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>plosives</th>
<th>fricatives</th>
<th>affricatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>voiced</td>
<td>/p/</td>
<td>/t/</td>
<td>/k/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unvoiced</td>
<td>/b/</td>
<td>/d/</td>
<td>/ɡ/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Place of articulation**

Since the consonants are produced when the airflow from the lungs is modified by an obstacle, we distinguished consonants according to their articulators.26

---

26 places where an obstacle affects the airflow
There are eight sets of consonants in English according to the place of articulation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>set</th>
<th>articulators</th>
<th>consonants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bilabial</td>
<td>both lips</td>
<td>/p/, /b/, /m/, /w/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>labiodental</td>
<td>upper teeth and lower lip</td>
<td>/ɬ/, /ʃ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dental (interdental)</td>
<td>tongue and upper teeth</td>
<td>/θ/, /ð/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alveolar</td>
<td>tongue and alveolar ridge</td>
<td>/ʃ/, /ʒ/, /s/, /z/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>postalveolar</td>
<td>tongue and back of the alveolar ridge</td>
<td>/ʃ/, /ʒ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>palatal</td>
<td>tongue and the hard palate</td>
<td>/ʃ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>velar</td>
<td>tongue and the soft palate (velum)</td>
<td>/k/, /ɡ/, /ŋ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>glottal</td>
<td>glottis</td>
<td>/h/, /ʔ/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Manner of articulation

As mentioned in the definition of the consonant, the airflow from the lungs is modified in some way, according to what we distinguished six sets of consonants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>set</th>
<th>modification of the airstream</th>
<th>consonants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>plosives (stops)</td>
<td>stopped and released suddenly</td>
<td>/p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/, /ɡ/, /ʔ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fricatives</td>
<td>allowed to escape with a friction</td>
<td>/ʃ/, /ʒ/, /θ/, /ð/, /s/, /z/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>affricatives (affricates)</td>
<td>stopped and then released slowly with a friction</td>
<td>/ts/, /ʃt/, /dʒ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nasal</td>
<td>flows through the nose, velum lowered</td>
<td>/m/, /n/, /ŋ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lateral</td>
<td>partially blocked, can escape on one or both sides of the blockade</td>
<td>/ɬ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>approximant</td>
<td>articulators are not touching each other</td>
<td>/w/, /ʃ/, /ʃ/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, the standard chart or table of English consonants according to place of articulation, manner and voicing can be presented (see Appendices 1 and 2).
3.2. Vowels

On the contrary to consonants, vowels are produced with no obstacle in the airflow. In addition, they are capable to create syllables. Vowels are usually divided into single vowels and diphthongs (see Fig. 1), but it should be noted that triphthongs occur in English as well.

**Single vowels**

Single vowels are sounds which are produced without any change in their characteristics. Vowels are divided into sets by a number of different characteristics. According to Cruttenden, Roach, LDAL, the standard ones are:

- **front, central** and **back** (distinguished by which part of the tongue is raised)
- **high, mid** and **low** (distinguished by how far the tongue is from the palate)
- **rounded, neutral** and **spread** (distinguished by the shape of the lips)
- **tense** and **lax** (distinguished by the muscular tension) — tense vowels are slightly longer and higher than lax vowels. Tense vowels can occur in stressed open syllables (bee, bay, saw), whereas lax vowels can occur in monosyllabic words ending with /ŋ/ (sing, long).
- **long** and **short** (distinguished by their length) — the difference is marked by /ː/ after a vowel in transcription. Tense vowels are long and lax vowels are short. It means, there is a slight difference in quality of the same vowels in long/short pair. Furthermore, there exist semi-long vowels as a result of *fortis-lenis* effect, but it is not expected to be learnt at standard primary or secondary schools.
- **schwa** (\(\varepsilon\), \(\varepsilon\)) — a special and highly used vowel which can occur in both short and long forms. Neutral in articulation, very important in English.

The standard graphical expression of vowels is a quadrilateral diagram by International Phonetic Association. If we combine it with the table of consonants, it will result as chart of English

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27 It has to be stated there that /l/ and /n/ have the capacity to be syllabic in words like kitten or little.
28 sometimes rounded and unrounded only
29 LDAL
30 ibid.
31 The schwa needs to be listed as a special category for its importance, unique articulation and central position in the diagram.
phonemes. The chart will be introduced later with comparison to Czech phonemes (see Appendix 2).

**Diphthongs**

Diphthong is a vowel in which a change in quality occurs during a syllable. They are always longer than single vowels. According to the diagram for vowels, there are centring and closing.

- centring diphthongs are those ending with schwa (/ɪə/ as in here, /eə/ as in there, /ʊə/ as in pure)
- closing diphthongs are subdivided into:
  - ending in /ɪ/ (/eɪ/ as in steak, /aɪ/ as in tie, /ɔɪ/ as in noise)
  - ending in /ʊ/ (/əʊ/ as in boat, /aʊ/ as in mouth)

**Triphthongs**

Triphthongs are sounds created from the diphthongs by addition of a short schwa to the end. There are only five triphthongs in English (/aɪə/ as in fire, /eɪə/ as in player, /ɔɪə/ as in lawyer, /auə/ as in hour and /əʊə/ as in lower).

---

32 Roach, 2000
33 See Appendix 2.
34 There occurs /ɔʊ/ instead of /əʊ/ in American pronunciation.
3.3. Suprasegmental features

Suprasegmental feature ‘extends over more than one sound in an utterance’.\textsuperscript{35} The distinction may be based on stress/non-stress features or on word/clause level. We chose the distinction by Ondráček (2011), based on that of Kelly\textsuperscript{36}:

![Flow chart of suprasegmental classification (Ondráček, 2011)](image)

**Word stress/sentence stress**

Stress (sometimes accent) is a pronunciation of syllable or word with more respiratory energy or muscular force than other syllables or words in the same utterance.\textsuperscript{37} The stressed syllable or word is heard as louder, higher in pitch and longer than others in the same utterance. We distinguish two forms of stress.

Word stress occurs in words longer than one syllable. In complex words (composed of two or more grammatical units, such as suffixes and prefixes) and compound words (that can be analysed into two words, both of which can exist independently as English words\textsuperscript{38}), there are both primary (/\textipa{}/) stress and secondary stress (/\textipa{}/). That means that one syllable is much more prominent than others whereas there is another important and prominent syllable though not as prominent as the one with the primary stress (e.g. \textipa{intonation} /\textipa{ɪn.təˈneɪʃn}/, \textipa{responsibility} /\textipa{rɪˈspɒnsɪˈbɪlɪtɪ}/). The stress in English words is not regular and must be learnt with each new word independently.

\textsuperscript{35} LDAL
\textsuperscript{36} Kelly, 2000
\textsuperscript{37} LDAL
\textsuperscript{38} Roach, 2000
Sentence stress emphasises the most prominent word within a sentence or clause. The sentence stress most commonly falls on content words\textsuperscript{39} that contain new information. In other case, a speaker can emphasize any syllable or word that they wish to highlight.\textsuperscript{40}

\textit{Elision}

Elision is deleting or omitting of some sounds in the connected speech, especially when the speaker speaks rapidly. The purpose of elision is economy of pronunciation.\textsuperscript{41} There exist many types of elision (such as \textbf{perhaps} [p\textipa{ɪ}ps], \textbf{tonight} /\textipa{tɒnɪt}/, \textbf{looked back} /\textipa{lʊkd ˈbæk}/, \textbf{waste of money} /\textipa{wɛst ə mʌnɪ}/\textsuperscript{42}), but we find it irrelevant for our research.

\textit{Assimilation}

Assimilation is a phonological process in which a speech sound changes and becomes more like or identical to another sound that precedes or follows it.\textsuperscript{43}

\begin{align*}
\text{in the} & \quad /\text{ɪn }\text{ðə}/ \rightarrow /\text{ɪn} \text{nə}/ \\
\text{get them} & \quad /\text{ɡeɪt} \text{ðəm}/ \rightarrow /\text{ɡet} \text{əm}/ \\
\text{read these} & \quad /\text{riːd} \text{dɪz}/ \rightarrow /\text{riːd} \text{dɪz}/\textsuperscript{44}
\end{align*}

This aspect is rather irrelevant for our research as well.

\textit{Linking}

Linking (or \textit{liaison}) in continuous speech connects the end of one word or syllable to the beginning of the next.\textsuperscript{45} Although there are many types of linking, such as linking /\textipa{w}/ (\textbf{you aren’t} [\textipa{juː ərənt}]\textsuperscript{46}) and /\textipa{j}/ (\textbf{may ask} [\textipa{meɪ ˈɑːsk}]\textsuperscript{47}) or intrusive /\textipa{r}/ (\textbf{Formula A} /\textipa{fɔːmjələr eɪ/}\textsuperscript{48}), consonant-vowel linking is the only type we expect to be used by the learners during our research.

\textit{Reduction}

\textsuperscript{39} often the last word in a sentence
\textsuperscript{40} LDAL
\textsuperscript{41} Ondráček, 2011
\textsuperscript{42} Roach, 2000
\textsuperscript{43} LDAL
\textsuperscript{44} Roach, 2000
\textsuperscript{45} LDAL
\textsuperscript{46} Cruttenden, 1996
\textsuperscript{47} ibid.
\textsuperscript{48} Roach, 2000
Some words can be pronounced in two forms (strong and weak). The strong form is usually used when the word is stressed or pronounced in isolation. In other situations, these words are pronounced with a reduction of some of the sounds (e.g. definite article the in strong form /ðiː/ and weak form /ðə/ or /ðɪ/). We expect little distinction between strong and weak forms by the learners during the research.

**Intonation**

Intonation is a changing of pitch when speaking and is connected with typical intonation patterns used in appropriate types of sentences or clauses (e.g. intonation of a yes-no question is different than the one of a wh-question or declarative sentence).\(^{49}\) We can observe whether the learners change pitch when speaking and whether the change is made in a proper way according to the type of the sentence.

**Rhythm**

In general, rhythm is a regular succession of strong and weak elements. In music, the elements are beats or bars, in speech, they are strong and weak (or stressed and unstressed) syllables. The distribution of strong syllables within a sentence is more or less regular and the time unit between strong syllables is called *foot*. Rhythm is very important in poetry, since it makes the text more artistic, easier to be learnt and remembered, etc. In normal speech, the proper rhythm is necessary to sound natural. The rhythm is very closely connected with intonation and linking as well. We will pay little attention to rhythm in the research since it is a complex feature of pronunciation which is not expected to be used by the learners correctly.

\(^{49}\) Skaličková, 1979
4. Comparison of phonemic systems and pronunciation of English and Czech (German, Russian) languages

We chose English and Czech languages for comparison of their sound systems and pronunciation because there can be found many differences. Since German and Russian languages are taught as second foreign languages in the Czech Republic, we added them to the comparison for understanding the connection between written and spoken words and the possible confusion and mispronunciation of some words.50

4.1. Consonants

Phonetic material of all four languages is very similar to each other, however some of the consonants from one language do not occur in another one (English th, Czech ř, no h in Russian51). It can be observed that English and German as Germanic languages have similar orthographical transcription of individual sounds as well as Czech and Russian as Slavic languages.52 What might be a potential problem for learners of foreign language is the different quality of the same sound (Czech and English h, Czech and Russian ž-k, sh-sch-š-m-m or pronunciation of r53). We present affricates /ts/, /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ despite the fact that these phonemes are combinations of two simple phonemes. It has to be noted, that approximants /j/ and /w/ are sometimes called semivowels by many writers.55

With an inspiration from the bachelor thesis of Pavel Hrubeš56 we decided to write down the complete list of English consonants and state possible problems connected with pronunciation that may occur.

50 There can be taught more second foreign languages, as French, Spanish or Latin, but we omitted them since we did include only six learners of French and no learners of the other languages in our research.
51 It has to be stated that this fact cannot affect the pronunciation of /h/ since we did not observe any native Russians.
52 regardless to Cyrillic
53 R is typically pronounced as trill /r/ in Czech and Russian, uvular fricative /ʁ/ in German and approximant /ɹ/ in English. In Slavic languages, r can be syllabic, whereas in Germanic ones it is replaced with schwa in these cases.
54 This sound occurs only in clusters in English, but it should be included in the table because of its common occurrence in all four languages. On the other hand, there is another affricate /pf/ in German (Apfel, Empfindsamkeit) which is not included for the absence of it in the other languages.
55 Roach, 2000
56 Hrubeš, 2008
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>phoneme</th>
<th>spelling</th>
<th>possible problems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/p/</td>
<td>(p), (p, b)</td>
<td>may be pronounced without the aspiration(^{60})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/b/</td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>may be pronounced as /p/ in the final position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/t/</td>
<td>(t), (d)</td>
<td>may be pronounced without the aspiration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/d/</td>
<td>(d)</td>
<td>may be pronounced as /t/ in the final position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/k/</td>
<td>(c, ch), (k, g)</td>
<td>may be pronounced without the aspiration, when (ch) occurs, may be pronounced as /x/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/g/</td>
<td>(g)</td>
<td>may be pronounced as /k/ in the final position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/m/</td>
<td>(m)</td>
<td>no problems expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/n/</td>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>no problems expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ŋ/</td>
<td>(ng), (nk, ng)</td>
<td>may be pronounced as /ŋg/ or /ŋk/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/f/</td>
<td>(ph, gh)</td>
<td>no problems expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/v/</td>
<td>(v), (w, qu) (^{61})</td>
<td>may be pronounced as /w/, learners of German may pronounce as /f/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/θ/</td>
<td>(th)</td>
<td>may be pronounced as /f/, /ʃ/, /s/, or /[^p]/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ð/</td>
<td>(th)</td>
<td>may be pronounced as /d/, /z/ or /dz/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/s/</td>
<td>(s), (s, ss, ʃ)</td>
<td>may be pronounced as /z/, learners of German may pronounce /ʃ/ when occurs in sp and st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/z/</td>
<td>(s), (z)</td>
<td>may be pronounced as /s/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ʃ/</td>
<td>(sh), (š)</td>
<td>no problems expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ʒ/ (^{62})</td>
<td>(g), (ž)</td>
<td>no problems expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/h/</td>
<td>(h)</td>
<td>no problems expected, though it may be pronounced as voiced(^{63})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ts/</td>
<td>(ts), (č), (č), (tsch)</td>
<td>no problems expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ʃ/</td>
<td>(ch), (sh), (š), (tsch)</td>
<td>may be pronounced as /x/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ʒ/</td>
<td>(g), (ʒ), (dʒ)</td>
<td>may be pronounced as /g/ or /ʒ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/w/</td>
<td>(w, qu)</td>
<td>may be pronounced as /v/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/r/</td>
<td>(r)</td>
<td>no problems expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/j/</td>
<td>(j), (i)</td>
<td>no problems expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/l/</td>
<td>(l)</td>
<td>no problems expected, though using of /l/ is not expected</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{57}\) These columns are highly simplified to understand the main differences. We are aware of a large number of different spellings pronounced with listed sounds.

\(^{58}\) Czech phonetic transcription combines symbols from the IPA chart with Czech letters.

\(^{59}\) Russian, as well as Czech distinguishes between hard and soft consonants. In written text, hard consonants occur before \(y\) (ъ, ы, э) while soft before \(i\) (ё, е, и, ы, я). Soft consonants can be marked with ' in Czech (ž, š, č, ř, ď, ť, ɲ) or are indicated by apostrophe in Russian phonetic transcription. In Russian almost all consonants can be both hard and soft depending on its position within the word. Thus we have /м'/, /с'/, /п'/, /р'/, etc. in Russian.

\(^{60}\) Aspirated /p/, /t/, /k/ occur in German as well. Thus, learners of German may be more successful in aspiration than learners of other second foreign languages.

\(^{61}\) The difference between pronunciation of qu in English /kw/ on one hand and Czech and German /kv/ on the other can be viewed as a source of mispronunciation that occurs very often.

\(^{62}\) This phoneme in Germanic languages occurs only in words adopted from other languages (esp. French).

\(^{63}\) In German /h/ is unvoiced as in English. Thus, learners of German may be more successful in pronunciation of /h/ than learners of other second foreign languages.
We are aware of oversimplification of the problems listed above as well as slight differences in pronunciation of some of the phonemes. However, the problems and the differences are not the main point in this thesis.

4.2. Vowels

Concerning vowels, there is much stronger diversity of pronunciation in listed languages. All the languages use short and long vowels. Umlauts occur in German, in addition to the standard ones. In Czech, there is no difference between articulation of long and short vowels. This may cause unnatural pronunciation of English vowels, but it is not that problematic to be included in this thesis. We found the comment about different pronunciation of written consonants (typically u, oo, ú, ů and Russian y) sufficient. Problems may occur when a short vowel is pronounced as long (/uː/ in book) and vice versa (/ɪ/ in sheet).

Concerning diphthongs and triphthongs, the pronunciation may be affected by the fact that there occur only /ou/ (boule), /au/ (mňau) and possible /eu/ (euforie) in the Czech language. Sounds very close to diphthongs /æt/, /ɛt/ and /ɔt/ occur in Czech, but they are classified as combinations of a vowel and consonant /j/, which is clear being aware of the written form (vlajka, hejno, sojka).

4.3. Suprasegmental features of pronunciation

We consider more than appropriate to list some of the suprasegmental features through the languages involved in our research. It is worthy to state at this place that there is no larger comparative monographic work on different aspects of pronunciation of English and Czech, since that of Skaličková (1979).

Linking

As has been mentioned in Chapter 3.3, there are three main types of linking in English while ‘in standard Czech there is no linking; words are separated by a glottal stop. Because of this, Czechs find this kind [consonant-vowel] of linking very difficult.’ (Ondráček, 2011)

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64 There may be differences (as in every language) in spreading of i/y and e according to the regions (Prague i/y is totally different than south Moravian one, speakers from Brno may have specific pronunciation of e), as well as in length of vowels (shortening of long vowels in Ostrava region). Furthermore, there is a difference between pronunciation of ɨ and ɨ in Russian, but it is not expected to affect English pronunciation.
This statement is unquestionably true, however it should be stated that in colloquial Czech there is linking. Consonant-vowel linking is absolutely normal (byli jsme tam /bili sme tam/\(^{65}\)). When the final sound of first word and initial sound of second are both vowels, the words may be linked by the ‘intrusive /v/’ (u okna /uvokna/) or by connecting both vowels into a sort of diphthong /uokna/. The latter linking is used in some Moravian regional dialects and is usual in standard Russian pronunciation.

The comments and examples mentioned above tends to illustrate similarities among languages which can be useful in teaching English (e.g. when teaching intrusive /r/, comment about Czech colloquial ‘intrusive /v/’ may help learners understand the English linking by the intrusive /r/).

**Stress**

Word stress does occur and is being used in a natural way in all four languages involved in our research. The fundamental difference between Czech and any other languages mentioned above is that Czech language uses static stress. It means that the first syllable in every Czech word is stressed. If the word has three or more syllables, the secondary stresses occur on every odd syllable in that word.

On the other hand, in English, as well as in German and Russian, the word stress is dynamic and may occur on different syllables within one word. In this case, the grammatical category of that word might be changed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun/Adjective</th>
<th>Verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>combine</td>
<td>/ˈkɒmbain/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>progress</td>
<td>/ˈprəʊ.gres/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>record</td>
<td>/ˈrek.kɔːd/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Moreover, in all the languages mentioned in our research, except Czech, there is a reduction in unstressed syllables which is best noticeable in Russian. There is no reduction of unstressed syllables in Czech which may cause mispronunciation of English (German, Russian) sentences.

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\(^{65}\) In many cases, such as here, initial /j/ is omitted in colloquial Czech. In some Moravian regions, the first consonant of jsme after /j/ may be pronounced as /z/ instead of /s/ when a vowel precedes.

\(^{66}\) Cruttenden, 1996
The sentence stress occurs in all mentioned languages, especially when a speaker wants to emphasize an important piece of information.

**Intonation**

Intonation is a very complex feature and occurs in all four languages. It has the same function (distinguishing the type of a sentence, emotions, etc.) in all four languages. The peak (‘highest syllable’) in all four languages corresponds with the most stressed syllable. The interval between highest and lowest ‘tone’ in English is larger than in Czech. Thus, Czech learners tend to flatten the intonation, because they feel uncomfortable and unnatural when speaking with such broad intonation. In Czech, extreme intonation, very similar to English, is used only in exceptionally emotional utterances or on stage in theatre.

There exist a large number of intonation patterns in each language (e.g. 7 intonation constructions in Russian) which should be used properly. What is rather easy for Czech learners, that the two basic patterns of English pronunciation (tune one — falling, tune two — rising) are used in a relatively similar way as in Czech. The list of patterns on the next page contains both English and Czech intonation models. The English examples are taken from Skaličková (1979), while we added the Czech equivalents of the sentences to demonstrate similarities or slight differences. Dots mark unstressed syllables, lines (both straight and curved) represent stressed syllables. Curved line symbolises a change in the pitch within the syllables. The differences in pitch intervals are not included in the table, since it would be a matter of a specialised thesis.

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67 Furthermore, there may exist regional or social varieties within one language as well.
As can be seen in the table, the intonation patterns in English and Czech are noticeably similar, though slight differences in intervals and changing of the pitch do exist.

5. **Formulation of hypotheses for the further research**

We will perform a research based on assessment of speaking and listening abilities of selected learners. We formulated ten hypotheses for the future research:

- There will occur a large number of mistakes, especially those typical for Czechs.
- The suprasegmental features of pronunciation will hardly occur.
- The secondary school learners will score better than the primary school learners.
- The mathematic-class learners will score better than the standard-class learners.
- The eight-year programme learners will score better than the four-year learners.
- The achieved score depends on length of learning English.
- Learners of German will make specific mistakes.
- A long term stay in an English speaking country will increase the score rapidly.
- The learners who watch films or TV programmes in English will score better than the ones who do not watch.
- The learners who play a musical instrument will score better than the ones who do not play any.
II) PRACTICAL PART

In the practical part, we will perform a research focused on English pronunciation in the classes of English at particular schools.

1. Introduction and methodology

We selected two schools in Třebíč (primary and secondary) for cooperation and set some crucial research methods in order to get as accurate results as possible.

First, we needed to acquire an elementary knowledge of the environment and non-teaching/learning aspects of relationship between the speakers and English pronunciation which can affect the pronunciation of the subjects. We used questionnaires and tests for gathering this type of information. The questionnaires for teachers were focused on their teaching experience, qualification for teaching pronunciation, attitude to teaching pronunciation and preferences of elementary aspects of the language such as vocabulary, grammar, literature, etc. Then the teachers were asked individually whether they are interested in the research and if they are willing to continue in cooperation. The test for learners was extracted from *English Pronunciation in Use*\(^{68}\) and consisted of listening and non-listening parts. According to the test results, samples of learners were chosen for further research\(^{69}\).

It is obvious that research in the field of phonetics and phonology cannot be performed without some audio material. We chose two methods for recording the samples of speeches of observed teachers and learners. Each recording consists of two parts: a short informal interview at the beginning in order to make the recorded subject feel comfortable, and text from a textbook to be read aloud and recorded. We asked a set of questions in the first part of the interview. There were two questions for the teachers (‘What do you like the most about teaching English?’ and ‘What do you like the least about teaching English?’). In the case of learners, the main points were: the length of learning English, possible stay in an English speaking country, ability to play a musical instrument, custom of watching films in English (listening to radio or TV programmes in English respectively) and the fact if the learner is studying any other foreign language. The grade from


\(^{69}\) We used the Gaussian curve for selection of the learners. A group of learners with the highest, the lowest and an average score within each class was selected.
English as a subject in the school is not considered as an objective factor of pronunciation qualities of the subjects.

During the recording sessions we faced some problems connected either with the recording environment or the recorded subject. Concerning the environment, the recording sessions were not held in ideal rooms, since no others were unoccupied at the time the recording sessions were held. In the case of the primary school the teacher’s lounge was chosen and the learners were affected by the unknown environment. When recording at the secondary school both rooms were inappropriately chosen — one has poor acoustics with a strong echo while in the other some teachers were passing through and the recording had to be interrupted in some cases.

We recorded both teachers and learners. One teacher refused to be recorded acknowledging she is extremely shy even when taking photographs. The learners were showing shyness as well and undoubtedly that many of them were feeling so unconfident in their vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation of English that they answered with one word sentences, spoke Czech or did not answer at all.

The recording sessions were held in May—June 2014 in both school buildings using MXL 770 condenser microphone with a pop filter, Focusrite I-track solo external sound card and a trial version of Cubase 5 recording software.

2. Research

2.1. Questionnaires for the teachers (QT)

Prior to the research, we needed to find teachers willing to cooperate with regard to travel and time possibilities of the researcher, considering the next stages of the research. We consulted some contacts with a specialist from an organisation focusing on educating and counselling specialists, based on the European Social Fund projects. We managed to gather contact information about a large number of teachers from many schools and towns. A questionnaire consisting of 21 questions was composed and sent by e-mail and/or given to the teachers personally. Finally, we got 22 answered questionnaires back.

2.2. Analyses of QT

Among the 22 teachers who answered the questionnaire, there were 17 from Třebíč and five from another place (Náměšť nad Oslavou, Velké Meziříčí). We decided to further contact only the
ones from Třebíč. The length of their teaching practice varies from 4 to 25 years, they teach at primary, secondary and language schools and the only native speaker among them also teaches lessons for adults. The teachers usually teach from 11 to 30 lessons per week, but the answers can be ambiguous because we don’t know how many of them are English and how many are others. We asked this question more precisely when cooperating with the selected teachers. All of the teachers who answered the questionnaire visited an English speaking country at least once. It was the UK in all cases, five teachers visited the USA, one Malta, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. There were three exceptions (the native speaker and two teachers whose qualification is based on special courses), but the majority of questioned teachers qualified for teaching English by studying university programmes for future teachers of English as a second language.

According to the answers, the most important aspect of language in their lessons is speaking, then vocabulary, grammar, listening, reading, pronunciation and the others. Considering pronunciation, it was answered that the most important is production of individual sounds and then the suprasegmental features such as intonation, stresses, linking, rhythm etc. The native speaker stated that he does not insist on a specific model of pronunciation, because there are many accents and types of pronunciation and the main purpose at school is intelligibility.

All of the qualified teachers were trained in phonetics and phonology during their studies. Their knowledge of natural English is basically based on watching television or films, visiting an English speaking country and listening to the radio. Five teachers took a special course, another five interact with the native speaker and one is a native speaker himself.

All teachers (except the native speaker and some others) were aware of their pronunciation problems. The most common mistakes were stresses, rhythm or intonation. Some of the teachers stated they had occasional problems with individual sounds, weak forms and linking. Three teachers were not sure.

Although the teachers use a variety of textbooks in lessons (Project English, Maturita Solutions, New English File, Headway, etc.), there are the same types of pronunciation exercises, such as minimal pairs, word stress and intonation in all of them. The learners are usually successful in these exercises, but have some pronunciation problems, the principle of which is individual sounds (especially dental fricatives). Linking, stresses and intonation were mentioned as well. The teachers find the source of improvement in more practice, both speaking and listening, watching films or television and listening to the radio or other authentic recordings. Only two teachers suggest
interaction with native speakers, whereas one suggests an individual approach, more reading or more lessons.

The teachers usually teach at least some of the phonemic symbols to their learners. The importance of pronunciation in the lessons is hardly more than 20% in the majority of cases and the share of the pronunciation on the final grade has been stated as less than 10%. It is important to mention, that most of the teachers do not distinguish pronunciation as a special skill, but as a part of speaking which is the most important.

After interpreting the answers we decided to include teachers from one primary school and one secondary school to make the research more operable and consistent. The final choice is seven teachers, none of them is a native speaker. We decided to encode names of the teachers into an abbreviation which consists of letter P or S for primary or secondary school and a number which distinguishes individual teachers within the school. Their answers are stated in the Appendix 3.⁷⁰

2.3. Recordings of the teachers (RT)

The teachers were asked two questions to encourage them to start a monologue. It is necessary to record as natural speech as possible. Then the teachers were asked to read the same text that the learners will read. Some of the teachers stated that reading the text *prima vista* is rather difficult. Thus, the linking and intonation cannot be performed perfectly.

**Teacher P-1**

This teacher refused to participate in the recording session due to her shyness. One class of eighth graders and one class of ninth graders taught by this teacher has been examined.

**Teacher P-2**

Concerning general quality of the speech, we should state that the teacher is intelligible, uses right intonation with wide interval of pitch and the stresses are more or less placed correctly. Speaking about individual sounds, there is absolutely no problem in vowels, but sometimes the dental fricatives tend to be pronounced as alveolar or labiodental, the velar nasals are sometimes connected with velar plosives and voiced consonants in the final position seem to be pronounced as voiceless on occasion. However, in general, the pronunciation and quality of speech is sufficient

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⁷⁰The answers to question No.2 are omitted since the type of school is included in the code for individual teachers. Question No. 4 is omitted as well, because none of the teachers participating in the research is a native speaker.
for teaching at a primary school. The examined groups of learners taught by this teacher were the lower level learners from all of the eight-grade classes and one whole nine-grade class.

**Teacher P-3**

The speech is intelligible with right intonation and stresses. The words are linked properly. Concerning individual sounds, both vowels and consonants are pronounced correctly and unvoiced plosives are aspirated. Sometimes there is a tendency to add velar plosives after velar nasals and pronouncing the final voiced consonants as voiceless. Only one class of eighth graders taught by this teacher has been examined.

**Teacher P-4**

Intelligible speech with appropriate pace, intonation and stresses. Individual sounds are pronounced correctly, vowels, especially schwa are right, unvoiced consonants in the final position tend to be pronounced as unvoiced and sometimes, there is velar plosive consonant added right after velar nasal. One class of eighth graders and one class of ninth graders taught by this teacher has been examined.

**Teacher S-1**

Very British pronunciation close to RP. Linking and intonation, as well as stresses, are used properly. The vowels, especially schwa and diphthongs are pronounced correctly and naturally. Concerning consonants, no change in voicing occurs and the velar nasal is pronounced without adding any plosive. Dental fricatives are pronounced as dental fricatives and /h/ is pronounced as unvoiced. Learners of the first grade taught by this teacher have been examined.

**Teacher S-2**

The only male teacher recorded. He sounds very natural, rather Northern English, even in the unprepared speech. The stresses, intonation and linking are used properly. This teacher teaches the higher level learners (first, second and third grade). Sometimes, his speech can be hard to understand, not because of the pronunciation but because of the speed.

**Teacher S-3**

Intelligible natural speech with correct use of stresses, intonation and linking. Individual sounds are produced without any mistake, unvoiced plosives are aspirated where appropriate, velar nasal is pronounced without adding any plosives and the final voiced consonants remain voiced.
Generally, the pronunciation of this teacher is very close to RP. This teacher teaches the lower level learners (only first grade recorded).

2.4. Tests for the learners (TL)

Since we cooperated with the seven teachers who taught over 200 learners in total, we found testing such a large number of learners greatly helpful and valid for further research. We decided to compose a test which would test both productive and receptive skills in the field of pronunciation, at least to the extent possible to examine in a written form.

A very short and easy test composed of questions from a test in *English Pronunciation in Use* was distributed to the learners (with a significant help of the teachers) and two questions were added:

- ‘How long have you been learning English?’
- ‘Have you ever been to an English speaking country? Where? For how long?’

The selection of the learners for the recording would be based on results of previously written test as well as on recommendation of the teachers.

The test consists of four parts. *Questions 1 and 2* are focused on production (though imaginative) of sounds, while *3 and 4* deal with receptive abilities.

2.5. Analyses of TL

Finally, we collected 201 completed tests from different grade learners. There are 70 eighth-graders, 50 ninth-graders from a primary school, 49 first-graders, 18 second-graders and 14 third graders from the secondary school. Except for the last two groups, there are at least two different classes within one grade.

The learning practice of researched learners varies from 4 to 13 years and their results are from 4 to 35 points, which is a maximum\(^7\). There are 46 learners who visited an English speaking country, but majority of them stated one week stay in London which cannot affect the pronunciation much.

We should examine the results more thoroughly. Thus we decided to sort the results according to questions, not according to the learners, to ensure that the analysis is systematic and clear.

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\(^7\) The learner who scored 4 points did not answer all questions. There were only two learners who scored maximal number of points.
However, the learners have to be mentioned in connection with the number of successful ones. The classes will be presented under a code, e.g. 8AP-1. The first number (in this case 8) represents grade (eighth grade), the letter after grade (in this case A) stands for particular class, the latter two letter-number characters reference to the teacher (in this case P-1). Thus, the 8AP-1 are the eighth-grade learners whose teacher is P-1. See Comments on Privacy for the further explanation of the codes and Appendix 4 for the test.

72 There will be eighth and ninth grades from the primary school (8, 9) with varieties (A, B, M, S) which means standard classes (A and B), mathematic classes (M) and sport class (S). Concerning secondary school, the numbers stand for a grade (1 to 3), then letters B, C (four-year programme) and G (eight-year programme) occur. Teacher S-x is the native speaker who refused recording, but her learners completed the test.
**Question 1**

The question is focused on vowel sounds. The learners were given orthographic form of four words in each of seven sub-questions and their task was to circle the one with different vowel sound.

**EXAMPLE:** hot hold gone swan

The task is mentioned in row *phenomenon* (the vowel of the three original words is the upper one, while the different vowel which should be circled is the lower one). We present a table of phenomena occurring in the questions with number of learners who answered correctly (sorted according to grades, classes and teachers).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>question number</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>number of learners</th>
<th>average correct answers</th>
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<td>/uː/</td>
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<td>172</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

73 Average correct answers per class (in all tables of this type) indicates the ratio of total correct answers in the class and number of learners in the class. The results are rounded to one decimal place.
**Question 2**

Second question deals with silent letters. The task is to identify the word in which one of the consonant letters of orthographical form is not pronounced.

EXAMPE: camp crisp **climb** cost

The results are listed the same way as in the *Question 1*.

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<th>question number</th>
<th>/b/</th>
<th>/p/</th>
<th>/t/</th>
<th>/h/</th>
<th>/l/</th>
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<th>/r/</th>
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<th>average correct answers</th>
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<td>receipt</td>
<td>listen</td>
<td>hour</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Question 3**

Questions 3 and 4 test the listening abilities of the learners. In this question, the learners have to choose the word they hear\(^3\). The options are very close to each other (glass/gas, is/was, etc.). Since the sentences are rather varied, no particular phenomena are examined here.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>question number</th>
<th>1st grade</th>
<th>9th grade</th>
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<td>1st g.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

\(^3\) For recording for this task see Appendix 6.

\(^4\) number of learners

\(^5\) average of correct answers
Question 4

The last question in the test was supported with a recording as well\(^7\). There were pairs of sentences with different meanings which differ only in intonation, stress or rhythm when pronounced. The task was to indicate the sentence which was heard.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>question number</th>
<th>1</th>
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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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<th>6</th>
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<th>average correct answers</th>
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<td>193</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>196</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall results of the TL

Essentially we can state that the learners were more successful in the second part of the test which was focused on listening. Furthermore, it is natural that the secondary school learners got better results than the ones from the primary school. This may be caused by the fact that the primary school education is obligatory. Thus, the learners are a mix of all levels and abilities. On the other hand, the learners at the secondary school chose the school and it can be assumed that they have better attitude and are more motivated to study particular subjects, for instance English.

\(^7\) For the original recording hear Appendix 6.
2.6. Recordings of the learners (RL)

At this stage, we performed a selection of appropriate learners suitable for the recording. Since there were a choice from 201 learners involved, it was impossible to record and analyse all of them, although we are aware of the utility of a research which would be *sui generis* unique.

We made a choice based on the Gaussian curve. Practically, it means that one or two learners with the highest test score as well as one or two learners with the lowest test score were chosen. The largest number of recorded learners scored an average number of points.

Each recording begins with a short conversation based on semi-standardized interview with types of questions listed below:

- What are your hobbies?
- Do you play any musical instrument?
- Do you watch films in English (with/without subtitles; English/Czech subtitles)?

After the interview, the learners were asked to read the text (see Appendix 5).

2.7. Analyses of RL

The recordings are sorted according to the same classes as in the analysis of the test. We are aware of the fact we should focus on stereotypes and common mistakes made by Czech learners of English. Thus we composed an assessment scale which deals with particular features of speech.

**Methodology of the assessment**

- Correct pronunciation of plosive consonants (ideally with aspiration when appropriate) without change in voicing in the final position (e.g. *club* /b/ → /p/) equals to a maximum of *four points*.
- Correct pronunciation of velar nasal /ŋ/, especially in -ing endings, without occurrence of /ŋg/ or /ŋk/ clusters equals to a maximum of *four points*.
- Correct pronunciation of dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/ without pronouncing them as /f/, /s/, /t/, /d/ or /z/ equals to a maximum of *four points*.
- Correct pronunciation of /w/ without change to /v/ (and vice versa) equals to a maximum of *four points*. 
• Correct pronunciation of vowels and diphthongs (triphthongs) equals to a maximum of four points.

Total maximum of points which can be reached concerning segmental features equals to twenty.

• Correct usage of suprasegmental features equals to a maximum of ten points which means
  o two points for word stress
  o two points for sentence stress
  o two points for weak forms/strong forms
  o two points for linking
  o two points for intonation

Finally, another maximum of five points can be gained for overall quality of speech (fluency, speed, pace, etc.). Thus we have 20 + 10 + 5 = 35 points which equals to maximum of points from the test. This will help us to compare the results from tests and recordings.

8AP-1 learners

We chose two learners with the highest, two with the lowest and three with an average score from the test for the recording session. We can see individual learners with their results in the table below.

| test score | 16 | 19 | 25 | 25 | 27 | 32 | 33 |
| recording score | 12 | 13 | 13 | 16 | 14 | 25 | 19 |

There are four learners of German and three learners of Russian in the recorded group and the differences can be recognized at the first listening. The learners of German tend to pronounce ie as /iː/ (e.g. tie) which occurs in German and they often pronounce English word young as German equivalent jung. Mrs Snell was pronounced as /ʃel/ by one of the German learner. There are no specific mistakes connected just with learners of Russian. Apart from mistakes based on the second learnt language, there occurred all specific Czech pronunciation problems (devoicing

78 though we are aware of differences between pronunciation of English and Czech vowels (e.g. En /e/ vs. Cz /ɛ/)
of final consonants, /θ/→/f/, /ð/→/d/, /ŋ/→/ŋk/, /w/→/v/, etc.). One of the often mispronounced word was few as /fɪv/ or /fɪf/, which is probably a result of spelling pronunciation. The suprasegmental features were hardly heard.

**8AP-2 learners**

Due to small number of learners in this group, we chose a learner with the highest, a learner with the lowest and a learner with an average score from the test. Their results from both test and recording are listed in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>test score</th>
<th>16</th>
<th>21</th>
<th>25</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>recording score</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of the examined learners learn German as a second foreign language. The confusion between languages can be demonstrated on unprepared dialogue in which one learner began with word ‘ich’ and one said this sentence, ‘My hobbies ist plays Fussbal.’ The learner with the lowest score is dyslectic and his reading abilities are limited. He did not read fluently, skipped words or whole lines, etc. Again few as /fɪv/ or /fɪf/ occurred. Furthermore, the average scoring learner pronounced much noise as /mʊx nɔɪs/. Generally, typical Czech mistakes were heard relatively often.

**8MP-4 learners**

There were two learners with the highest, two with the lowest and three with an average score chosen (see the table below). In addition, we chose two learners within the Gaussian curve who spent a considerably long time (nine months and one year) in an English speaking country (Chicago, USA and Warrington, UK, respectively) to compare their pronunciation with the others who have never been to an English speaking country. There were six learners of German and one learner of Russian as a second foreign language.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>test score</th>
<th>22</th>
<th>24</th>
<th>27</th>
<th>29</th>
<th>30</th>
<th>31</th>
<th>33</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>recording score</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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79 We have not been aware of this fact when making a selection of learners for the recording sessions.
The learners of German made the same mistakes as the learners of German from previous class described above (tie as /t̩iː/), though the /t/ sound was often aspirated. Young was sometimes pronounced as German jung and /fɪv/ or /fɪf/ instead of /fjuː/ was heard as well. These learners of German often replaced English words with German ones ‘We were here until elf.’ etc.

Now we will focus on the two learners who spent nine months or more in an English speaking country. The boy who was near Chicago spoke very naturally, with linking, rather correct stresses and good intonation. His accent might be described as rather American (I said /ʌ sed/). He pronounced vowels, especially /æ/ correctly, while almost all schwas were replaced by American approximant /r/. Unfortunately, the learner still carries some of the bad habits typical for Czech learners (pronouncing final voiced consonants as unvoiced, dental fricatives were correct only occasionally, etc.).

The girl who spent one year at school in Warrington acquired the very best of British pronunciation there, though she said, that the stay did not help her as much as perpetual self-studying and watching films. Concerning her pronunciation, she was the only learner whose speech can be described as natural without typical mistakes. There occurred correct pronunciation of plosives without changing final voiced consonants to voiceless with aspiration where appropriate, velar nasal /ŋ/ with hardly any /k/ or /g/ following, dental fricatives were pronounced as dental and there was no doubt where to pronounce /v/ and /w/. Vowels and diphthongs were pronounced in a way very close to native speakers. Speaking about suprasegmental features, all the stresses, intonation models and linking were present in the speech, as well as weak forms. Last but not least, she is the only primary school learner who pronounced advertising correctly.

80 We do not consider that as a problem or mistake. It is stated just to describe the effect of the stay in the USA.
8MP-2 learners

Since there were only seven learners tested in this group, we chose one with the highest, one with the lowest and one with an average score, as can be seen below. Two learners from this group learn German and one learns Russian as a second foreign language. All the learners are the lower level ones, based on the placement test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>test score</th>
<th>19</th>
<th>26</th>
<th>30</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>recording score</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As in the previous groups, the learners of German replaced some of the English words with their German equivalents (eleven→elf, my→mein, etc.). The overall recording score is low and the learner who scored the most points in the test gained the least points from the recording. This was caused by nervousness of the learner who was not able to remember some English words during the recording session. However, the pronunciation when reading corresponds with 14 points that she gained. There was first occurrence of few pronounces as /fɪv/ or /fɪf/ by the learner of Russian in this group.

8SP-3 learners

There were five learners (one with the highest, one with the lowest and three with an average score) chosen from this group. All the learners learns German as the second foreign language. Their results are presented in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>test score</th>
<th>18</th>
<th>26</th>
<th>26</th>
<th>27</th>
<th>31</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>recording score</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most problematic word for these learners was neighbours which was pronounced as /ˈnɛɪbɜːrs/, /ˈn æɪbrəʊts/, /ˈnɪgbɜːts/ or /ˈn ɛ tbrʊs/. As learners of German, they often pronounced ei as /ai/. Another typical mistake caused by learning German was pronunciation of Mrs Snell as /ʃnell/ or /ʃel/ in a large number of cases. In two cases young was pronounced with /ə/ which is probably caused by spelling pronunciation. On the other hand, one of the students clearly pronounced unvoiced /h/ which may be caused by the fact that /h/ in German is unvoiced as well. One learner linked words properly (e.g. like it).
8SP-2 learners

We made a selection of four learners (from total seven) within this group. One with the highest, one with the lowest and two with an average score. The learner with the highest score learns Russian as a second foreign language while the others learn German. The results are stated below.

| test score | 23 | 25 | 25 | 27 |
| recording score | 13 | 14 | 15 | 14 |

No learner pronounced **few** correctly. Variants /fɪf/, /fɪv/, /fef/ and /fjʊf/ was heard. Typical German mistakes occurred, such as /tɪː/ (tie) and /ʃnel/ (Snell) or **jung** instead of **young**. There was /h/ pronounced in word **hours** relatively often. One learner pronounced **hours** as /hɔːs/ which made the original sentence ‘…the hours are really long…’ rather humorous. The confusion between English and German languages can be demonstrated by quotes taken from the speeches: ‘I am hobbies… I was hobbies ice hockey und football.’ or ‘My hobby ist playing Fussbal.’ This type of mistakes did not occur in the speech of the learner of Russian, though she made a couple of other mistakes, as /viːl put/ (**well paid**).

9AP-4 learners

There were learners who learn only English as a foreign language in this group. Thus, we did not face the problems connected with the learners of German. We selected five learners (one with the highest, one with the lowest and three with an average score). There were three learners who have been to an English speaking country (the UK). Results of the tests and recordings are listed in the table below.

| test score | 18 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 32 |
| recording score | 25 | 13 | 20 | 21 | 20 |

The foremost problem which occurred in speeches of four learners was /h/ in the beginning of the word **hours**. Some of the learners aspirated the unvoiced plosive consonants, though one of them used this feature in the end of words where voiced consonant should be pronounced. One learner linked very well (**but I like it**). Another learner read **11.00** as /ɪlevən nɪl nɪl/ which is to a certain extent unusual.
9BP-1 learners

The number of learners selected for the recording session is five, two with the highest, one with the lowest and two with an average score. The learner who scored only four points in the test answered only the first two questions. The learner who scored 30 points stayed seven months in the USA, two other learners spent one week in the UK and one has been to Ireland for two weeks. Thus the selection is reasonable. Another learner who was absent during the recording sessions spent three months in the UK and scored 30 points in the test. Only one of the learners learns another foreign language — German.

| test score | 4 | 20 | 26 | 30 | 31 |
| recording score | 12 | 20 | 13 | 26 | 14 |

As in the previous group, there was /h/ in the beginning of word hours occurring in speeches of four learners. Another problems were /fɪ/ (few), /tɪː/ (tie) and pronunciation of neighbours. The learner who spent seven months in the USA has fewer problems with speaking, she aspirated correctly and the speech was correctly connected and fluent. However, she did not perform as well as the learner from 8MP-1 class.

9MP-2 learners

Seven learners has been selected (two with the highest, three with the lowest and two with an average score)\(^{81}\). Two of the recorded learners stayed in the UK for a week while another two learn German as a second foreign language. The results are listed below.

| test score | 24 | 24 | 25 | 30 | 30 | 31 | 32 |
| recording score | 13 | 21 | 16 | 15 | 19 | 22 | 13 |

This group scored the highest points in the test within the primary school but the pronunciation of selected learners was not as correct as the test results would indicate. The mistake that occurred most was /h/ in the beginning of word hours. Another problem was young pronounced with /ʊ/ instead of /ʌ/. Furthermore wears as /wɜːz/ was heard in two cases. One learner pronounced few

\(^{81}\) We considered this selection according to who was present at school during the recording sessions.
day as /fei ˈdʒeəs/ while other learner used specific pronunciation of thing /ˈtaŋk/. The learners of German pronounced Mrs Snell as /ʃel/.

**1B2-1 learners**

We chose five learners (one with the highest, one with the lowest and three with an average score) for the recording. All of the learners learn German as a second foreign language and two of them stayed one week in the UK. These learners are the lower level ones while the higher level ones are taught by the native speaker who refused taking a part in the research due to lack of time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>test score</th>
<th>23</th>
<th>31</th>
<th>31</th>
<th>31</th>
<th>34</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>16</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recorded learners spoke more or less correctly, the speeches were fluent and often well linked. Apart from one learner (16 points) there was no problem with distinguishing /w/ and /v/. The unvoiced plosives were well aspirated in most cases. Concerning vowels, hardly any problems occurred. The voiced dental fricatives were replaced by /d/, unvoiced /θ/ was replaced by /f/ and one learner pronounced it correctly. The difference between compulsory education at primary school and higher education at secondary school was recognizable at first hearing, although these learners were in the first grade only.

**1GS-2 learners**

It was hard to select the right representatives for the highest, the lowest and an average results since all learners within this group scored from 30 to 34 points (30 — one learner, 31 two learners, 32 — one learner, 33 — three learners, 34 — five learners). We were unable to select the learners according to another key — gender\(^{82}\) — since there were only two male learners in this group. Thus, we made a proportional representation of the learners according to their results, as is listed in the table below. Two of selected learners learn French as a second foreign language while the others learn German. Two learners stayed one week in the UK. There are the higher level learners in this group which is based on the placement test sat five years before our research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>test results</th>
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<th>32</th>
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<th>34</th>
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<td>25</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{82}\) to make a consistent set of recordings
All the learners were comfortable intelligible, though the pronunciation was not absolutely perfect. This applies particularly to inserting velar plosives after velar nasals and pronouncing dental fricatives as alveolar or labiodental fricatives. The speeches were well connected (e.g. ten of us), the stresses and the intonation were fulfilled to a certain extent, as well. Aspiration occurred at four learners and two of them also pronounced /h/ as voiceless consonant.

1GS-3 learners

The other half of the previously examined class is represented by six learners scoring from 30 to 34 points. The selection was performed as listed in the table below. There were two learners of German and four of French as a second foreign language. No one within this group has been to an English speaking country. There are the lower level learners within this group.83

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>test results</th>
<th>30</th>
<th>30</th>
<th>32</th>
<th>32</th>
<th>32</th>
<th>34</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>recording results</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Basically, the same as about the previous group can be said about this group, though these learners scored fewer points in the recordings. The speeches were intelligible, rather well connected (ten of us again), while the correct stresses and intonation models were not heard as often as in the previous group. Concerning individual sounds, the plosives were hardly ever aspirated, dental fricatives were pronounced as alveolar or labiodental fricatives, velar plosives were added after velar nasals and the devoicing of the final voiced consonants occurred as well. Vowels and diphthongs were mostly pronounced correctly. The only cardinal error was well pronounced as /vɪl/ which might have been caused by nervousness.

2BS-2 learners

There were two learners with the highest84, two with the lowest and three with an average score selected within this group. The second foreign language of all selected learners is German and all the learners are the higher level ones.

83 As is obvious from the number of points gained in the test, there are little differences between test results of 1GS-2 and 1GS-3 learners.
84 Only two learners scored the maximum of points in the test. One learner is from this class, the other is from the following 3CS-2 class.
It might seem abnormal but the quality of speech of these learners is lower than of the lower grade ones. First of all, the fluency and overall impression of the speech is not as accurate as the same qualities of the first graders. Then, the mistakes connected with consonants (devoicing, inserting velar plosives after velar nasals, dental fricatives pronounced as alveolar or labiodental fricatives, and blurring of distinction between /w/ and /v/) occurred in more cases. Thus, the maximum of points connected with consonants and suprasegmental features was not fulfilled. On the other hand, no serious problems (apart from enjoying being pronounced as annoying) occurred. Two learners combined English and German in sentences ‘I play my lieblich songs.’ and ‘tschechisch titles und English language’.

### 3CS-2 learners

The highest grade learners who were examined within our research have from nine to thirteen years of experience with learning English. We chose two learners with the highest, two with the lowest and three with an average score from the test for taking a part in the recording sessions. The second foreign language of all selected learners is German and all learners in this group belong to the higher level ones within the class. The results are stated in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>test results</th>
<th>26</th>
<th>30</th>
<th>32</th>
<th>32</th>
<th>32</th>
<th>34</th>
<th>35</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>recording results</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The same problem as in the previous group occurred here. The speeches were unconnected, hardly any attention was paid to the stresses or intonation (question and exclamatory sentence pronounced the same as other sentences). The consonants were not pronounced properly (concerning devoicing, velar plosives after velar nasals, dental fricatives as alveolar or labiodental fricatives, hardly any distinction between /v/ and /w/, etc.). One of the learner was confused between English and German saying ‘I play Klavier.’, /tiː/ instead of /taɪ/ (tie) and /ʃnel/ instead of /snel/ (Snell) while another learner said: ‘I am very oft with my friends.’ However, the performances were intelligible and sufficient for elementary communication.

### Overall results of the RL
Before we start to analyse factors that might have affected the pronunciation of the learners recorded, we should assess the overall level of the recordings. There are individual features which were assessed in the recordings with the actual scored points demonstrated in the graph below. The results are listed as overall, regardless of classes, teachers, etc. Numbers in brackets indicate maximal score of a question.

Graph 1: Overall results of RL

As can be seen, the most problematic features were dental fricatives and suprasegmental features while there were little problems concerning vowels.
2.8. Factors that might affected the pronunciation of recorded learners

We shall interpret the results in relation to the factors stated by the learners during the test and recording sessions. We will observe what affects the average score from the test, average score from the recording and average of the sum of both scores. Only one factor in each interpretation shall be taken into account regardless of any other factors.

Length of learning

One of the elementary hypothesis is that the score will be dependent on the length of learning. The longer the learning is the higher the score should be. The results of our research are submitted in a graph below. The numbers in brackets indicate the number of learners belonging to a group.

According to the graph, the hypothesis is more or less confirmed. It should be stated that the only learner in the 4 years group is the one who answered only two questions in the test. The score in the 11 years group is not as high as can be expected which may be caused by such factors as inappropriate selection of the learners for the recording, nervousness or shyness during the recording sessions.
**School and grade**

We will perform an analysis of individual classes regardless of the level based groups taught by different teachers within a class. The hypothesis in this analysis is that the secondary school learners would score higher points than the primary school ones. In addition, the learners of M classes would score better than other primary school learners since they are selective classes with a tendency to include the best learners within the school. The learners from the G class would also score better than the others because they have been taught by the same teachers for five years, furthermore at a selective school. In the graph below, individual classes as well as average scores of all primary school learners (PS) and secondary school learners (SS) are listed. Numbers in brackets indicate the number of learners within each group.

![Graph 3: School and class](image)

The hypothesis has been proved to a certain extent. The 8M and 1G learners scored the highest results within their grades. On the other hand, the 9M learners were not as good as the 9A learners from a standard class. In might be caused by the teacher as well as by inappropriate selection of the learners for the recording. It is obvious that the secondary school learners scored considerably higher than the primary school ones.
**Teacher**

We will observe how the personality and methods of individual teachers can affect the score of their learners. This is not intended to be an attempt to assess the teachers or making a chart of the best teachers. Again, numbers in brackets indicate the number of learners within each group.

![Graph 4: Teacher](image)

According to the graph, secondary school teachers have greater effect on the listening and speaking skills of their learners. The results might be affected by the fact that there is compulsory education at primary schools while the secondary schools are optional and selective. Another aspect may be the entering level of the learners as well as number of lessons per week, etc.
**Second foreign language**

We will not compare the overall results of learners of individual second foreign languages. We will focus on occurrence of common mistakes and mispronunciations within the learners of German, as are demonstrated in the graphs below.

It is certain that the learners who learn German as a second foreign language make specific mistakes resulting from close relationship between English and German. Three of the most common mistakes were replacing the whole words (*young*→*jung*, *my*→*mein*, *eleven*→*elf*, *football*→*Fussbal*, etc.), mispronunciation of *Mrs Snell* (*ʃel* or *ʃnel*) which is caused by similarity with the German word *schnell*, and *ie* (in *tie*) pronounced in German as *iː* instead of diphthong */aɪ*/. However, the number of learners who made this type of mistakes is not as high as was expected (11 of 52) which is not a cardinal problem. Higher number of learners would occur if we examined mistakes typical for Czech learners in general.
**Stay in an English speaking country**

It is generally believed that staying in an English speaking country is the optimal way for improving one’s pronunciation. Concerning this aspect, we decided to sort the results according to the fact if any English speaking country has been visited and according to the length of the stay. Thus, we got four categories for comparison of the results which are displayed in the graph below. The numbers in brackets indicate the number of learners within each group.

![Graph 6: Stays in an English speaking country](image)

The graph indicates that the learners who stayed more than six months in an English speaking country scored considerably better than the others in the recording part of our research. The second column was added due to a significant percentage of learners who stayed one week in the UK. We believe that such short term stay cannot improve speaking ability of that learners significantly. Concerning the two learners with six months to one year stay, there can be clearly observed an improvement. Both learners has been to the USA and their pronunciation is rather American than RP. The learner who spent one year in Warrington, UK, scored the highest total score, since her pronunciation was very close to RP, as well as many of assessed features were performed correctly. We are aware of extreme inaccuracy of these results which is caused by small number of learners who stayed in an English speaking country for longer time. It would be advisable to perform another research in this field with larger sample of learners and equal number of learners per each group.
**Watching films in English**

Another factor which is believed to have significant effect on pronunciation. We divided the learners into five groups (do not watch, watch with Czech subtitles, watch with English subtitles, watch without subtitles, read English books). If the learner stated more than one option, then the answer was sorted according to: reading → no subtitles → EN subtitles → CZ subtitles respectively where reading is the most preferred option. Numbers in brackets indicate the number of learners within each group.

The results of this analysis seems to be one of the most questionable ones within the whole research. There is a large number of aspects within watching films of reading books in English which cannot be reduced to whether the learner watches films (reads books) or not. According to our results, the highest score was achieved by the learners who read, which is not usual since pronunciation is connected with listening to a greater extent than with reading. It should be researched how watching films or reading books affect pronunciation with respect to type and level of watched (read) media, length and regularity of watching (reading), etc. but due to complexity of such research these factors cannot be observed within this thesis.
**Musical activities**

Last, but not least of generally believed factors which improves pronunciation. We made a little research in this field asking the learners whether they play any musical instrument or not. The results are demonstrated in the graph below.

![Graph 7: Musical activities](image)

The results indicate that learners who play a musical instrument score better both in test and recording. It might be true, but we do not have any instruments for proving it. This feature should be examined individually and theses on this topic exist.\(^{85}\)

**Other factors**

It should be stated that other factors than ones described above affected the results of both tests and recordings. In the test, one learner answered only first two questions (which has been already mentioned several times). Concerning the recordings, we are aware of the nervousness, shyness and other factors resulting from encounter with the researcher who was absolutely unknown to all recorded learners. The recording itself might cause change in the quality of speech as well as nervousness or shyness which led even one teacher to refuse to be recorded. It must not

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\(^{85}\) There are at least three theses defended recently at the Department of English Language and Literature at Faculty of Education, Masaryk University.
be forgotten to remind that one recorded learner was dyslectic which affected the quality of his reading significantly.

2.9. Relation between test and recording scores

In the graph below we can see the occurrence of particular differences between test and recording scores. Basically, the test score was higher than the recording one, though two exceptions exist. One is the learner who answered only two questions in the test while the other is that learner who spent one year in the UK and scored 33 points from the recording. Because of the fact that the difference can be a negative number, the quantities of differences are listed as moduli.

The distribution of the data more or less follows the Gaussian curve. It might be a signal that the research is relevant.
We examined seven teachers and over 200 learners and their attitude to English pronunciation. Six teachers and 79 learners were recorded and the recordings were analysed. Thus we were able to search for associations between different factors and the quality of speech. We confirmed some hypotheses or generally believed relations, therefore we suggest a number of recommendations for both teachers and learners to achieve the best possible pronunciation.

First of all, there is a need to study the language as a complex system with regards to all important aspects. The learners are primarily taught vocabulary and grammar, though the teachers stated that speaking is nearly the most important skill that should be learnt. The learners are not confident when speaking because they concentrate on the grammatical structures and right vocabulary instead of trying to speak naturally, though grammatically or semantically inaccurately. The confidence is the most important quality that should be acquired in the very beginning of studying a foreign language (e.g. through drill activities that are hidden in games). The learners should be motivated as well but it seems to be rather impossible in some groups of learners.

Another important aspect is acquiring the ability of producing individual sounds (especially those that does not occur in Czech) properly and naturally and it should be done as soon as possible. When a teenager is asked to pronounce a dental fricative consonant, he or she might feel uncomfortable because the consonant sounds like a badly pronounced alveolar fricative. Thus the correct pronunciation has to be learnt in the young age to achieve natural pronunciation afterwards.

One of the greatest issues that can negatively affect pronunciation and learning of a foreign language itself is simultaneous learning of two foreign languages in the stage in which foundations of both languages are hardly learnt. This issue can be best demonstrated on primary school learners of English and German. There were tendencies to replace English words with German ones or pronouncing English words with German pronunciation. The differences between both languages should be highlighted and repeated every time the incorrect pronunciation occurs. After the research, we are entirely convinced that simultaneous learning of two foreign languages at standard a primary schools is rather counterproductive considering the desirable quality of knowledge of both languages plus Czech language as a mother tongue.

When learning a foreign language the most important activities are (as the teachers participating in our research stated) those that cannot be performed within the English classes. The best instrument for acquiring the native-like pronunciation is a long term stay in an English speaking country. This is not simple for primary school learners, though there exist several educational
programmes that enable studying abroad. Another option is watching films or TV programmes in English and trying to imitate the native speakers. There certainly is a relation between musical abilities and pronunciation, but we did not observe it thoroughly. It would be extremely beneficial to focus on those activities outside classes and their influence on pronunciation in oncoming educational research of future diploma students.

In the end, we can confirm that the main and only purpose of teaching/learning of English pronunciation — *comfortable intelligibility* — is more or less fulfilled at the observed schools. The prescribed pronunciation or RP is learnt after leaving secondary school, at university, if a learner chooses English as his/her study programme. It is natural because hardly any learner specialises in English at primary or secondary school and the language is only a part of all subjects taught and considered more important (Maths and Science in $M$ classes, Physical Education is $S$ classes and other subjects in seminars in the last two years of the secondary school).
IV) SUMMARY

This thesis focuses on teaching English pronunciation at selected primary and secondary schools in Třebíč.

In the theoretical part, we deal with teaching English as a second language with regard to some of the key documents created and codified by the Ministry of Education Youth and Sport, as well as School Educational Programmes of school involved in the research. Training of teachers and factors that affect pronunciation learning are mentioned. Then we present a brief comparison of English, Czech, German and Russian phonemic systems taking into account both segmental and suprasegmental features of pronunciation and formulated fundamental hypotheses for the research in the practical part.

In the practical part, we perform a research among 22 teachers and over 200 learners. After the initial analysis of the results, we narrow the selection down to seven teachers and 79 learners for further cooperation. These teachers and learners are recorded, the recordings are analysed and finally, the hypotheses are proved or disproved.

We observed that the achieved score from test and recording corresponded with the length of learning English. German as a second foreign language can affect the English pronunciation, as well as vocabulary, significantly. We proved that a long term stay in an English speaking country can improve the speaking skills and pronunciation considerably. Watching films in English and musical activities may have an impact on pronunciation but research in this field goes far beyond the scope and content of this thesis.
V) SHRNUTÍ

Předkládaná práce je zaměřena na výuku anglické výslovnosti na vybrané základní a střední škole v Třebíči.

V teoretické části se zabýváme výukou anglického jazyka s ohledem na základní klíčové dokumenty vydávané Ministerstvem školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy a školní vzdělávací programy vybraných škol. Po vzdělání učitelů se věnujeme faktorům, které mohou ovlivnit výuku anglické výslovnosti. Dále předkládáme srovnání fonémických systémů angličtiny, češtiny, němčiny a ruštiny s přihlédnutím k segmentálním i suprasegmentálním jevům. Na základě těchto teoretických poznatků jsou zformulovány hypotézy k dalšímu výzkumu.

V praktické části provádíme výzkum na vzorku 22 učitelů a více než 200 žáků. Po analýze dílčích výsledků zužujeme výběr na sedm učitelů a 79 žáků, kteří se účastní další fáze výzkumu, v níž jsou pořízeny zvukové záznamy jejich mluveného projevu. Nahrávky jsou následně analyzovány, což umožňuje potvrzení či vyvrácení hypotéz.

Pozorovali jsme, že výsledky testů a nahrávek jsou přímo úměrné délce studia anglického jazyka. Němčina jako druhý cizí jazyk může do značné míry ovlivňovat nejen výslovnost, ale i slovní zásobu angličtiny. Potvrdili jsme, že dlouhodobý pobyt v anglicky mluvící zemi může výrazně zlepšit mluvený projev a výslovnost žáka. Sledování filmů a hudební aktivity mohou mít vliv na výslovnost angličtiny, avšak řádný výzkum v této oblasti dalece překračuje rozsah i obsah této práce.
VI) BIBLIOGRAPHY


Type IPA phonetic symbols - online keyboard (all languages) <http://ipa.typeit.org/>
VII) APPENDICES

1. IPA chart

### The International Phonetic Alphabet (2005)

**Consonants (Pulmonic)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bilabial</th>
<th>Dental</th>
<th>Alveolar</th>
<th>Palatoalveolar</th>
<th>Retrolingual</th>
<th>Palatal</th>
<th>Velar</th>
<th>Uvular</th>
<th>Pharyngeal</th>
<th>Epiglottal</th>
<th>Glottal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
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<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricative</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>v</td>
<td>θ</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>z</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>θ</td>
<td>z</td>
<td>θ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximant</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>j</td>
<td>j</td>
<td>j</td>
<td>j</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>η</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>r</td>
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<td>r</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>r</td>
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<td>r</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tap, Flap</td>
<td>v</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>r</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lateral fricative</td>
<td>ɾ</td>
<td>ɾ</td>
<td>ɾ</td>
<td>ɾ</td>
<td>ɾ</td>
<td>ɾ</td>
<td>ɾ</td>
<td>ɾ</td>
<td>ɾ</td>
<td>ɾ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lateral approximant</td>
<td>ɾ</td>
<td>ɾ</td>
<td>ɾ</td>
<td>ɾ</td>
<td>ɾ</td>
<td>ɾ</td>
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<td>ɾ</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lateral flap</td>
<td>ɾ</td>
<td>ɾ</td>
<td>ɾ</td>
<td>ɾ</td>
<td>ɾ</td>
<td>ɾ</td>
<td>ɾ</td>
<td>ɾ</td>
<td>ɾ</td>
<td>ɾ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a modally voiced consonant, except for murmured š. Shaded areas denote articulations judged to be impossible. Light grey letters are unofficial extensions of the IPA.*

### Consonants (Non-Pulmonic)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anterior click releases (require posterior stops)</th>
<th>Voiced implosions</th>
<th>Effervescents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bilabial fricated (&quot;bilateral&quot;)</td>
<td>Bilabial</td>
<td>'Examples:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laminal alveolar fricating (&quot;dental&quot;)</td>
<td>Dental or alveolar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apical (post) alveolar</td>
<td>Palatal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laminal palatoalveolar</td>
<td>Velar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lateral alveolar fricating (&quot;lateral&quot;)</td>
<td>Alveolar fricative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Vowels

- **Front**
  - Close: i
  - Near front: iy
  - Central: u
  - Near back: u

- **Near close**
  - i

- **Close mid**
  - e

- **Mid**
  - ə

- **Open mid**
  - ɛ

- **Near open**
  - ə

- **Open**
  - a

*Vowels at right & left of bullets are rounded & unrounded.*

### Diacritics

Diacritics may be placed above a symbol with a descender, as ɹ. Other IPA symbols may appear as diacritics to represent phonetic detail: ɾ (fricative release), ʰ (breathy voice), ɔ (glottal onset), ə (epenthetic schwa), ь (diphthongization).

### Syllabicity & Releases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Syllabic</th>
<th>Syllabic release</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>¥</td>
<td>¥</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phonetic</th>
<th>Primary articulation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voiceless or slack voice</td>
<td>Dental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasal release</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Secondary articulation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>¥</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vowels at right &amp; left of bullets are rounded &amp; unrounded.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Consonants (Co-Articulated)

- Alpha: Voiceless labialized velar approximant
- W: Voiced labialized velar approximant
- η: Voiced labialized palatal approximant
- θ: Voiced palataled postalveolar (alveolo-palatal) fricative
- θ: Voiced palataled postalveolar (alveolo-palatal) fricative
- θ: Simultaneous x and (disputed)

**Consonants (Co-Articulated)**

- M: Voiceless labialized velar approximant
- W: Voiced labialized velar approximant
- η: Voiced labialized palatal approximant
- θ: Voiced palataled postalveolar (alveolo-palatal) fricative
- θ: Voiced palataled postalveolar (alveolo-palatal) fricative
- θ: Simultaneous x and (disputed)

**Affricates and double articulations may be joined by a tie bar.**

### Tone

- **Primary stress**: Extra stress
- **Secondary stress**: Extra-long
- **Long**
- **Extra-long**
- **Mid**
- **High rising**
- **Low rising**
- **Typically**
- **Low falling**
- **Tone terracing**
- **Upstep**
- **Downstep**
- **Mode of articulation**
- **Tone**
- **Level tone**
- **Ratio tone**

**Examples:**
- B: Top
- L: Falling
- η: Mid
- η: High
- η: Falling
- η: Falling
- η: High
- η: Low
- η: Downstep
- η: Upside
- η: Level
- η: Ratio

### Syllabicity & Releases

- Syllable: ¥
- Syllabic release: ¥

- Voiceless or slack voice: Dental
- Nasal release: Advanced

- Advanced tongue root: ¥
- Velarized or pharyngealized: ¥
- Retracted: ¥
- Advanced tongue root: ¥
- Velarized or pharyngealized: ¥
- Retracted tongue root: ¥

- Centralized: ¥
- Advanced tongue root: ¥
- Velarized or pharyngealized: ¥
- Retracted tongue root: ¥

- ¥ (a bilabial approximant): ¥
- ¥ (a voiced alveolar non-sibilant fricative): ¥
- ¥ (a fricative trill): ¥
2. Chart of phonemic material of English and Czech languages

CONSONANTS (based on HIPA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bilabial</th>
<th>Labiodental</th>
<th>Dental</th>
<th>Alveolar</th>
<th>Postalveolar</th>
<th>Palatal</th>
<th>Velar</th>
<th>Glottal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plosive</td>
<td>p b</td>
<td></td>
<td>t d</td>
<td></td>
<td>c j</td>
<td>k g</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasal</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>(ŋ)</td>
<td>n</td>
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<td>j n</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricative</td>
<td>f v</td>
<td>θ ð</td>
<td>s z</td>
<td></td>
<td>f 3</td>
<td>x h</td>
<td>f i</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affricative</td>
<td>ts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximant</td>
<td>w</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lateral approximant</td>
<td></td>
<td>l</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comment: phonemes which occur exclusively in Czech are in light grey cells, whereas the ones occurring in English are dark grey cells. Note the difference between manners of pronunciation of h in both languages. The /ř/ symbol used here for Czech ř is very complicated in sense of transcription. Moreover, it may be both voiced and unvoiced depending on following sound. The nasal labiodental /ŋ/ in brackets occurs in words where /v/ or /f/ follows (tramvaj, triumf).

ENGLISH VOWELS (Roach)

CZECH VOWELS (HIPA)

ENGLISH DIPHTHONGS (Roach)

CZECH DIPHTHONGS (based on HIPA)
3. Questionnaire with answers of teachers involved in further research

1. How long have you been teaching English?
2. What type of school do you teach at?
3. How many lessons do you teach per week?
4. Are you a native speaker? (If so, go to question 6.)
   Yes    No
5. Have you ever visited an English speaking country? Which? How long did you stay there?
6. What is your qualification for teaching English? (What school or study programme did you do?)
7. What aspects of language are according to you the most important in your lessons? (Write your order of importance.)
   - cultural background
   - grammar
   - listening
   - literature
   - pronunciation
   - reading
   - speaking
   - system and history of the language
   - vocabulary
   - writing
8. What is according to you the most important phenomenon in pronunciation? (Write your order of importance.)
   - production of individual sounds
   - word stress/sentence stress
   - weak forms/strong forms
   - linking
   - intonation
   - rhythm
   - other (write which)
9. Are you trained in phonetics/phonology? If so, what training was it?
10. Are you aware of any pronunciation problems you have? If so, what do you have problems with?
    - production of individual sounds
    - word stress/sentence stress
    - weak forms/strong forms
    - linking
    - intonation
    - rhythm
11. What is your model/source of natural English? What/who do you imitate?
   films
   TV
   radio
   visiting an English speaking country
   special courses (state which)
   other (write which)

12. What textbook do you use in your English lessons?

13. Are there any pronunciation exercises in that textbook? Which features are practised?

14. Do you use the pronunciation exercises in your lessons? Why yes/not? How often?

15. Are your pupils/students successful in doing these kinds of exercises?

16. Are you aware of some of their pronunciation problems? If so, which?
   - production of individual sounds (esp. those which cause pronunciation problems of Czech learners of English)
   - word stress/sentence stress
   - weak forms/strong forms
   - linking
   - intonation
   - rhythm
   - other (write which)
   I don’t know.

17. What can be done to improve the pronunciation of your students?

18. Do you teach phonemic symbols to your pupils/students?
   Yes  No

19. Do you correct pronunciation mistakes of your pupils/students?
   Yes  No
   If so, how?

20. How much time of your lessons do you dedicate to pronunciation?

21. What percentage of the final grade does pronunciation roughly represent?
**Teacher P-1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>length of teaching practice</strong></th>
<th>10 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>number of lessons per week</strong></td>
<td>19 (English only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>visited an English speaking country</strong></td>
<td>yes, UK many times, about 1 year in total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>qualification for teaching</strong></td>
<td>Faculty of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>importance of aspects of language</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. speaking 
2. vocabulary 
3. listening 
4. grammar 
5. reading 
6. **pronunciation** 
7. writing 
8. cultural background 
9. literature 
10. system and history of the language |
| **importance within pronunciation** | 
1. pronouncing complete sentences correctly 
2. word stress/sentence stress 
3. production of individual sounds 
4. rhythm 
5. intonation 
6. weak forms/strong forms 
7. linking |
| **trained in phonetics and phonology** | yes, a course at university |
| **aware of any pronunciation problems** | weak forms/strong forms |
| **model/source of natural English** | television, visiting an English speaking country |
| **textbook used in lessons** | Chit Chat, Project |
| **pronunciation exercises** | yes, except linking |
| **using of pronunciation exercises in lessons** | yes, twice a month |
| **success of the learners** | yes |
| **pronunciation problems of learners** | production of individual sounds, word stress/sentence stress, rhythm, linking, weak forms/strong forms |
| **what can be done to improve** | more listening, practise |
| **teaches phonemic symbols** | yes |
| **corrects pronunciation mistakes** | yes, repeating and giving the right model |
| **time dedicated to pronunciation in lessons** | 22% |
| **percentage of final grade represented by pronunciation** | 10% |
**Teacher P-2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of teaching practice</th>
<th>8 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of lessons per week</td>
<td>24 total (14 of English, 10 of Civics)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visited an English-speaking country</td>
<td>yes, UK — a few days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualification for teaching</td>
<td>AAC Prague⁸⁶, Business administration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Importance of Aspects of Language

1. Speaking  
2. Vocabulary  
3. **Pronunciation**  
4. Listening  
5. Grammar  
6. Reading  
7. Writing  
8. System and history of the language  
9. Literature  
10. Cultural background

### Importance Within Pronunciation

1. Production of individual sounds  
2. Word stress/sentence stress  
3. Intonation  
4. Rhythm  
5. Linking  
6. Weak forms/strong forms

**Trained in phonetics and phonology**: no  
**Aware of any pronunciation problems**: no  
**Model/source of natural English**: films, television, radio, visiting an English-speaking country  
**Textbook used in lessons**: *Chit Chat, Project*  
**Pronunciation exercises**: yes

### Success of the Learners

**Sometimes**

### Pronunciation Problems of Learners

- Production of individual sounds  
- Word stress/sentence stress  
- Intonation

### What Can be Done to Improve

- More lessons, more opportunities, television, film, etc.

### Teaches Phonemic Symbols

**Yes**

### Corrects Pronunciation Mistakes

**Yes**, saying a right model

### Time Dedicated to Pronunciation in Lessons

It depends

### Percentage of Final Grade Represented by Pronunciation

**10%**

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⁸⁶ Anglo American College
**Teacher P-3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>length of teaching practice</strong></td>
<td>14 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>number of lessons per week</strong></td>
<td>24 total (10 of English, 14 of German)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>visited an English speaking country</strong></td>
<td>yes, UK for 4 weeks, USA for 2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>qualification for teaching</strong></td>
<td>Faculty of Education, University of Hradec Králové</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **importance of aspects of language** | 1. speaking  
2. reading  
3. vocabulary  
4. writing  
5. **pronunciation**  
6. grammar  
7. listening  
8. cultural background  
9. literature  
10. system and history of the language |
| **importance within pronunciation** | 1. production of individual sounds  
2. intonation  
3. rhythm  
4. linking  
5. weak forms/strong forms  
6. word stress/sentence stress |
| **trained in phonetics and phonology** | yes, a course at the university, reading aloud and recording herself |
| **aware of any pronunciation problems** | no |
| **model/source of natural English** | films, radio, visiting an English speaking country |
| **textbook used in lessons** | Chit Chat, Project |
| **pronunciation exercises** | yes, deal with all the features mentioned above |
| **using of pronunciation exercises in lessons** | seldom, once a month |
| **success of the learners** | mostly yes |
| **pronunciation problems of learners** |  
- word stress/sentence stress  
- weak forms/strong forms  
- intonation |
| **what can be done to improve** | more reading practise |
| **teaches phonemic symbols** | yes |
| **corrects pronunciation mistakes** | yes, saying the right model |
| **time dedicated to pronunciation in lessons** | while doing exercises |
| **percentage of final grade represented by pronunciation** | 10% |
**Teacher P-4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Teaching Practice</th>
<th>15 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Lessons per Week</td>
<td>24 total (14 of English, 10 of Music)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visited an English Speaking Country</td>
<td>yes, UK for 1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualification for Teaching</td>
<td>Faculty of Education, Palacký University Olomouc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Importance of Aspects of Language | 1. Speaking  
2. Vocabulary  
3. Grammar  
4. Listening  
5. **Pronunciation**  
6. Reading  
7. Writing  
8. Cultural Background  
9. Literature  
10. System and History of the Language |
| Importance within Pronunciation | 1. Production of Individual Sounds  
2. Word Stress/Sentence Stress  
3. Intonation  
4. Weak Forms/Strong Forms  
5. Rhythm  
6. Linking |
| Trained in Phonetics and Phonology | One semester course at university |
| Aware of Any Pronunciation Problems | Word stress (sometimes) |
| Model/Source of Natural English | Special course for teachers from ESF for three years |
| Textbook Used in Lessons | Chit Chat, Project |
| Pronunciation Exercises | Yes, word stress, short and long vowels, plural endings, intonation, etc. |
| Using of Pronunciation Exercises in Lessons | Tries to use all exercises in the textbooks |
| Success of the Learners | Depends on level of the learners |
| Pronunciation Problems of Learners | Production of Individual Sounds |
| What Can Be Done to Improve | More listening (films, songs) at home, since there is little time for it at school; mixed ability classes are not an ideal option for teaching foreign language |
| Teaches Phonemic Symbols | Yes |
| Corrects Pronunciation Mistakes | Yes, saying right model and repeating |
| Time Dedicated to Pronunciation in Lessons | About 5 minutes |
| Percentage of Final Grade Represented by Pronunciation | About 10% |
**Teacher S-1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>length of teaching practice</th>
<th>12 years</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>number of lessons per week</td>
<td>20 total (12 of English, 8 of History)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>visited an English speaking country</td>
<td>yes, UK — several week-long stays, USA — 1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qualification for teaching</td>
<td>Teachers Training College</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| importance of aspects of language | 1. vocabulary and **pronunciation**  
2. grammar  
3. speaking  
4. listening  
5. reading  
6. writing  
7. cultural background  
8. literature  
9. system and history of the language |
| importance within pronunciation | 1. production of individual sounds  
2. word stress/sentence stress  
3. linking  
4. weak forms/strong forms  
5. intonation  
6. rhythm |
| trained in phonetics and phonology | a course at the university (not sure about the length) |
| aware of any pronunciation problems | to be honest, is not sure |
| model/source of natural English | definitely a combination of everything possible |
| textbook used in lessons | Maturita Solutions, Project |
| pronunciation exercises | yes, individual sounds, word stress/sentence stress, weak forms/strong forms, linking, intonation, rhythm |
| using of pronunciation exercises in lessons | yes, sometimes |
| success of the learners | yes |
| pronunciation problems of learners | production of individual sounds, weak forms/strong forms, linking |
| what can be done to improve | practice, watching films, listening to spoken English |
| teaches phonemic symbols | yes, some of them |
| corrects pronunciation mistakes | sometimes, not in a fluent speech, but in pronunciation exercises |
| time dedicated to pronunciation in lessons | is not sure |
| percentage of final grade represented by pronunciation | 20% |
**Teacher S-2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Teaching Practice</th>
<th>5 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Lessons per Week</td>
<td>21 (English only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visited an English Speaking Country</td>
<td>yes, UK for 10 months (University of Leeds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualification for Teaching</td>
<td>none, FF MU — department of English and American Studies (a PhD student)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Importance of Aspects of Language | 1. Grammar  
2. Speaking  
3. Vocabulary  
4. Reading  
5. Writing  
6. Pronunciation  
7. Listening  
8. System and history of the language  
9. Literature  
10. Cultural background |
| Importance within Pronunciation | 1. Production of individual sounds  
2. Word stress/sentence stress  
3. Linking  
4. Weak forms/strong forms  
5. Rhythm  
6. Intonation |
<p>| Trained in Phonetics and Phonology | yes, has been involved in this area of linguistics and sociolinguistics for about seven years, might easily become his lifelong academic specialisation |
| Aware of Any Pronunciation Problems | yes, particularly geographical names, unknown words, rhythm |
| Model/Source of Natural English | Educated northern/northern RP (source of inspiration: individual people — e.g. radio and TV presenters — rather than a model found in a textbook) |
| Textbook Used in Lessons | Maturita Solutions, Objective FCE |
| Pronunciation Exercises | Not many, typically minimal pairs |
| Using of Pronunciation Exercises in Lessons | Not really, pronunciation is discussed in a random way |
| Success of the Learners | Some are, others not so (as always) |
| Pronunciation Problems of Learners | Production of individual sounds, word stress/sentence stress, weak forms/strong forms, linking, intonation |
| What Can Be Done to Improve | Listening to authentic recordings, acquainting learners with the variety of accents and the most salient features (even of non-standard English, e.g. vowel in a word <em>strut</em> pronounced as <em>/ʊ</em>/) |
| Teaches Phonemic Symbols | Yes |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>corrects pronunciation mistakes</th>
<th>yes, instant reminding them</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>time dedicated to pronunciation in lessons</td>
<td>2%?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>percentage of final grade represented by pronunciation</td>
<td>oral exam — 10%?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Teacher S-3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>length of teaching practice</td>
<td>10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>number of lessons per week</td>
<td>20 (English only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>visited an English speaking country</td>
<td>yes, USA for three months, New Zealand for five months, UK twice for two and half months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qualification for teaching</td>
<td>Faculty of Education, Masaryk University</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| importance of aspects of language                    | 1. speaking  
2. vocabulary  
3. grammar  
4. listening  
5. pronunciation  
6. reading  
7. writing  
8. literature  
9. system and history of the language                |
| importance within pronunciation                      | 1. production of individual sounds  
2. word stress/sentence stress  
3. weak forms/strong forms  
4. intonation  
5. linking  
6. rhythm                                                                                          |
| trained in phonetics and phonology                   | yes, during her studies                                                                                                                  |
| aware of any pronunciation problems                  | word stress/sentence stress, rhythm                                                                                                    |
| model/source of natural English                      | films, television, radio, visiting an English speaking country                                                                            |
| textbook used in lessons                             | Project, Maturita Solutions                                                                                                               |
| pronunciation exercises                              | yes, all features                                                                                                                        |
| using of pronunciation exercises in lessons          | yes, three times a month                                                                                                                 |
| success of the learners                               | basically yes                                                                                                                            |
| pronunciation problems of learners                   | production of individual sounds, word stress/sentence stress, weak forms/strong forms, linking, intonation, rhythm                      |
| what can be done to improve                          | guide the learners to listen to and imitate the native speakers (on TV, on the radio, in films, etc.)                                     |
| teaches phonemic symbols                              | yes                                                                                                                                     |
| corrects pronunciation mistakes                       | yes, together with the whole class, they correct themselves                                                                           |
| time dedicated to pronunciation in lessons            | a couple of minutes                                                                                                                      |
| percentage of final grade represented by pronunciation| 10%                                                                                                                                     |
4. Test (learners)

**Pronunciation test**

**Section A  Letters and sounds**

A1. Circle the word with a different vowel sound.

- Example: hot (hold) gone swan
  1. black want mad hand
  2. case lake name care
  3. soap hope sold soup
  4. what box most salt

My score = __/7

A2. Circle the word if one of the consonant letters is not pronounced.

- Example: camp crisp (chiph) cost
  1. lamb label cable cab
  2. recipe repeat receipt rope
  3. listen writer eaten eaten
  4. hour hate home hill

Section B  Syllables, words and sentences

B1. Listen and circle the word you hear.

- Example: The glass / gas is green.
  1. The glass / gas is green.
  2. The shop / shop is open.
  3. I can't sell / smell anything.
  4. They need / needed more time.
  5. I think they want / wanted to talk.
  6. There are thirty / thirteenth people in my class.
  7. Alice is / was here.

My score = __/14

Section C  Conversation

C1. Listen. Which sentence do you hear? Tick (✓) a or b.

- Example: Was that the question he asked? ✓
  a. Was that the question he asked?
  b. Was that the question? he asked.
 1. a. We noticed carefully downstairs. It was dark.
     b. We noticed carefully. Downstairs it was dark.
 2. a. I saw her clearly. She was hungry.
     b. I saw her. Clearly, she was hungry.
 3. a. The word he said was right.
     b. The word he said was right.
 4. a. It was cold last night. The roads were icy.
     b. It was cold. Last night, the roads were icy.
 5. a. 'Who?' said Martin.
     b. Who said 'Martin'?
 6. a. What she said was good.
     b. What she said was 'Good'.
 7. a. Let's go home later. We can have a pizza.
     b. Let's go home. Later we can have a pizza.

My score = __/7
5. Reading text

I moved into this flat a few weeks ago, and I'm really enjoying living here. There's only one bedroom, and at the moment my sister is staying with me because she's looking for a job.

I work in advertising. It's hard work, and the hours are really long, but I like it. And it's well paid. The office is really relaxed. No one wears a suit or a tie.

The only thing I don’t like about this flat is one of the neighbours, Mrs Snell, I think her name is. She's really strange. She never speaks to anyone. I always say hello to her, and 'Are you all right?' and 'What a lovely day today!', but she never speaks a word. Maybe she doesn’t like young people.

I had a party a few days ago. It really wasn’t very noisy. About ten of us were here until 11.00 and then we went to a club. When I saw Mrs Snell the next day, I said I hoped there wasn’t too much noise, but as usual she didn’t say anything. Funny lady.

Taken form ‘Tapescript 1.5’ from *New Headway: Pre-intermediate* (2006), p. 118
6. Recordings (CD-R)

01. Sample text read by a native speaker

02. Teacher P-2

03. Teacher P-3

04. Teacher P-4

05. Teacher S-1

06. Teacher S-2

07. Teacher S-3

08.—14. 8AP-1 learners

15.—17. 8AP-2 learners

18.—27. 8MP-4 learners

28.—32. 8SP-3 learners

33.—36. 8SP-2 learners

37.—41. 9AP-4 learners

42.—48. 9BP-1 learners

49.—55. 9MP-2 learners

56.—60. 1BS-1 learners

61.—65. 1GS-2 learners

66.—71. 1GS-3 learners

72.—79. 2BS-2 learners

80.—86. 3CS-2 learners

87.—88. Listening part of the test

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87 “Tapescript 1.5’ from New Headway: Pre-intermediate (2006)