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Bc. Magdaléna Hruběšová

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# ZADÁNÍ DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE

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Jméno a příjmení: **Bc. Magdaléna Hruběšová**  
Osobní číslo: **H21356**  
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Studentka se ve své práci zaměří na výuku výslovnosti v hodinách anglického jazyka na základní škole. V teoretické části práce bude nejprve diskutovat výslovnost v kontextu obecného cíle výuky anglického jazyka a relevantních kurikulárních dokumentů. Následně komplexně popíše principy výuky výslovnosti s oporou v teoretických zdrojích relevantních pro tuto problematiku. Teoretickou část diplomové práce uzavře podkapitolami týkající se vymezení postojů a charakteristik vybrané skupiny žáků. Náplní praktické části diplomové práce bude kvalitativní výzkumné šetření, konkrétně případová studie. Cílem bude zjistit, zda a jakým způsobem probíhá výuka výslovnosti a jaké postoje k ní učitel a žáci mají.

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Vedoucí diplomové práce: **Mgr. Helena Zitková, Ph.D.**  
Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky

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---

**doc. Mgr. Jiří Kubeš, Ph.D.**  
děkan

---

**Mgr. Olga Roebuck, Ph.D.**  
vedoucí katedry

V Pardubicích dne 30. listopadu 2021

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## **ANNOTATION**

This diploma thesis is focused on the attitudes of teachers and learners towards pronunciation in English. In the theoretical part, the historical perspective on teaching pronunciation is introduced, and then followed by the contemporary perspective on teaching pronunciation, which is based on the relevant curricular documents. Furthermore, an overview of basic terminology relevant to pronunciation is introduced and discussed in relation to teaching pronunciation. Lastly, the period of the young learner is discussed. The practical part focuses on the description of case study which aims to find out what are the attitudes of teachers and learners towards teaching pronunciation.

## **KEY WORDS**

Pronunciation, early school age, attitude, teaching pronunciation, linguistic competence, elementary school

## **TITLE**

Výuka výslovnosti – postoje učitelů a žáků

## **ANNOTATION**

Tato diplomová práce pojednává o postojích učitelů a žáků k výuce výslovnosti v hodinách anglického jazyka. V teoretické části práce je představen historický pohled na výuku výslovnosti a následně současný pohled na tuto výuku, který vychází z příslušných kurikulárních dokumentů. Dále je představen a diskutován přehled základní terminologie relevantní k výslovnosti, která je následně diskutována ve vztahu k výuce. Teoretickou část práce uzavírá obecné vymezení období mladšího školního věku. Praktická část diplomové práce je zaměřena na popis případové studie, jejímž cílem je zjistit, jaké jsou postoje učitelů a žáků k výuce výslovnosti.

## **KEYWORDS**

Výslovnost, mladší školní věk, postoj, vyučování výslovnosti, lingvistická kompetence, základní škola

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Pronunciation has been one of the topics discussed in connection with teaching languages. Even now it is a point of discussion for many. There are scholars, such as Zahia Bouchar, who express that “The importance of pronunciation is also discussed in relation to improving listening comprehension as the latter is improved by an awareness of the pronunciation features (Pennington, 1996 and Harmer, 2001 quoted in Bouchar 2018, 48). Scrivener states that “Pronunciation can be an overlooked area [...], partly because teachers themselves feel more uncertain about it than about grammar or lexis [...]” (2011, 271). Additionally, the topic of pronunciation itself is a complicated one, it includes vast terminology and definitions. There are many ways, approaches and methods, and the question of what is best for everyone remains. Moreover, does the best method even exist? And what do teachers and learners think? This will be the aim of this thesis – to provide an insight into what a limited number of learners and teachers think about pronunciation, if it should be taught at all and if so, then what is the method to be used.

To provide background information about the ever-evolving methods and approaches towards teaching pronunciation, this thesis starts with a brief overview of the history in this field. This part is followed by a chapter in which a further description of the curricular documents, which influence the way pronunciation is taught in the Czech Republic and in the European Union. The question asked in this part of the thesis will be whether these documents do provide information that could be connected to pronunciation, or not.

In the third chapter of the theoretical part, a terminology overview is provided. The focus here is placed on the basic terminology, such as ‘allophone’ or ‘phoneme’, and the further discussion concerns the segmental and suprasegmental features of pronunciation. This part is followed by chapter describing how to teach pronunciation.

The theoretical part of the thesis is closed by a chapter in which the specifics of the young learners are described from the perspective of cognitive, social and emotional development. Some of the differences between learning the first and the second language are just briefly mentioned.

The practical part of this thesis consists of a description of a case study. In the first chapter of the practical part, the planning phase is introduced together with the type of research which was chosen. The research questions are described in this part of the thesis, too. The school, the teachers, and the learners participating in the research are introduced. Then, information concerning the piloting phase together with the research phases of both

interviews and questions are provided. The practical part of the thesis is closed by a description of open coding of the interviews, by a chapter focusing on the interpretation of the data, and by a discussion of the obtained data.

## 1. The history of teaching pronunciation

This chapter aims to provide a brief overview of different way the teaching of pronunciation in history. The terms ‘approach’ and ‘methods’<sup>1</sup> will be used. Because of this, the description of the methods will not be exhausting by any means since the methods that did not primarily focus on pronunciation will not be listed.

Although authors suggest there is not much known concerning the methods used to teach languages prior to the nineteenth century, still information regarding pronunciation can be found. Louis G. Kelly notes that “[...] little has been written about teaching pronunciation, at least in the West [...] This situation contrasts with that in India, where, in the millennium before Christ, the Sanskrit grammarians had developed a sophisticated system of phonology [...]” (1976, 60). Even though Caravolas in his book describes the situation in India similarly, he also states that the first phonetic alphabet was created in Ancient Greece (2001, 10). However, pronunciation did not have an extraordinary role in Ancient Greece classes. Caravolas describes the process of teaching Greek and although tongue twisters occurred as well as the focus on rhythm and intonation, it was not pronunciation what was crucial (2001, 11–12). The situation concerning pronunciation did not change until the emergence of the Direct Method in the nineteenth century. Prior to this method, the main focus was placed on reading and writing skills and Richards and Rogers specifically state that “speaking the foreign language was not the goal, and oral practice was limited to students reading aloud the sentences they had translated” (2001, 4). As can be seen, correct pronunciation was not the main goal.

However, in the Direct Method, a language is viewed differently. Connected with the Reform Movement, the International Phonetic Association and the International Phonetic Alphabet were established in 1880s, too (Richards and Rogers 2001, 9). The need to practice pronunciation was reflected in the language classrooms. Larsen-Freeman describes the main objective of the method as teaching to communicate in a given language, so speaking is the

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<sup>1</sup> However, prior to describing the different methods and approaches, the difference between these two terms should be explained. To do so, the model by Jack C. Richards and Theodore S. Rogers will be used. From this model, the difference is apparent since the term method functions as an umbrella term under which are other terms to be found. This does not mean that it is organized hierarchically. Richards and Rogers themselves state that “a method is theoretically related to an approach, is organizationally determined by a design, and is practically realized in procedure”. Furthermore, they connect approach to a theory of language and to a theory of language learning (2001, 20–22). Thus, the difference between a method and an approach is in the fact that a method consists of an approach, a design and a procedure. However, the distinction and definition is not perceived uniformly.

main language skill and pronunciation is focused on since the beginner levels (2000, 29–30). However, many drawbacks of this method displayed and because of that, different methods emerged in the United Kingdom and in the United States. Joan Morley describes that both methods (The Situational Language Teaching and Audiolingualism) saw pronunciation as a key and they share the focus on phonemes and their variations and on suprasegmental features, such as stress or rhythm. The instruction included imitation, drilling, explanation and the focus on accuracy (1991, 484–485). Pronunciation was perceived as highly important.

It was after these methods that the position of pronunciation started to be rather unstable. Morley describes the period of 1960s to 1980s as the period when perspectives on pronunciation were discussed. Points of discussion concerned not only the importance of pronunciation, but also the methods used to teach pronunciation and languages and as a result of that, many new approaches towards teaching languages emerged in this period. The position of pronunciation varies among different methods. Richards and Rogers list the communicative methodologies towards teaching languages as those following Audiolingualism and the Situational Language Teaching (2001, 151). Celce-Murcia defines the Communicative Approach as “an umbrella term for a number of designs and procedures [...]” (2014, 8). However, the focus on pronunciation may be complicated to state exactly. Although from the description of some of the methods belonging to this group the extent to which pronunciation is perceived as important could be guessed, still, authors do not describe the approaches in such a way. To provide an example, Nunan describes Task-Based Teaching and Learning and states that “[...] although there is no explicit focus on pronunciation, grammar, or vocabulary, students need to mobilize their linguistic resources to achieve the goal of the task” (2014, 459). The position of pronunciation is not clearly defined.

Still, there were other methods that emerged in the same period - Richards and Rogers list the Silent Way, the Natural Approach and Total Physical Response (2001, 15). Out of this list, the Natural Approach and Total Physical Response are described by authors as methods in which their specific objectives are tightly connected to the needs of the particular learners (Richards and Rogers 2001, 184; Larsen-Freeman, 115). Because of that, the importance of pronunciation cannot be clearly defined since the needs of learners may differ among various groups. However, this does not apply to the Silent Way. Although the name does not indicate it, practicing and achieving the correct pronunciation is highlighted as a major component of language learning in this method. Richards and Rogers state that the beginning part of a lesson is devoted to pronunciation practice (2001, 86). Harmer adds the use of Cuisenaire rods

and of a phonemic chart for the purposes of the pronunciation practice (2007, 68). As can be seen, pronunciation in *The Silent Way* is important.

Although there is no syllabus in *Community Language Learning*, attention is partly given to pronunciation, too. Larsen-Freeman describes the activity called *Human Computer™* and adds that the teacher and the learners practice pronunciation patterns that arise as those to be worked on throughout the lesson (2000, 100–101). However, Richards and Rogers highlight the absence of a stable syllabus and the presence of unclear objectives in *Community Language Learning* (2001, 98). The period of the emergence of many methods is a period of instability in the perspective of pronunciation. There were other methods that did not have strictly defined objectives concerning pronunciation, such as *Neurolinguistic Programming*. As Richards and Rogers state, the beginnings of *Neurolinguistic Programming* were not tied to language classrooms (2001, 125). Nowadays, studies are starting to focus on the usage of *Neurolinguistic Programming* philosophy in language classrooms. The results of these studies are quite positive as their outcomes are that *Neurolinguistic Programming* has a positive impact on the learners of English (Caballero and Rosado 2018, 13; Bani Ahmad 2018, 305–306). Possibly, the position of pronunciation is changing in *Neurolinguistic Programming*.

However, back in the era between 1960s to 1990s, the importance of pronunciation in language classrooms was questioned greatly. Morley explains this by specifying the questions, which concerned the teachability of pronunciation in direct instruction, the importance of pronunciation as such, and whether the focus should be placed on pronunciation at all. Moreover, Morley explains that because of this, many methods and programs did not focus on pronunciation at all (1991, 485). Examples of these methods are *The Lexical Approach* or in the *Competency-Based Language Teaching* (Harmer 2007, 74–75; Griffith and Lim 2014, 2–3). The position of pronunciation was changing rapidly.

Still, there is an approach that emerged in the 1980s, and which does not dismiss pronunciation from the beginning, which is *Communicative Language Teaching*. From the literature observed, it can be stated that in the *Communicative Language Teaching* pronunciation is not seen as particularly important but still needed, because Richards and Rogers claim that “comprehensible pronunciation is sought” since “effective communication is sought” (Richards and Rogers 2001, 156). On the other hand, they mention that clear objectives of teachers using this approach are impossible to state since the reflection of needs of particular students is presumed (Richards and Rogers 2001, 163). An example including a similarly unclear position of pronunciation could be the *Cooperative Language Learning*

because Richards and Rogers claim that one of the aims of this method is “to develop communicative competence” and they add that “more specific objectives will derive from the context in which it is used” (Richards and Rogers 2001, 195). From this, it could be stated that pronunciation holds partly an important role in this approach since it is a part of the communicative competence itself. This suggestion is then agreed with by Richards and Rogers when they state that “[...] we find CLL used in teaching [...] the four skills, grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary” (2001, 195). Undoubtedly, pronunciation is again recognized as a part of language worth of focus, but still its position can be rather unstable. The time period of 1960s to 1980s and 1990s was truly turbulent in relation to pronunciation and the importance of pronunciation was difficult to state concerning all the methods and approaches that emerged in this period. After this turbulent time, the post-methods period came.

The post-methods era started in the 1990s when the idea of methods started to be greatly criticized and since “mainstream language teaching no longer regarded methods as the key factor in counting for success or failure in language teaching.” (Richards and Rogers 2002, 247). Furthermore, they state that the knowledge of methods and approaches may help a novice teacher to gain confidence in their teaching (Richards and Rogers 2002, 250). If so greatly criticized, are methods of any use? Richards and Rogers argue that methods “will continue to be useful for teachers and student teachers to become familiar with the major teaching approaches and methods proposed for second and foreign language teaching” (Richards and Rogers 2001, 250). Celce-Murcia suggests that the post-methods era is one of constant change (2014,12–13). Also, in the European Union, the CEFR document was developed and can be used by teachers of languages. This document, among the other documents that are important for teaching languages, describes the current perspective on pronunciation, and it will be described in the following chapter.

## **2. Pronunciation from the perspective of curricular documents**

### **2.1 Communicative European Framework of Reference for Languages**

Communicative European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (abbreviated into CEFR) is a document issued by the European Union. The first version was issued in 2001. For the purposes of this thesis, the version issued in 2020 will be referred to. This version, in its full name Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment: Companion volume (again abbreviated as CEFR) aims to provide guidance for those creating language curricula and also to provide a teacher-friendly version of the CEFR document concerning the aims and principles included in CEFR (2020, 21). Generally, it is an important curricular document.

Moreover, CEFR describes and operates with the concept of ‘Communicative Language Competences’, which are further divided into ‘Linguistic Competence’, ‘Sociopragmatic Competence’, and ‘Pragmatic Competence’ (CEFR 2020, 129). The term ‘competence’ can be according to Hartl and Hartlová defined as “ability, experience, qualification [...]”<sup>2</sup> (2000, 263). On the other hand, Průcha, Walterová, and Mareš describe competence as a set of tools that the students or learners are capable of using. These tools are not connected to one subject only, but they apply across the whole educational system (2003, 104). As could be seen from the citations, competence is the ability of a learner to apply the learned knowledge in real-life situations. In this thesis, the main focus will be placed on linguistic competence, since pronunciation (in CEFR listed as ‘Phonological control’) is one of the sub-categories of this competence.

As with the remaining two competences included in the linguistic competence, the descriptors of the linguistic competence are included in the CEFR document. Linguistic competence deals with linguistic matters, such as General linguistic range, Vocabulary range, Grammatical accuracy, Vocabulary control, Phonological control, and Orthographic control (CEFR 2020, 129). As can be seen from the list, linguistic competence is a vast area, and pronunciation has a substantial position in Linguistic competence.

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<sup>2</sup> Translated by the author.

### **2.1.1 Phonological control**

As mentioned above, one of the parts of linguistic competence is phonological control. Originally, the aim in this field was to reach phonological control similar to an idealized native speaker of the language (CEFR 2020, 133). However, there is an important shift in goals present in this part of the CEFR. In the past, the main attention was given to teaching and learning how to pronounce in the given language without any foreign accent, as mentioned previously. Nowadays, intelligibility is of increasingly more value than accuracy and reaching the level of a native-like accent. In the perspective of the authors of this document, the previously prevailing focus on accuracy and accent proved to be harmful to the ways of teaching pronunciation. Additionally, the models followed in cases, when the native-like pronunciation is the goal, in fact ignored other important aspects of teaching and learning pronunciation, such as taking the sociolinguistic aspects into account, or the needs of the learners (CEFR 2020, 133). Because of that, in the up-to-date version of CEFR, this is no longer perceived as a goal.

As stated previously, intelligibility is of high importance nowadays. The other areas of importance are ‘overall phonological control’, ‘sound articulation’, and ‘prosodic features (intonation, stress and rhythm)’ (CEFR 2020, 133). Out of these areas, intelligibility is still perceived as the major area. It is so because according to the intelligibility of the speaker the levels of language proficiency described in the CEFR have been distinguished (2020, 133). In total, there are six levels differentiated with each level being labelled by a letter and a number (such as A1 for the beginner’s level and C2 for the proficient user's level). Furthermore, there is a scale which can be referred to if the level of a speaker’s phonological control needs to be established. It is stated that together with intelligibility of the speaker, the other key concepts that have to be taken into account in the scale are “the degree of clarity and precision in the articulation of sounds” (CEFR 2020, 133). If the need to state a speaker’s level arises, then the scale provided in the CEFR document could be used for such purposes. For the previously mentioned areas, thus for ‘overall phonological control’, ‘sound articulation’, and ‘prosodic features’ detailed descriptions are provided (2020, 134–135). Definitely, phonological control is a complex matter. By describing the major areas in such detail, the CEFR may prove to be a needed and helpful tool.



## 2.2 Rámcový vzdělávací program (RVP)

This document is functioning on a national level in the Czech Republic with the focus placed on every subject taught in elementary and lower secondary education in the Czech Republic. In this document, the expected outcomes<sup>3</sup> are described in detail in connection with three distinguished periods: the first period, which is the period between the first and the third grade, the second period, which is marked by the end of the fifth grade and finally the lower secondary period thus the period of the sixth to the ninth grade (2021, 14). For all of these periods, more information for teaching a foreign language is provided.

As stated previously, the expected outcomes<sup>4</sup> are described in detail, containing the description of the expected level of knowledge and skills the pupil should achieve at the end of the given period. Similarly, there are also detailed descriptions of the minimal recommended levels in terms of the given skills and knowledge in the foreign language at the end of each period (2021, 25– 28). All of these details could prove helpful for teachers.

### 2.2.1 Pronunciation in the RVP document

Overall, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, all information concerning language teaching in this document, thus even pronunciation, is to be found in part 5.1.2. A Foreign Language<sup>5</sup>. In the expected outcomes<sup>6</sup> for the first period, there is no curriculum concerning pronunciation stated explicitly, nor there are outcomes concerning learner's pronunciation in terms of utterances being pronounced by the learner. The only outcomes which are indirectly linked to learners is the outcome CJ-3-1-05, which is “[a learner] connects the spoken and written form of the same word or a phrase”<sup>7</sup> (RVP 2021, 25) and the fact that the learner should be able to understand the teacher if the teacher speaks slowly and carefully (RVP 2021, 25). Additionally, the definition of the minimal suggested level of knowledge and skills is defined in each section of the expected outcomes. For the minimum concerning the first period of expected outcomes, the learner shall be introduced to the sound form of the foreign language (RVP 2021, 25). Mostly, the importance of the correct pronunciation of the teacher is stressed in this part. The teacher should be able to speak slowly and to pronounce words clearly and carefully (RVP 2021, 25). Such an information can be confirmed by Lightbown and Spada, who refer to this modification as one of the aspects of ‘the teacher talk’ or ‘the

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<sup>3</sup> Translated by the author.

<sup>4</sup> Translated by the author.

<sup>5</sup> Translated by the author.

<sup>6</sup> Translated by the author.

<sup>7</sup> Translated by the author.

foreigner talk' (2011, 32–33). As can be seen, the expected outcomes in this part are designed so that the learner is first exposed to the language. Only after this period it could be aimed for the learners' active production. This is supported by Lightbown and Spada, who state that “younger learners [...] are usually allowed to be silent until they are ready to speak” (2011, 32). On the other hand, Bao warns that there has to be a meaningful and comprehensible input provided otherwise the silence is not productive (2019, 32). Definitely, all this information is reflected in this section of the RVP.

The expected outcomes for the second period thus the fifth grade of the elementary school do not differ much from the expected outcomes for the first period, which is the third grade. Again, the principles of slower speech and clear and careful pronunciation applied by the teacher are suggested as suitable. In addition, the ability of the learner to connect the written and spoken form of a word or a phrase is highlighted for the second time (RVP 2021, 25). In comparison with the expected outcomes for the first period, the format of the expected outcomes changed since they are divided into listening comprehension, speaking, reading comprehension and writing (in the first period, there was no such distinction, the section was entitled as language skills (RVP 2021, 25). For each of these sections, the minimal suggested outcomes are described, too. Again, there are no notes concerning to pronunciation of the learner in the minimal suggested outcomes (RVP 2021, 25). However, pronunciation is further discussed in the Curriculum section<sup>8</sup> for the second period. Here, pronunciation and the graphic form of a language are merged together with the curriculum being “phonetic symbols (passive knowledge), basic pronunciation habits, the relationship between the sound and the graphic form of words”<sup>9</sup> (RVP 2021, 26). As can be seen, the description of the curriculum is not extensive.

Finally, the third period is marked by the end of elementary school – the ninth grade. This section builds on the previous periods, such as by suggesting the slower speed of speech to teachers (RVP 2021, 27). The expected outcomes are divided in the same manner as in the previous section. There are no minimal suggested outcomes concerning pronunciation. Pronunciation itself is discussed only in the curriculum section in which the requirements are again in the category of the sound and the graphic form of the language. The requirements concerning pronunciation are the following: “developing sufficiently intelligible pronunciation and ability to distinguish by ear the elements of the phonological system of the

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<sup>8</sup> Translated by the author.

<sup>9</sup> Translated by the author.

language; word and sentence stress; intonation; [...]”<sup>10</sup> (RVP 2021, 28). Similarly as in the CEFR document, the importance of intelligibility is highlighted in the RVP document, too (by which the previous note in the expected outcomes of the ninth grade (the third period) is meant). However, the description is not as detailed in the RVP document as in the CEFR Companion document since the pronunciation in connection with learners is mostly mentioned only in the curriculum section.

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<sup>10</sup> Translated by the author.

### **3. Pronunciation in literature – what is it and how should it be taught?**

#### **3.1 Phonetics, Phonology, segmental and suprasegmental features, phonemes**

Nowadays, English functions as a Lingua Franca, which means that it serves as a language of communication for people who do not share the same mother tongue (Jenkins 2007, 1). The field focusing solely on pronunciation is the field of phonetics and phonology with the difference between these two terminologies being that ‘phonetics’ “studies the characteristics of human soundmaking, especially those sounds used in speech [...] whereas the term ‘phonology’ refers to “a branch of linguistics which studies the sound systems of languages” (Crystal 2008, 363; Crystal 2008, 365). As can be seen, both fields are interconnected.

But how is pronunciation understood? Prashant defines the term ‘pronunciation’ as “the way words are spoken” and adds that “for the better communication, we need correct pronunciation, because pronunciation affects very much on the understanding of the meanings of the words” (2018, 15–16). There are a lot of different features of pronunciation, which are divided into the categories of segmental and suprasegmental. Segmental features can be further divided into consonants and vowels, both of which are further distinguishable, and suprasegmental features are further distinguished into two important sections: intonation, and stress - word stress and sentence stress (Kelly 2000, 1; Roach 2001, 31). The division of the suprasegmental features varies. Roach lists the suprasegmental features such as the pitch, accents loudness, tempo, voice quality, rhythm and other features. Moreover, he adds that the study of these features of languages may be referred to as the study of prosody (2001, 31–36). The division described in this paragraph will be used as the outline of this chapter.

The smallest unit of a language in terms of pronunciation is a ‘phoneme’. Kelly defines a phoneme as “the different sounds within a language (Kelly 2000,1). Furthermore, Kelly enlarges the definition of a phoneme: “they are units which differentiate between word meanings” (Kelly 2000, 29). Phonemes are crucial since they have such a vast influence on the meaning of words and utterances. Kelly provides an example when mentioning the words ‘rot’ and ‘rat’ – only one sound (or one letter) has been changed, yet that change affects the meaning of the whole word significantly (Kelly 2000, 1). There appears to be a discussion of

how many phonemes are actually recognized in English. Generally, the number stated is forty-four (Kelly 2000, 2), however, there are scholars who disagree and state that the number of phonemes is impossible to state precisely (Bett 2002, 8). However, in connection to this context, the term ‘allophone’ should be introduced. The term ‘allophone’ refers to different realizations of a singular phoneme. These realizations can be analyzed since they can be recorded whereas phonemes, according to Collins et.al, are abstract units which do not exist outside of the speaker’s or listener’s mind (Roach 2001,17; Collins, Mees, and Carley 2019, 64). To provide an example of an allophone, the realizations of the phoneme ‘p’ such as [p] and [p<sup>h</sup>] are the allophones of the phoneme /p/ and since being an allophone, the realization is written in the square brackets (Roach 2001, 7; Carr 2013,86). All the units are located in the International Phonetic Alphabet (abbreviated into IPA). Crystal explains that these signs can be used for transcription, which means that the sounds a speaker says can be recorded in a written form with the signs from the IPA (2008, 490). Additionally, Roach states that phonetic symbols could be used when teaching the English pronunciation (Roach 2001, 5). The question of whether to use phonetic symbols or not in the process will be discussed briefly later in the following chapter.

There are yet another two terminologies that should be introduced at this point, which are ‘homophones’ and ‘homographs’. Homographs are words which share the written form but differ in pronunciation, such as in ‘lead’, which according to its pronunciation may vary in meaning. Conversely, homophones share the same pronunciation but differ in spelling, although it may differ in various English accents (Brown 2014, 213; Collins, Carley, and Mees 2019, 74–75). As can be seen, these variations may have a significant effect on the effectiveness of communication, which is even highlighted by Collins, Mees, and Carley, who suggest that these variations may be a cause of error for learners (2019, 74).

Lastly, the distinction between ‘segmental’ and ‘suprasegmental’ features of pronunciation should be explained. Segments, or segmental features, are individual sounds speakers make in the act of speaking, thus, vowels and consonants (Roach 2000, 5; Brown 2014, 6). Suprasegmental features are those which influence longer stretches of speech. Examples of these features are intonation, rhythm, stress or connected speech (Kelly 2001, 1–3; Roach 2000, 31; Goodwin 2014, 137–139). Both segmental and suprasegmental features will be described in further detail in the following sub-chapters of this thesis. Afterwards, the focus will be on how to teach pronunciation.

### 3.2 Segmental features – Vowels

Vowels are the first to be described. Vowels are always voiced sounds, which means that when producing a vowel sound, the vocal cords vibrate (Kelly 2001, 2). Brown highlights vowels should be described as sounds with a pronunciation “during which the air escapes through the mouth with little or no obstruction” (Brown 2014, 20). In total, there are twelve vowel sounds and eight diphthongs recognized (Kelly 2000, 2). There are three ways in which vowels are further distinguished: according to length, according to their complexity since they can be a combination of vowel sounds or single, or they are divided with a respect to the way they are pronounced (Kelly 2000, 2; Roach 2001, 18–19). All these divisions will be briefly discussed.

The first distinction is according to their length. Vowels are divided into short and long vowels (Kelly 2000, 2). Followingly, the distinction between a single vowel sound and a combination of vowel sounds should be noted. The combinations of vowel sounds are referred to under the terms ‘diphthongs’ and ‘triphthongs’. As Kelly explains, the former refers to joining and moving from one vowel sound to another, such as in the word ‘late’ in which the diphthong /eɪ/ occurs. He adds that there are eight diphthongs in English: /eɪ/, /aɪ/, /əʊ/, /aʊ/, /eə/, /ɪə/, /ɔɪ/ and /ʊə/ (Kelly 2000, 2). Similarly, three to five triphthongs are identified in English, with the term itself meaning the movement from and combination of three vowel sounds - /eɪə/ /aɪə/ /ɔɪə/ /əʊə/ /aʊə/ (Kelly 2000, 2; Eddy 2010). The last distinction to be made here is the distinction of vowels according to the way they are pronounced. As Roach states, vowels may differ in terms of the position of the speaker’s lips and in the openness or closeness of the vowels. In this respect, vowels can be divided into open, closed, front, back, central, mid-open and mid-closed vowels (Roach 2001, 18–19). The definition and categorization of vowels is quite extensive.

To summarize, there are quite a few important ideas to understand in connection with the pronunciation of vowels. Firstly, vowels are categorized in terms of their “frontness, openness, and rounding”, which means that a vowel can be labeled based on the way of pronouncing it - how open or close the speaker’s mouth is or what is the position of the speaker’s tongue in the mouth (Roach 2001, 19). Additionally, as stated previously, there are not only single vowel sounds, but also diphthongs and triphthongs that may vary from an accent to another accent. It should be noted that there are more distinctions in connection to vowels, however, this subchapter aimed to provide only the basics.

### 3.3 Segmental features - Consonants

As was discussed in the previous text, consonants, similarly as vowels, are classified as segmental features of pronunciation. Consonant sounds are classified, too: according to the place of articulation, if the consonant sound is voiced or unvoiced (unvoiced consonants could be also called voiceless), in what manner the consonant sound is produced (and if there is any obstruction while pronouncing the consonant sound), and according to the airstream needed to pronounce the consonant sound (Roach 2001, 20; Kelly 2000, 47–48). The criteria for classification of consonant sounds will be briefly described in more detail.

Firstly, the places of articulation described by scholars are the lips (bilabial area), the teeth (dental and labiodental area), the alveolar ridge area, the post-alveolar area and even further in the mouth the palatal area. To complete the list, there is also the velar area, the uvular area and the glottal area (Roach 2000, 21–22). The importance of knowing the area included in pronouncing the consonant sound is in the fact that these terms provide additional information concerning the action of articulators (Kelly 2000, 47). Furthermore, Kelly also provides a simplified explanations for each of these areas so that it is less complicated to understand the processes behind the pronouncing of consonants (2000, 6). To summarize, lips, teeth, palate, larynx, vocal folds and similar places are crucial for producing the right sounds known as consonants.

The next classification of the consonant sounds is according to the manner of articulation. In this classification, six categories are identified: plosives (such as /p/), affricates (such as /tʃ/), fricatives (such as /f/), nasals (such as /m/), laterals (such as /l/) and approximants, such as /r/ (Kelly 2000, 47–53; Roach 2000, 23–24). This category is broad and involves an extensive description of the articulators and their positions in the process of pronouncing the consonant sounds, so the place and manner of pronunciation of consonants are tied closely. Additionally, there is a variety of terms used to describe the manner of articulation, such as Linda Lane who introduces the category of ‘liquids’ or ‘glides’ and thus provides a different perspective on this classification (2010, 120). Again, the criteria used to describe the consonant sounds are extensive, however, it may help to understand the process of pronouncing the given consonant correctly.

The last category to describe is the one of airstream which may not be agreed on by scholars. To provide an example, Kelly or Lane do not list this category; however, Brown and Roach do. The argument to include this factor into the categorization of the consonant sounds could be that the production of every sound in English is dependent on air (Brown 2014, 15).

There are several mechanisms of the airstream included in the creation of the consonant sounds. To provide an example, there is a pulmonic airstream that concerns the lungs, glottalic airstream that concerns the larynx area, or velaric airstream that is described as a closure (Roach 2000, 24). Brown agrees with Roach by listing the categories of egressive and ingressive airstream (thus the airstream which is being let out and in), however, he disagrees with claiming that the glottalic and velaric airstreams as of much importance, since, as was noted previously, only the pulmonic airstream is used to produce different sounds in English (Roach 2000, 24; Brown 2014, 15).

As can be seen, the category of consonants could appear quite complicated since there are many perspectives and descriptions to be aware of. The question of how to approach the teaching of the pronunciation of consonants in the classrooms and whether all of these descriptions need to be introduced in the classroom will be discussed further in this thesis.

### **3.4 Suprasegmental features**

In English, there is quite an extensive number of various suprasegmental features of pronunciation, as will be described further in this sub-chapter. But what are suprasegmental features? Crystal defines suprasegmental features as “a vocal effect that extends over more than one sound segment in an utterance, such as pitch, stress or juncture patterns” (2008, 466). However, the list of features belonging to suprasegmental features is not clear since there are extensive differences among different descriptions. Roach lists stress, accent, intonation, rhythm, tempo, voice quality, pitch, which he connects to tone and paralinguistic features (2000, 31–37). Brown lists intonation, stress, rhythm and voice quality (2014, 6). Linda Lane includes in the suprasegmental features stress, rhythm and intonation (2010, 263). Finally, there are authors that do not describe suprasegmental features, but they label them as ‘prosody’. Brown states that the term ‘prosody’ refers to loudness and intonation. Moreover, he adds that authors do not share the same perspective on the term ‘prosody’ and that they use it in different manners. On the other hand, Roach states that prosody is an umbrella term for the study of voice quality, tempo, pitch and loudness (Brown 2014, 6; Roach 2000, 31). The definition by David Crystal will be kept in mind throughout the whole part of this thesis dealing with the suprasegmental features. Each suprasegmental feature will be described in further detail.



### 3.4.1 Word stress, sentence stress and rhythm

In English, stress functions on two levels: on the level of individual words and on the level of one or more sentences. English is a stressed-time language, which is explained by Roach as a type of language in which the speech has a regular rhythm thus the stressed syllables are spread regularly in the speech (2001, 36). Additionally, word and sentence stress could be found among the most mentioned terms in connection with suprasegmental features, since as Celce-Murcia et.al cite Field, word stress influences the intelligibility of a speaker greatly (Field, 2005 cited in Celce-Murcia 2014, 139). Moreover, stress influences also the word class, thus by the placement of stress in a word the word class a word belongs to may change. As scholars state, in the case of a noun, the stress is usually placed on the first syllable, whereas verbs ordinarily show the stress on the second syllable. The stressed syllable is recognizable by the change in pitch, the length of the syllable itself, by loudness and it is surrounded by unstressed syllables which do not share these features (Roach 2000, 32; Kelly 2000, 67). However, these descriptors may not prove noticeable to all learners. As Kelly says there are people who spot stress in words effortlessly and there are those who do not (Kelly 2000, 67). Definitely, a teacher should be aware of this possibility, when planning to teach word and sentence stress.

However, the topic of word stress is more complicated since the questions concerning the meaning of the terms ‘primary stress’, ‘secondary stress’ and ‘unstressed’ arise. Also, the terminology of functional and content words arises, too. Goodwin defines the term ‘primary stress’ as the strongest stress in a word, usually falling on one syllable (2014, 138). Collins, Mees and Carley agree and add that a ‘primary stress’ is transcribed as a vertical mark in the upper part of a word. Moreover, they add a description of the term ‘secondary stress’, which is the second strongest stress in a word, and it is transcribed as a vertical mark on the line (2019, 304). Finally, as Goodwin notes, the rest of syllables are unstressed (2014, 138). There are many rules for each of these stresses concerning what syllable is stressed and where the primary stress cannot occur, however, they will not be described in this thesis.

Concerning the functional and content words and their relatedness to stress, Brown highlights the fact that not all words are pronounced with the same level of stress that is placed on them – content words (those which are the most informative) are stressed; functional words then have to be unstressed, or weakened in pronunciation (2014, 92). Again, there are rules further recognized and described concerning the weak forms of functional words.

As Goodwin states, the terms ‘sentence stress’ and ‘rhythm’ in the English pronunciation are equal thus they refer to the same feature of pronunciation. Also, rhythm is the result of varying stressed (long) and unstressed (short) syllables in speech (2014, 138). Roach agrees with this definition and highlights the fact that rhythm is fairly complicated in many aspects. Moreover, he adds that the importance of rhythm is in its effect of easing the communication process by signaling changes between topics or speakers, to find the most important parts of messages or in enabling speakers to divide the speech into smaller meaningful units, such as words (2001, 37). As can be seen, rhythm has its important role in communication.

### **3.4.2 Intonation**

Intonation is yet another suprasegmental feature of English to be discussed. Crystal defines intonation as a “distinctive use of patterns of pitch, or melody” (2008, 252). Intonation patterns vary in the speech. Collins, Mees, and Carley list the intonation patterns: commands and statements are usually associated with falling tunes at the end of a sentence, however, if a speaker uses a rise-fall intonation pattern in the statement, it can sound as a question (2019, 358–360). However, the intonation patterns concerning questions are more complicated, since the choice of intonation pattern depends on the type of question. Collins, Mees, and Carley focus specifically on wh-questions and yes-no questions. If the question is within the former type, the intonation pattern should be falling; if the question is of the latter type, the intonation pattern should be rising (2019, 361–361). However, Kelly disagrees by suggesting that a falling intonation is used in the wh-questions if it is the first time asking for the particular piece of information. If the speaker is seeking information he or she has been already given, then the intonation should be fall-rise (2000, 88–89). Moreover, Kelly adds the intonation concerning question tags into this list and he states that if the speaker is not sure about a statement and is using a question tag to reassure himself or herself, then the intonation should be rising. On the other hand, if a confirmation is an expected outcome of the use of a question tag, then the intonation is falling (2000, 89). Finally, listing is noted by Roach as having a repeatedly raising intonation and falling only at the last word of a list (2001, 35). Still, exceptions may occur in the speech. Kelly agrees by saying that such rules as those listed in the paragraph should be understood as generalizations (2000, 89). Still, intonation has multiple significant functions in speech. Crystal lists the functions as the function of signaling a grammatical structure, a signal of the social background of the speaker and the attitudinal function thus the function of signaling personal attitude towards the content of the

utterance (2008, 252). Goodwin disagrees by stating that the grammar structure is not always in agreement with intonation since often, intonation is also influenced by the communicative intention of the speaker (2014, 138). Therefore, a speaker of English should pay attention to taking this information into account.

Features of English pronunciation that are connected with intonation are the tonic syllable and prominence. Crystal defines the tonic syllable as the syllable which has the maximal prominence which is often highlighted by a change in the pitch of a speaker (2008, 487 – 488). Goodwin states that the terms ‘prominent word’ and ‘tonic syllable’ are used to describe the same feature of spoken language and adds that prominence is used to signal new information, to emphasize or to contrast information (2014, 137). Crystal provides a similar perspective by stating that “the change in tonicity gives the sentence different implications” (2008, 488). Intonation and prominence definitely do influence speech greatly, as was described in this paragraph.

### **3.4.3 Connected speech**

There are several features of connected speech. For the purposes of this thesis, these features will be only briefly introduced. First, the question of what connected speech is has to be answered. As Brown explains, sounds in English are not isolated and because of that, they influence one another (2014, 91). There are several features that form connected speech. These features include assimilation, elision, contraction, juncture, intrusion and linking. Each of these features will be described briefly.

Assimilation is described by scholars as a process in which every sound modifies the neighboring sound. Roach agrees with this statement and provides a description of the three most common categories of assimilation: that of voice, of place and of manner (2001, 53–55). Celce-Murcia, Brinton, Goodwin, and Griner state that assimilation may happen on the scope of multiple words and even inside single word only (2010, 167–168). In order to speak more naturally, the assimilation should be known to a speaker. Similarly, authors perceive linking as another important feature of connected speech. They also connect the feature of intrusion and juncture to the feature of linking. For example, Kelly provides information on linking and intrusion. He discusses the linking /r/, intrusive /r/, linking /j/ and linking /w/. The third and the fourth items on this list have the function of joining two words in the speech together if certain conditions are met, for example if the pronounced word ends in /i:/ or /i/, then usually the linking /j/ is introduced into the speech. Intrusive /r/ is similar in a way that it is introduced by the speakers of non-rhotic accents of English if two vowel sounds meet and the

need to link the two vowel sounds together arises (2000, 111–112). As can be seen, sounds in connected speech can be modified to a great extent.

Elision is another feature of connected speech. Wells describes elision as an omission of a sound in an utterance (2016, 80). Goodwin shares this understanding by stating that there is a possibility of disappearance of sounds in English (2014, 139). Similarly, contractions are made in English. Kelly explains that contractions in the spoken production mean the process of merging two words together so that they are pronounced in a more economical manner (as a one word, or even one syllable). Additionally, he notes that the contractions in pronunciation are similar to those in writing (2000, 113). Celce-Murcia compares contractions to junctures by putting them in the same category and by stating that generally, these terminologies can be explained as a process of changing the boundaries of a word (2010, 164). Again, in contractions, as well as in other features of connected speech, the tendency to speak economically can be noted. This is agreed on by Celce-Murcia by citing the work of Clarey and Dixon, who suggest that connected speech is present in the English pronunciation mainly for the purposes of efficiency (Clarey and Dixon 1963, cited in Celce-Murcia 2010, 164). Definitely, the attempts to speak as effectively as possible can be seen in connected speech.

The suprasegmentals described in this section were not all. Definitely, the list could be more extensive and detailed, however, the main point here was to illustrate the category of suprasegmental features as such. The chapter discussing how pronunciation should be taught follows.

## 4. How to teach pronunciation?

After defining all the features of pronunciation on both segmental and suprasegmental levels, the question of how to teach all of these features to learners arises. Generally, there is not an agreement in literature about the number of phases that a process of teaching pronunciation should have. To provide an example, Kelly describes the stages of raising awareness of the learners of the different features followed by drilling and implementing other techniques and Celce-Murcia, Brinton, Goodwin, Griner and Goodwin lists five steps that are necessary (2000, 37–38; 2014, 145–146). Because of the disagreement, it is complicated to state the exact number of steps that are necessary to teach pronunciation successfully.

On the other hand, an agreement seems to be upon the steps of teaching pronunciation as such. First of all, the learners need to be able to distinguish the sound which they are supposed to learn to pronounce correctly. Kelly calls this phase the ‘raising awareness’ phase and highlights its importance in teaching both segmental and suprasegmental features (2000, 37; 2000, 75). Goodwin agrees but in the model by Celce-Murcia et. al which she describes, this phase seems to be divided into two sub-steps which are the ‘description and analysis’ stage and the ‘listening discrimination’ stage. She defines the stage of ‘description and analysis’ as a stage in which “the teacher presents a feature showing when and how it occurs, perhaps with the use of charts and diagrams”, and the stage of ‘listening discrimination’ as a phase in which the teacher should integrate various listening activities with the aim to help the learners to identify and discriminate the particular feature in context (2014, 145). Learners should be able to identify what they are expected to learn to pronounce correctly prior to actually learning to pronounce it. This statement is supported by the study conducted by David Counselman. The results of this study are that if learners’ attention is drawn to the differences between the pronunciation in the learners’ first language and the pronunciation in the learners’ second language, then the pronunciation of the learner may improve (2015, 42). Nevertheless, not all scholars agree. For example, results of a study conducted by Kissling suggest that even if the learners receive instruction in relation to phonetics, it might not lead to a long-term improvement in their pronunciation skills (2013, 794). Surely, including the step focused on perception and recognition of the features of pronunciation that are to be taught has its benefits, however, it has to be followed by other steps to ensure its effectiveness in the long-term perspective.

In this stage, authors provide examples of activities or techniques to use. Kelly states that using phonemic chart is one of the best ways to introduce sounds to learners. He argues that if the teacher puts time and effort into explaining the details of the chart, it can prove to be a useful tool helping students to work on their pronunciation independently even outside of the classroom (2000, 37). So, the teacher explains the segmental features by explaining the details of the chart and then, in the later stages of teaching and learning pronunciation, learners can still use the phonemic chart. However, Goodwin warns that the symbols may vary significantly among different student's books and other materials, such as different dictionaries. Additionally, she highlights the crucial need to practice sounds not only separately, but especially in context otherwise the whole practice may prove to be ineffective (2014, 141–142). As was stated previously, in the RVP document the passive knowledge of phonetic symbols is requested (RVP 2021, 26). The opinions on the usage of phonetic symbols in teaching languages vary among scholars, however, the majority shares the perspective of recommending teaching phonetic symbols. Generally, the decision to use a phonetic chart in the classroom may be useful, however, it needs a certain amount of planning to ensure its effectiveness.

Similarly, an activity including the distinction of different sounds in the minimal pairs is recommended to be included in the pronunciation lessons. According to Philip Carr, minimal pairs are “pairs of words which differ with respect to only one sound [...]” (2013, 86). Such as the words ‘kit’ and ‘pit’ (Brown 71, 2014), the minimal pairs are two words which differ only in one sound. This activity could be a helpful tool in the phase of raising awareness of different phonemes and their realizations in English.

Another activity in this stage of pronunciation teaching discussed by scholars is explaining what to do and how to do it. Harmer agrees with the need to draw learners' attention towards the particular feature. He suggests using diagrams or demonstrations together with pointing to the feature in real-life conversations (2007, 250). Kelly agrees with these techniques and adds that the explanations should be worded in such a way that learners can remember them, and he encourages the usage of diagrams, too (2000, 54–56). Smotrova adds the usage of gestures by the teacher on the list of effective tools for drawing learners' attention to pronunciation features (2017, 81). As can be seen, the introductory stage is seen as important and should not be omitted from the process of teaching pronunciation.

The following step that is described by scholars is the practice stage. Richards and Pennington highlight that pronunciation belongs to the psychomotor domain. They add that the process of getting to actively use a newly learned phonological rule may not be immediate

(1986, 214). Kelly agrees and lists drilling as the suitable next step for both segmental and suprasegmental pronunciation. He claims that drills are exceptional for practicing individual sounds and important even for suprasegmental features of pronunciation (2000, 37; 2000, 75–76). Goodwin partly agrees, but distinguishes three types of practice: controlled practice, guided practice and communicative practice. Each type of pronunciation practice is different in the focus which is given to the form and to the meaning of a segmental or suprasegmental feature (Goodwin 2014, 146). Penny Ur lists the practice stage as the very last. According to her, the learners should proceed to the practice stage only after mastering the individual sound or suprasegmental feature produce it in isolation (1991, 54). It could be stated that there are two to three stages recommended by the authors. The first stage is the stage of drawing the learners' attention, raising the awareness of a feature. Then, as previously mentioned, Ur suggests having the learners to produce the desired feature of pronunciation in isolation. The last stage can be identified as the stage of practice, which for Kelly means drilling but for other authors, such as for Goodwin, it is a more complicated phase in which various activities may occur.

When planning a pronunciation instruction, the question of how to implement such an instruction in a lesson may arise. Harmer in his book provides a list of four possible manners in which teaching pronunciation can be approached. The first is devoting the whole lesson to pronunciation instruction and practice, the second is discrete slots, the third are integrated phases and the fourth is opportunistic learning (2007, 251–252). Each way to approach pronunciation instruction and practice is different and has its advantages and disadvantages. On the other hand, Kelly advocates for a different distinction which is the distinction into integrated lessons, remedial lessons and practice lessons (2000, 14). As can be seen, both authors describe the integration of pronunciation into the lessons.

Moreover, they also agree that if a pronunciation difficulty or problem arises, the teacher should react – according to Harmer, the optimum way for this is opportunistic teaching, in which the pronunciation problem is named and tackled at the moment of appearing (2007, 252), for Kelly the appropriate reaction is taking the form of remedial lessons, but is in fact close to Harmer's recommendation, since the remedial lesson is an immediate reaction of the teacher towards the pronunciation problem (2000, 114). As can be seen, there are opportunities to choose from if a teacher aims to include pronunciation practice in his or her lessons. But which way is the most appropriate? Harmer suggests that it is on the teacher to decide, on the other hand, Goodwin states that pronunciation should be always

integrated with all four language skills and not focused on in isolation in the whole lesson (2014, 145). Possibly, it could be stated that the teacher should decide.

Another of the many decisions a teacher has to make in connection with pronunciation concerns the use of a bottom-up approach and the goals of pronunciation instruction and practice. The bottom-up approach will be only briefly introduced. Goodwin explains the bottom-up approach as proceeding from the smallest features of pronunciation to those larger in their scope (2014, 136). If the bottom-up approach is used for teaching pronunciation, the starting point are the individual sounds and the lessons proceed to longer utterances. However, Goodwin argues that it is more efficient and effective to use the top-down approach instead since in everyday conversation, speakers do not think about the speech sound by sound but the other way around (2014, 136). This should be considered by the teacher, too.

The goals are yet another aspect to take into account by the teacher. To state the objectives of pronunciation lessons can prove to be complicated. A question for which scholars are discussing the answer is whether perfect pronunciation should be a priority. Kenworthy suggests that the goals of the learners should be considered when stating the aims or goals by the teacher since it may influence them greatly (1987, 3). Here, a teacher seeking support could use the curricular documents discussed above. Another goal considering pronunciation which is highly discussed by scholars is the question of intelligibility and perfection. There is a mutual agreement on this topic which is that it should not be aimed for perfection, but for intelligibility (Ur 1991, 42; Harmer 2007, 248–249). Definitely, there are more aspects to consider when stating the goals of pronunciation teaching. However, as noted previously, the goals of the learners should be always kept in mind.

Finally, the question of assessing pronunciation should be addressed. Goodwin describes nine types of assessment of pronunciation. She states that the assessment of pronunciation has various functions such as diagnosing function, ongoing feedback function or the measurement of achievement function (2014, 149–150). Kolář and Šikulová agree and add the motivational function and more (2005, 45). However, Scrivener suggests a different perspective by discussing five decisions a teacher has to repeatedly make in connection with errors. He highlights the importance of asking what error was made, if it is effective to address, when to address it and how to address it and similar (2011, 285). Based on this statement, it can be seen that assessment has an important role in teaching pronunciation, however, the teacher has to contemplate the aspects of assessing pronunciation in detail so the negative outcomes can be prevented. Generally, there are at least two basic categories distinguished in relation to evaluation or assessment: the formative and the summative



assessment. Kolář and Šikulová define the formative type of assessment as “aimed at supporting the further effective learning of learners. It achieves this by providing useful feedback to learners”<sup>11</sup> (2005, 32). Moreover, they add that it is useful feedback to the teacher, too (2005, 32). In contrast, a summative type of assessment “determines the level of knowledge achieved at a certain point in time”<sup>12</sup> (2005, 32). Goodwin adds that with the formative assessment, the learner’s awareness of one’s awareness is higher and often results in higher confidence in the learner’s pronunciation (2014, 149). For sure, assessment and feedback are necessary also in connection with pronunciation. In this thesis, the formative assessment will be referred to as ‘feedback’ whereas summative assessment will be referred to in connection with grading and grades.

Definitely, teaching pronunciation is a complex topic which includes many factors, aspects and features which are not all in control of the teacher. Still, there are many tools and activities that can help to teach pronunciation, such as using international phonetic alphabet or gestures in the lessons, and many more can be found in books. As long as the goals are stated, appropriate and thought of, as long as feedback is provided, the process of teaching pronunciation can be successful.

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<sup>11</sup> Translated by the author.

<sup>12</sup> Translated by the author.

## **5. The characteristics of the learners**

In this final chapter of the theoretical part of the thesis, the topic dealt with will be the general description of the age period in which the learners who participated in the research which is discussed later in the practical part of this thesis are at the moment.

The research included in this thesis is focused on young learners. As Langmeier and Krejčířová note, this period is characterized by the age span from 6 or 7 years to 11 to twelve years (Langmeier and Krejčířová 1998, 115). Vágnerová provides a more detailed list since she divides this time period into two phases, which are the early school age, that spreads from the time the child enters a school (thus from the age of six or seven years) up to eight or nine years of age. Secondly, she lists the middle school age period, that spreads from eight or nine years of age up to the first signs of puberty appearing, thus, up to the age of eleven or twelve years (Vágnerová 2005, 237). In this thesis, it will be referred to both of these definitions if not stated differently.

The early school age is a period during which children enter elementary school and gain experience connected to this change in life. Also, as is highlighted by Vágnerová, the act of becoming a learner and entering a school is crucial for a child and the experience often has tremendous consequences on the child's life and on the perception of his or her own identity (Vágnerová 2005, 236–237). But it is not only this change that characterizes this period. A child of this age is often referred to in literature as 'a sober realist', which is a term explained by Langmeier and Krejčířová as the period in life when a child is trying to understand the world and his or her surroundings as they truly are. This tendency is apparent in all features of the child's life, such as in playing, drawings, or in the books the child wants to read (1998, 115). This feature is connected with the cognitive development of a child.

### **5.1 Cognitive development**

When discussing the development of a young learner, cognitive development should be discussed. One of the models that describe cognitive development of young learners is Jean Piaget's model. Piaget in his book distinguishes four stages of cognitive development: the sensorimotor stage, which is starting by the birth and ending with the second year of age, the preoperational thinking stage which spreads between the second and the seventh year of age, the concrete operational thinking stage, when the child is between seven years and eleven years old, and finally the formal operational thinking stage in which

the child is at least twelve years old and older (1999, 117–118). Still, it has to be taken into account that the age is only approximate, as Piaget highlights in his book by not stating strict borders to each of the defined stages. To provide an example, the concrete operational thinking stage starts approximately at the age of seven or eight years old and the end of this stage is around eleven or twelve years of age (Piaget 1999, 118). Since the learners who participated in the research for this thesis are mostly seven to ten years old, the preoperational thinking stage and the concrete operational thinking stage will be discussed in more detail.

### **5.1.1 The preoperational thinking stage**

Each of the stages or phases has its substages. In the case of the preoperational thinking stage, the substages are the preoperational substage and the intuitive substage. Fontana states that the former substage is related to the children who are two to four years old and it is characterized mainly by the ability to use symbols which enables children to imagine various actions without actively doing them. This ability is displayed mainly when the child is playing (2014, 67). This is an enormous change in the life of a child since it is the first time the child can refer to things that are not physically present near the child. Similar changes of such importance can be seen in the intuitive substage, too. Piaget lists three key features of this substage, which are egocentrism, centering and irreversibility (1999, 122–131). Fontana provides descriptions of all three features. According to him, egocentrism can be understood as an inability to change perspective from the subjective perspective (2014, 68). This is an important feature that should be carried in the minds of teachers and caregivers. Another important feature of the intuitive substage, centering, is defined by Fontana as the focus that a child puts on one feature of a thing, which results in the inability to recognize the conservation of a number or of an amount (2014, 69). Thus, if the same amount of a liquid is transferred from one bottle to another (and the bottles differ in their shape), a child in the intuitive substage would most likely state that the amount of liquid is different. Finally, the third feature, irreversibility, is explained by Fontana as the inability to reverse the actions to achieve a certain goal (2014, 69). If more steps are required to accomplish a task, a child is not able to proceed in a backward manner only because of the intuitive substage of cognitive development in which the child is at the given moment.

### **5.1.2 The concrete operational thinking stage**

This stage covers the early school age since it spreads from the age of seven to the age of eleven or twelve and it is again a period of many crucial changes in cognitive thinking. Authors state that one of the major changes is in the ability to think more logically and in a system, which is still not identical to the systems of adults since children occurring in the concrete operational thinking stage are connecting their thoughts to their experience (Piaget 1999, 131–132; Fontana 2014, 69). A child is thus able to think to a certain degree abstractly if there is an event in their lives that is similar. Furthermore, Fontana highlights that if a child is able to create a system of thoughts, he or she is also able to sort various objects according to a certain feature, such as shape, which can result in the improved ability of a child to solve problems (2014, 70). As can be seen, this is one of the major advances for a child. However, Fontana highlights the difficulties that the children in this stage encounter if they are asked to work with a hypothesis. Many times, children in this stage of cognitive development do not change their hypothesis but their opinion or understanding of a topic (2014, 69–70). These hypotheses that a child may have and that are challenged could be related to various topics. Another of the important features in this stage is decentralization. Fontana argues that decentralization is undergoing a change together with the understanding of the conservation concept. Moreover, the lowering of egocentrism is present in this stage (2014, 70). As can be seen, the stage of concrete operational thinking has enormous importance concerning logical thinking.

Both stages of cognitive development are enormously important for a child. However, it may seem that the connection between cognitive abilities and pronunciation in English is rather weak. The concept of pronunciation is complex, and so teachers of English should be aware of the stages in cognitive development and of their further descriptions when considering teaching English pronunciation to young learners. Yet one more feature is perceived as important in literature and that is the ability to focus for a given amount of time, or the attention span. Authors agree that the attention span is rather limited in the young learner period of life. However, the amount of time that the authors list is different. Vágnerová states that the amount of time that the maturity of a child is connected with the attention span. In her other book, Vágnerová states that the attention span is prolonged by the maximum of a minute and a half each year and that a young learner is able to focus for the maximum of ten minutes. On the other hand, Otevřelová states that the ability to focus for fifteen to twenty minutes is expected of a pre-school child (2000, 136–137; 2005, 256; 2016,

66–67). Even though the attention span is prolonging with age, it is still rather limited in the young learners.

## **5.2 Emotional and social development**

The child is developing emotionally and socially as a young learner, too. Vágnerová states one of the main features in the life of a child in the young learner period and that is the increasing emotional stability. Additionally, authors also stress the ability to describe a child's emotions which he or she feels, thus communicate their emotions, or to control their emotions and the fact that children around ten years of age have the ability to feel, recognize and describe ambivalent emotions (Vágnerová 2005, 261–263; Langmeier and Krejčířová 1999, 129). This is a tremendous change in the life of an individual. The child's ability to describe what he or she is feeling at a particular moment is one of the important steps in their emotional development. On the other hand, children share the tendency to perceive and judge their emotions in a way they believe others would do. Vágnerová comments on this feature by saying that this behavior may be harmful to a child because the individual may feel embarrassed, guilty, or ashamed of their emotions (2005, 262). This is of importance since as Jack C. Richards highlights: “[...] for learners, emotions are crucial to how they navigate and process their learning” (2022, 237). As can be seen, emotions are important in a language classroom. Although a young learner may be more emotionally stable, the emotions can still influence the learner and the process of learning.

Another feature that is developing quite rapidly is the social aspect of a child in society. The perception of an individual in a society is quite related to emotions of that individual. This is mentioned by Vágnerová, who states that many emotions are felt as a reaction towards a social encounter, thus, emotions are reactions towards the outside world (2005, 263). Additionally, Vágnerová cites Ružová, who says that “a specific manifestation of school-age children causing emotional reactions is joking at the expense of others, provoking them. The object of the pranks is expected to handle the situation and not react angrily or hurtfully, to control his emotions” (Ružová, 2001 in Vágnerová 2005, 263). This is why children in this particular stage may seem to be testing others, however, it is one of the ways that peers communicate in social groups. Langmeier and Krejčířová agree that peer interaction is becoming more and more important in this developmental stage (1999, 128). When a child starts attending school, it is an enormous change for him or her and for the family of the child. Gradually, the child recognizes peers as their main support. Vágnerová agrees by stating that at the beginning of school attendance, the main sources of support are still the parents and the

family, however, in the stage of middle school age, the learner relies mostly on his or her peers (2005, 263). Such a change may have positive or even negative outcomes. Authors agree that in the first years of attending school, young learners are getting used to their new social roles and they are gradually more able to describe themselves from the psychological perspective and to compare themselves with their peers to whom it may be uncomplicated to compare. In addition, they agree that if there occur negative situations in this process, it may result in solidifying the fears and worries of a child (Langmeier and Krejčířová 1999, 133–135; Vágnerová 2005, 262–264). The teacher can often influence the child's experience greatly. Fontana agrees with such a statement by saying that every teacher functions as a model of behavior, even if the teacher does not recognize this fact (2014, 297). Definitely, teachers should be aware of this and should be careful to not prompt the solidification of the worries and fears of their learners by any means.

During the first years of school attendance, the sociability of a child is developing, too. As Nakonečný states, peer interaction is demanding for a child because the child has to understand new social norms (2003, 385). Additionally, gender identity develops, too. Nakonečný suggests that one of the typical behaviors displayed by children who are less than eleven years old are friendly relationships between members of the same genders, thus, girls are making friends among girls and boys among boys (2003, 385). As can be seen, gender identity is connected to peer interaction, thus, to sociability of a child. A general tendency of labelling learners according to their gender is recognizable in other books, too. To provide an example, Vágnerová discusses the emergence and further development of characteristics typical for genders and she also lists some of these characteristics. Girls are perceived as responsible, reliable, or as those who need more support and protection. On the other hand, boys are perceived as less sensitive to feedback, hyperactivity, or as being the source of interruptions during a lesson (2005, 314–315). Langmeier and Krejčířová agree by saying that gender identity is to an extent a stereotype and that not behaving according to the gender identity may have severe consequences in the further life of an individual (1999, 134). Gender identity is yet another of the important aspects to develop in this stage of life and any potential difficulties may lead to many troubles and problems later in life.

Although this list of changes was by no means exhaustive, it functioned as an illustration of the advances in the early and middle school age period in the lives of children. There are many more changes that are taking place. Also, it is an incredibly sensitive period, as was discussed in this chapter.

### **5.3 The differences in the first and second languages**

Young learners do not undergo development only in the cognitive, emotional and social field, but also in the sensorimotor perception which will be briefly discussed in this part of the thesis. Since the topic of the thesis is pronunciation, the closest perception is listening. Vágnerová states that almost every six years old child is capable of hearing and distinguishing all phonemes of their mother tongue. However, she additionally states that if the speaker is not talking slowly, the child may not be able to distinguish individual words or understand the speech (2005, 240). The immediate next step in developing this ability is phonologic differentiation and the overall development of phonemic knowledge. According to Vágnerová, it is roughly in this period of a child's life that the child is becoming increasingly aware of the individual sounds to be distinguished in a word, that vowels differ in length, or that words are sequenced in sentences (2005, 240–241). As can be seen, there is quite a tremendous development alongside all the changes happening in the life of a young learner.

The question concerning second language learning arises. There are differences highlighted in first and second language acquisition. To provide an example, Lightbown and Spada suggest that there is a great number of differences, such as the amount of exposure to a language, learner characteristics (both in cognitive and attitudinal perspectives), the range of language that a learner is exposed to and many more (2011, 29–33). Definitely, the acquisition of first and second languages is not similar. Usually, second language exposure is much more limited than first language exposure, because second language exposure takes place mainly in the language classes (although other cases often occur, too). Lightbown and Spada highlight the extensive influence of culture and first language as one of the major influences which affect pronunciation on the levels of perception and production in a second language. Moreover, the greater differences there are between the first language and the second language, the more complicated it can be to reach fluency (2011, 104–105). Generally, the phonology Czech language is rather different, so this may prove to be the case for the Czech learners, too.

The theory of language acquisition has been undergoing a change, too. This fact was partly illustrated in the first chapter of this thesis, in which various approaches to teaching English pronunciation were discussed. The Direct Method, Neurolinguistic Programming, and many more theories, approaches, and methodologies are connected to the topic of second language acquisition, although not all of them include a focus on pronunciation, as was illustrated. However, the perspectives of various theories of how the second language

acquisition vary tremendously. The question about the attitudes of teachers and learners remains.



## **PRACTICAL PART**

The theoretical part was focused on the history of teaching pronunciation, on various aspects of pronunciation and how to teach them and, finally, it described the perspective of the specific elementary school and learners who participated in the research. In this practical part, the case study, thus the research will be discussed.

## **6. The research**

### **6.1 The planning phase**

Firstly, the research questions have to be described. However, prior to this, the definition of an attitude should be included since it is the focus of the practical part of this thesis. Hartl and Hartlová explain the word ‘attitude’ as:

the tendency to react in a fixed way to objects, people, situations and to oneself. It is a part of the personality, it is related to the inclinations and interests of the personality, determine knowledge, understanding, thinking and feeling; [...] attitudes are acquired throughout life, primarily through education and wider social influences, such as public opinion, social contacts etc. They are all relatively permanent and contain a cognitive (cognitive), emotional (affective) and conative (behavioral) component [...] <sup>13</sup> (2004, 442).

Jedlička, Kořa and Slavík cite Jaromír Janoušek’s definition: “attitude is a psychological structure that permanently characterizes the subject’s selectivity in accepting external influences while acting in relation to the surrounding environment; attitude is primarily an evaluative relationship, and therefore every attitude is characterized by a certain degree of positivity or negativity towards its object”<sup>14</sup> (Janoušek 1981 in Jedlička, Kořa, and Slavík 2018, 109–110). For the purposes of this thesis, it will be these two definitions of attitude that will be taken into account.

One of the first steps in the research is to consider the aim and the research questions of the case study. The aim of the case study was to find out if and how is English pronunciation taught and how teachers and learners perceive it. The research questions were stated followingly: How is pronunciation taught in English lessons in specific classes? How does a specific group of learners perceive pronunciation and its teaching in connection with

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<sup>13</sup> Translated by the author.

<sup>14</sup> Translated by the author.

the English language? How do specific teachers perceive pronunciation and its teaching in connection with the English language? The methods chosen to detect answers to these questions will be described further in this chapter.

Generally, there are two approaches to choose from: the quantitative approach and the qualitative approach. The aim of the research in this thesis was to find out in what way pronunciation is taught if it is taught at all. Moreover, the attitudes of a teacher and pupils were taken into account. Because of the aim of the case study, the qualitative approach was chosen. As Gavora states, the qualitative approach states its results in detailed descriptions. In addition, he adds that the researcher doing the qualitative research is trying to get as close to the researched feature as possible to understanding how something is done and why (2010, 31–32). In order to understand how pronunciation is taught, two teachers who work with two different age groups were asked to participate in this research, and the results were compared to the theoretical background. Both teachers work at the same elementary school and both teach English which was basic criteria for the act of choosing the respondents.

After choosing the qualitative approach, the next step was to choose suitable methods to be used in the research. For the purposes of collecting qualitative data from teachers and learners, the interview was chosen since this method is best suited for giving information such as the opinions of the participants, or their experiences, feelings and emotions (Descombe 2007, 174). Since there are more options of which type of interview to choose, this had to be considered too. Finally, for the interview with the teachers the semi-structured interview one-to-one was chosen. The reasons for this option were that when using semi-structured interview, the topics to be covered are known beforehand and the answers can be discussed in further detail by probing, thus by asking and further developing particular points from the participant's answers (Descombe 2007, 176; Hendl 2005, 170). Similarly, in the case of the interviews with learners, the semi-structured interview was chosen so that the ideas could be developed further but still, the topics to cover would be known. For reasons of effectiveness, the learners were interviewed as a group.

In the planning phase, the questions for the interview with the teachers and with the learners were created. The following questions for the teachers were stated:

1. In what grades do you teach English here in this school year?
2. What are the specifics of this group in connection with teaching pronunciation?
3. Do you teach pronunciation? If so, how?
4. Is it important to focus on teaching pronunciation?
5. Do you focus on teaching the pronunciation of vowels and consonants?

6. Do you focus on teaching connected speech, intonation, word and sentence stress? Why?
7. Do you see any field in pronunciation as outstandingly important?
8. Do you teach transcription? If so, how?
9. Is there anything you would like to add at this moment?

Similarly, the questions for the group interview with learners were created. The questions were as follows:

1. What does pronunciation mean in Czech?
2. Is there any difference between the pronunciation in Czech and in English?
3. Is it important to learn the pronunciation in English? Why?
4. Do you learn pronunciation at school? How?
5. Do you learn pronunciation outside of school? How?
6. How should pronunciation be taught?
7. Is there anything you would like to find out concerning pronunciation?
8. Is there anything you would like to add at this moment?

## **6.2 The piloting phase**

Prior to the actual interviews, the piloting phase was carried out. During the piloting phase, the aims were to find out whether the questions are suitable for the interview and whether there are any flaws in the questions that should be resolved prior to the interviews and observations which took place after the piloting phase. The teacher who volunteered in this part of the research was contacted by email and was informed about the topic of the research. The teacher teaches mainly in the second grade in this school year, so it was agreed on the participation of these learners in the piloting part. The teacher asked to participate in the piloting of the interview was from a different elementary school than the teachers in the next stage of the research.

The process of piloting was similar in both interviews. Both interviews in the piloting phase were carried out in Czech – the learners participating in this phase were in the second grade, so in their case the age was the reason for doing so; the teacher chose Czech as the language of the interview. Additionally, both interviews were carried out in the first week of May 2023 and in the classroom of the second grade, face to face and in an environment that is familiar to the teacher and the learners. Denscombe suggests that the place chosen for the

interview should be quiet, private and have good acoustics (Denscombe 2007, 190), which was an additional reason for choosing the classroom.

As stated previously, the focus was to find any flaws in questions and in the organization of the interviews. In the first part of both interviews, the aim of the interview and of the research was briefly explained. As Gavora states, it may be helpful to start the interview by small talk to ensure the calmness and self-confidence of the respondents (Gavora 2000, 112). After this part, the recording of the interview was started. During the interview, additional questions were asked and field notes concerning the limits of the questions asked and of the moderation of the interviews were written. Moreover, the probes, such as asking for explanations or further commentary and checks for understanding (Denscombe 2007, 191; Janoušek et al. 1986 in Gavora 2000, 113) were used during both piloting interviews. During the interviews, field notes concerning mainly the downsides of the questions or of the moderation of the interview were written.

The piloting phase provided a lot of feedback concerning the questions asked and the monitoring of the interviews. In terms of the interview with the teacher, the main finding was that there is no question focused on providing feedback and assessment of learners' pronunciation by the teacher. Additionally, the question concerning working with a mistake was added, too.

In terms of the group interview with learners, the main result was that some questions proved to be too difficult for the second grade (the understanding of the feature of pronunciation is too abstract for the learners). To comment on moderating the interview, the piloting phase showed that a strategy of asking individual learners for their opinions needs to be implemented, otherwise there is a high risk of only a few learners responding. Also, the interview seemed to be too long for the learners since some were not paying attention, or it seemed so concerning their body language. On the other hand, this information was taken into account further in the research. Generally, there was a tendency to ask more than one question at a time, which is not recommended by scholars (Hendl 2005, 172). Because of this, the question number six in the teacher's interview was after the piloting phase divided into more questions. Additionally, the process of the reactions towards the answers should be neutral and the answers should be questioned quietly by the researcher during the interview (Denscombe 2007, 191–194). The piloting phase revealed that there needs to be more attention given to these aspects of interviews.

### **6.3 Who are the learners and the teachers?**

In this short subchapter, the aim is to introduce the young learners, and teachers who are participating in the case study which is further described in the practical part of this diploma thesis. Firstly, more details concerning the young learners and their teachers. Afterwards, a discussion concerning the School Education Program will take place.

There were several teachers asked about the participation in the research. In the end, two of them agreed to participate together with their classes since both of the teachers are in fact head teachers and they teach all the subjects in their classes including English. One of the teachers studied a university program focused specifically on teaching English. One of the teachers has been teaching for over ten years, the other one has been teaching for one year.

The classes that participated in the research were second and third-grade learners and they were from the same small elementary school, which has five grades and roughly seventy learners are attending the school. In total, seventeen learners participated in the research. None of the learners who participated in the research has any specific learning difficulties or ADHD. All learners seem to have approximately similar level of skills in English.

#### **6.3.1 The school and the school education program (SEP)**

The school could be described as relatively small in size since there are only five grades, so only children between six to twelve years old attend the school. For the purposes of anonymity, the name or precise location of the school is not mentioned, however, it is located in the Pardubice region. It is a school that is established by the village in which it is located. The school is small class family-type school and it is located near a kindergarten, which prompts cooperation between the school and the kindergarten.

The number of English lessons increases gradually – there are two lessons per week in the first and second grade, and three lessons per week in the third, fourth and fifth grade (SEP 2020, 63). The links to pronunciation are present in the SEP. From the perspective of pronunciation, there is not much to be found in the SEP. The outcomes concerning pronunciation are the same for all the five grades: “[the learner] is able to pronounce phonetically correctly in adequate range of vocabulary, uses phonetically correct pronunciation”<sup>15</sup> (SEP 2020, 63–71). Attention is given to the ability to “read fluently simple texts with correct pronunciation”<sup>16</sup> and the ability to “reproduce simple poems, songs, fairy

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<sup>15</sup> Translated by the author.

<sup>16</sup> Translated by the author.

tales and short dialogues in English”<sup>17</sup> (SEP 2020, 63–71). Concerning the curriculum and pronunciation in English, the bottom-up approach, which was described in the second chapter, is used since in SEP is stated that the curriculum in all five grades is “practice of individual sounds, groups of sounds, words, listening and subsequent reproduction of recordings spoken by a native speaker”<sup>18</sup> (SEP 2020, 63-71). It can be stated that pronunciation is seen as important in the document since pronunciation is mentioned multiple times. However, the outcomes and the curriculum are not described in much further detail.

## 6.4 Observations – piloting

Additionally, the method of observation was chosen as one of the methods in this case study. For the purposes of observation, the observation sheet was created. In this observation sheet, the method of structured observation was chosen. As Hendl states: “Individual coding methods are given by predetermined categories for recording what is observed. They range from a simple indication of whether a certain phenomenon has occurred to complex multi-category systems”<sup>19</sup> (2005, 202). In the observation sheet, the approach of pre-defined codes was chosen so that the occurrence of a phenomenon could be noted easily. Also, reserved space for notes concerning the progress of the lesson was created so that the gathered data can be further analyzed.

Similarly as with the interviews, prior to the observation the piloting phase had to take place. The piloting observation was only one, and it was done in May in one of the classes which were participating in the case study. The results of this observation were that the categories included in the observation sheet were confusing, and in a confusing order. Because of this, the categories included in the observation sheet were reorganized and the name of some of the categories was changed, too. Another result was that much more space is needed to briefly describe the activities that can be observed during the lesson, so the format of this category in the observation sheet changed, too. The category of the free usage stage was erased from the observation sheet completely.

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<sup>17</sup> Translated by the author.

<sup>18</sup> Translated by the author.

<sup>19</sup> Translated by the author.

## **6.5 The process of gathering data**

### **6.5.1 Triangulation**

The data were gathered by using three ways: by observation of English lessons taught by the teachers chosen for the case study. These teachers, and their learners were interviewed, too. This is in line with the definition of the term ‘triangulation’ provided by Denscombe, who states that: “Triangulation involves the practice of viewing things from more than one perspective’ (2007, 134). By interviewing the teachers, the data concerning their attitudes and beliefs could be gathered. Then, by observations, the data considering the way these teachers actually teach pronunciation, and the way they act when doing so could be gathered. Finally, by interviewing the learners, the whole situation could be understood in more detail since further data were provided and gathered.

### **6.5.2 Interviews with teachers**

For the purposes of this thesis, two teachers were interviewed. Both teachers work at the same elementary school and both of them are head teachers. The first contact with the teachers was done through email in which the methodology was explained to them together with the pre-supposed length of the interview, and of the purposes of the interviews, and observations. Also, they were asked to join the research. The dates of observations and of interviews with teachers and learners were arranged via email communication, too. Overall, all communication outside of classrooms was done by email.

The experience from the piloting interview was taken into account in the process of creating the questions for the interview. The questions were once again gone through and their linkage to the theoretical part of the thesis was reexamined. Both teachers could choose the language in which the interview will be realized prior to the interview and both teachers have chosen Czech for these purposes. Prior to the interview, both teachers were informed about the interview being recorded for the purposes of transcription and further analysis. In terms of recording the interview, Denscombe discusses field notes and audio recordings. Field notes are described as having the disadvantage of not being the “real” data, but only the recollections of the researcher. On the other hand, interviews have their disadvantages, too (2007, 194–196). Both of these methods were considered for the realization of interviews. In the end, only the audio recordings were done, because if a question worth asking arose, it was asked it at the moment of the interview. Also, the permissions with recording the interviews were given, so they could be recorded. Denscombe also highlights the fact that the

respondents being interviewed may feel nervous at the beginning of the interview because of the audio recording (2014, 195), so this fact was taken into account. The interview was in both cases started by an introductory question ‘At what grades do you teach English?’ because of the assumption that it should be a straightforward answer for the teachers, so it could make them feel more relaxed further in the interview. Also, one lesson was observed prior to every interview, and both interviews with teachers were done after the first observations due to time constraints. To comment on the environment in which the interviews were conducted, both were done in the classroom in which the teachers work, so it was a place that ensured privacy for the interview.

The questions asked in the interview were the following. They were asked in this order, however, if it was needed to further clarify the answer, or if further details could prove important, additional questions were asked. Also, as Gavora describes, attention was given to asking only one question at a time and to being as precise as possible (2000, 100 –101). If more than one question is written in one line in the list, then the questions were asked separately.

1. In what grades do you teach English here in this school year?
2. Do you teach pronunciation? If so, how?
3. In your opinion, what are the specifics in this age group in connection with teaching pronunciation?
4. Do you perceive any differences between various age groups in teaching pronunciation?
5. Is it important to consciously teach pronunciation?
6. Do you perceive any feature of the pronunciation in English as more important than the others?
7. Do you teach transcription? If so, how?
8. How do you work with mistakes in pronunciation in connection with learners? Why?
9. Do you evaluate pronunciation? If so, how? Why?
10. In your opinion, is pronunciation important in English?
11. How should pronunciation be taught?

As can be seen, the questions were not too broad and free of bias, which are rules from the guidelines described by Gavora (2000, 100–101). The interviews were manually transcribed for the further analysis of the data after the interviews.



### 6.5.3 Interviews with learners

For the purposes of this thesis, two grades of learners were interviewed. There is only one class in each grade in the elementary school in which the case study was conducted. In the second grade, the overall number of interviewed learners was six, in the third grade, the overall number of interviewed learners was 11. Both interviews were conducted at the end of May 2023 and in the beginning of June 2023. The interviews were recorded because of the further analysis of the collected data. Again, the permissions were needed for the option to record the interviews so this was secured prior to the interviews. Again, as Gavora describes, the first part of the interview should be general and the main function of this part of the interview is to help the respondents feel more confident. The aims for the interview should be explained in this part, too (2000, 112). This procedure was done in both interviews with the learners. Prior to the actual interview, the aims of the interview were explained together with the reason for collecting the data. As described in the planning phase, the interview was in the form of semi-structured group interview. Because of the age of the learners, both interviews were conducted in Czech and for the purposes of this thesis, the answers were translated by the author.

1. In total, there were eight questions asked in each interview. Again, if there is more than one question on a line, then the questions were asked separately.
2. Do you enjoy English?
3. How do you learn English? How do you learn vocabulary?
4. What does it mean “to know English”?
5. Is the pronunciation in English important? Is it important to pronounce the words in English correctly?
6. Do you see any differences between the way we say words in Czech and in English?
7. Do you think that the English pronunciation is difficult? What do you do if you cannot pronounce a word in English?
8. Do you learn to pronounce vocabulary in English at school? Is it important?
9. Should teachers evaluate how learners pronounce words in English?

As mentioned in the piloting phase of the research, some of the questions proved too difficult to answer for the second grader learners in the piloting phase. Because of that, the questions included in this phase of the research were slightly changed. If the terms ‘pronounce’, ‘pronunciation’ or ‘pronouncing’ seemed too difficult to understand for the

learners, they were replaced by a description: ‘the way we say words in English’. Similarly, words such as ‘evaluation’ or ‘assessment’ were replaced by a description, too. To comment on the environment, both interviews took place in school club room, which ensured privacy and enough time for the interviews. Also, it was environment familiar to the learners.

#### **6.5.4 Observations**

As described previously, observations were another way to collect data for the purposes of the case study. The teachers and learners who were interviewed were also included in the observations. In each grade, three lessons were observed, so in total six observations took place. However, there was an exception in the third grade because there was the piloting observation done, so in fact four observations were done in this class. However, for the purposes of the further analysis, only three observations were taken into account. The observations were realized at the end of May 2023 and at the beginning of June 2023. During the observations, I was seated in a corner of the classroom and I was quietly observing the actions of the teacher, of the learners and the activities that occurred in the lesson. A blank observation sheet used for the observation is included in the Appendix of this thesis. Additionally, an example of the filled observation sheet with data is included in the Appendix, too. The outcomes of the observations will be included in the discussion of the interviews of learners and of teachers.

### **6.6 Results**

#### **6.6.1 The open coding of the interviews**

The interviews with the teachers and with the learners were all manually transcribed and coded via ‘open coding’. Hendl states that the analysis by using coding is defined as “a systematic search within the data in order to find regularities and to classify their individual parts”<sup>20</sup> (2005, 226). He adds that “Coding helps us to describe the data. Code is a symbol assigned to a section of data in such a way that it classifies the section or it categorizes it”<sup>21</sup> (2005, 228). This is the manner in which the data from the interviews were approached and why this approach was taken. In addition, Hendl states that “this phase is always followed by an effort to interpret the results of this analysis as a whole, so that a certain story can be told

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<sup>20</sup> Translated by the author.

<sup>21</sup> Translated by the author.

about them”<sup>22</sup> (2005, 226). This is what was done in the analysis, too, and it will be described further in the practical part of this thesis. However, prior to the actual coding phase, the need to find a tool which could be used to analyze the data arose. In the end, the program ‘Quirkos Online Software’ was chosen for the analysis of the data for this thesis. To ensure confidentiality, each teacher and learner was assigned a code, so that the names would not need to be used. For teachers, the codes are T1 and T2, for learners LX with ‘X’ representing a number. The identical codes were used in the observation sheets to ensure clarity and to prevent any confusion in the gathered data.

The coding of the interviews was done in two rounds. In the first round, the transcripts of the interviews were assigned codes, as was described in the previous paragraph. Then, as Denscombe describes, the codes were categorized, thus, “grouped into categories” (2007, 292). Also, in all rounds, the distinction into codes and groups was revisited at least three times to ensure no mistakes occur or that details are not overlooked. This process was done with both types of interviews – with learners and with teachers. In the appendix of this thesis, an example of the coded interview can be found.

## **6.6.2 The interpretation of the data**

### **6.6.2.1 Interviews with teachers**

First, the data collected by interviewing the teachers will be introduced. As described in the previous text, all coded answers were grouped into two categories: Lesson and teaching pronunciation and the teacher’s perception of learners and beliefs about teaching pronunciation. There were multiple codes included in each of these categories as will be described further in this part of the thesis. Also, the data will be introduced according to the groups in which they are. Since both interviews were carried out in Czech, because both teachers chose it as the language of the interview, both interviews were translated into English by the author. For the reasons of confidentiality, the names of the teachers are not included, but codes Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 (shortened into T1 and T2) will be used to identify each teacher and to organize the quotations from each interview. References to the observed lessons will be made, too.

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<sup>22</sup> Translated by the author.

### 6.6.2.1.1 Lesson and teaching pronunciation

This category of data includes the codes ‘Structure of a lesson’, ‘Pronunciation in the whole lesson/specific part of the lesson’, ‘Activities’, ‘Phases of teaching’, ‘Assessment’ and ‘Mistakes/Feedback’. Both teachers see pronunciation as an important part of teaching and of their lessons. T1 and T2 agree that teaching pronunciation is important, which T2 clearly states by saying that “English cannot be taught without teaching pronunciation” and “[Pronunciation] is one of the basic pillars in teaching English.” T1 connects her answer together with labelling the features of pronunciation. T1 does not specifically state whether she includes the terminology, however, she comments on the importance of teaching pronunciation and on the process of the teaching by saying that: “Yes, sure! Well, of course, it probably shouldn’t be taught by saying to myself: “Ok, so now we’re going to do pronunciation” and then teach individual sounds. It should be done in the form of games and activities, or songs, poems. At least for the younger ones definitely.” T2 answers similarly by saying that

[...] it’s not like me telling to myself “Now, we will focus only on pronunciation in the lesson”, but because I teach in the second grade, in which it is a lot about the acquisition of vocabulary, so it’s clear to me that with each topic, each word must be covered, the children have to hear it from me several times. (T2)

In terms of activities that these teachers use for teaching pronunciation, T1 prefers songs, poems and similar activities. This was observed in her lessons, in which she used a nursery rhyme ‘Fly, fly butterfly’, multiple songs (such as ‘Hello Song’ or ‘Bye Bye Song’ which were included at the beginning and at the end of every observed lesson), or even role play, which was observed in one of the lessons in which the learners were practicing a fairy tale in English. Additionally, in one of the observed lessons, the learners were reading out loud from a magazine and the teacher was providing feedback concerning their pronunciation, which is one of the aims listed in the SEP of the school. On the other hand, activities observed in the lessons of the T2 were mainly based on flash cards with which the teacher was able to include several activities in the lessons, and on the inclusion of a video with a native speaker which was noted during the observations. T2 comments on the activities for teaching pronunciation: “Then there are classes when we demonstrate, do pantomime, ask questions [...]” To extend the list of pronunciation activities even more, T2 describes that “there are lessons during which I only speak English to children and it can be seen that the children get confused by it not being in chunks but the whole sentences.” She explains that “they often do not understand me and we go back to it and I explain to them that for example some of the words have merged together.” During the observations of the T2’s lessons, a variety of

activities was included, such as songs, YouTube videos or the previously mentioned flashcards with which various games were played, however, no English lesson in which the teacher would only speak English occurred during the observations.

Additionally, the teachers share the same perspective on the amount of pronunciation work that should be done in each lesson. T1 prefers to focus on pronunciation at every opportunity during the lesson. T2 does not state her opinion on this directly, so it is complicated to describe her perspective on this topic. Still, in the interview she states that “To teach English without teaching pronunciation is impossible” and that she “makes sure that they always take away the correct pronunciation”. In the lessons of T2 which were observed, the focus on pronunciation was present: in each of the three observed lessons, there were at least two activities in which the focus was placed on pronunciation. So, it could be stated that T2 perceives pronunciation as an important aspect of teaching English, too.

The teachers do not share the same perspective in listing the important aspects of pronunciation. T1 states that “/ə/, /ð/ and /ŋ/ seem important to me”. Also, that /r/ sound, I am always telling them that they have to swallow it”, however she adds that “I do not know what else could be important.” T2 disagrees by explaining that “[...] it’s interconnected, that all of it is a package that the teacher has to focus on and that one aspect of it cannot be prioritized because the language is complex”. On the other hand, in the observed lessons, both teachers paid attention to both segmental and suprasegmental features of pronunciation in every lesson by introducing activities which were aiming at these features, however, the provided feedback can be linked to segmental and suprasegmental features of pronunciation. Also, if the phase of raising awareness of pronunciation features and drill are considered, both teachers were drilling the pronunciation of learners by designing the activities in such a way that the learners were repeating a limited number of vocabulary items. In terms of raising awareness of the features, or providing explanation, in T1’s lessons only one such situation was observed, in the T2’S lessons two such situations were observed. All of these phases of raising awareness were done with no diagrams or charts, but they all included an explanation. Also, the explanations were mostly teachers’ reactions towards a mistake in pronunciation made by the learners. It should be noted that no new vocabulary or no new pronunciation features were introduced at the time of the realization of the observations.

T1 and T2 do not include the International Phonetic Alphabet in their English lessons in an active manner, which means that they do not include activities which would require the learners to produce any phonetic signs. Similarly, their opinions are connected to the grade in which the International Phonetic Alphabet should be introduced. T2 states that “because we

do not write and read in English, it does not make sense to introduce it to the learners in the second grade [...]", however, she sees the knowledge of IPA as one of the priorities which can be illustrated by her explanation that "so, to learn to read in it and to learn how to work with it is important, I think, but there is still time for the learners in the second grade". Further, the ideal time for the introduction of IPA is described by T2 as "the time when writing and reading in English will begin, when the written form will get there. Well, I think that's the time for that." In comparison, T1 describes that

it appears in the workbook, so they are in contact with it, but again it is not me telling them "This letter, that letter", mostly it's more like it flows through the third, fourth grade and in the fifth grade I'm already starting to show it [...] so that when they come across it in lower secondary school, they will know why it is or what it is and what it is good for. (T1)

In none of the observed lessons taught by the teachers, no use of IPA was noted.

Assessing pronunciation and providing feedback was another aspect of teaching pronunciation which was discussed and observed. Both teachers do not assess the learners' pronunciation as such, but they both focus on different perspectives which they assess. T1 bases the evaluation of pronunciation on the amount of the given effort: "If I see that they are trying, then if they say it incorrectly, correct themselves, then I do not assess it bad [...], then if someone seems to not be trying at all, that's worse in my view than if they say it with a mistake." Later in the interview, T1 added that "if I assess them bad for their pronunciation even if they try and they want to correct it, it would miss the effect." As was observed in the lessons, T1 provides feedback to learners' pronunciation in any moment of the lesson. The feedback or correction of learners' pronunciation was mainly in connection with various segmental features; however, suprasegmental features of pronunciation were corrected, too. In addition, in one of the observed lessons, T1 was in fact raising awareness of a pronunciation feature when she was providing correction of pronunciation to a learner. Also, T1 comments on the process of working with a mistake in pronunciation in the lessons:

So, I usually correct them, they have to say it again. As you may have noticed, they are all used to repeating it. Whatever I say, they repeat it, yes, so even if I do not even point out that they have to repeat it, and sometimes I do not even want them to repeat something, I want to do something else, and I want to follow up on the activity and they would just repeat it anyway. (T1)

In addition, T1 highlights that: “I’ll just say it again, so they’ll understand it was a mistake and fix it. Somehow, we do not purposefully say this is a mistake, this is wrong, no, somehow nice.” T2 chooses a similar strategy in both working with mistakes in lessons and in assessing learners’ pronunciation. On the topic of correcting mistakes in lessons, two strategies are described:

If a learner makes a mistake, I usually try to let the learner talk, then I say “yes, here I would like to praise you for this and that” and point out what could be done differently. The truth is that if I only ask about a word, for example with flashcards, I ask what it is specifically, so I correct it right away. If it wasn’t something more coherent, then there is no time or space or anything to wait for. (T2)

Additionally, T2 explains that the mistakes are not worked on only for short periods of time, such as only in the lessons in which they occur, but also in the long-term perspective: “When I pick up various words in which I see they appear in class with some inaccuracy [...], so I always try to collect these and then I simply aim for those specific words or phrases.” This is quite different from the T1’s perspective. Still, both teachers agree on not assessing pronunciation directly. The perspective of T1 was introduced earlier in this paragraph. T2 explains that she does not assess pronunciation, but learners’ comprehension:

I actually evaluate the learners for that, when we have some simple communication activity, or just today, or just today you saw the picture dictation, in which I verify by telling the learners different objects with different colors or even numbers, so I am actually dictating to them what they have to draw and then I check accordingly by looking at the picture if they understood it. (T2)

In the observed lessons, T2 provided feedback mainly on the segmental, but also on the suprasegmental features. The picture dictation was noted during observations and learners got marks for their pictures. T2 was also raising the awareness of certain pronunciation features of the learners during her lessons. In fact, it was observed in two lessons out of three and in these two lessons, the raising of awareness was connected with segmental features (it was an explanation of different consonant sounds and the teacher used minimal pairs for this purpose), and the raising of awareness was once connected with more segmental features at once (it was the pronunciation of the word ‘tongue’ which was difficult to pronounce for learners).

#### **6.6.2.1.2 Teacher's perception of learners and teachers' beliefs**

In this section, the rest of the codes belongs, so the codes 'Learners in the teacher's view', 'How should pronunciation be taught?', 'Grade', 'Age group', 'The teacher's knowledge', 'Teacher's beliefs', 'Differences between age groups', and 'Teacher's pronunciation' all belong in this category. The teachers were interviewed about their perception of learners and about their beliefs in light of how pronunciation should be taught, as can be seen from the previously listed questions.

First, attention will be paid to learners. T1 currently teaches English in the third and fifth grade, however, the research was focused on third grade learners. T1 clarifies, that in connection with teaching pronunciation, the learners in the third grade are "quite playful" and she adds that "the teaching using the poems and songs interests them". The specifics of the third graders are "that they can actually show the joy and the enthusiasm for the English language". When asked about the attention span, T1 explains that "that's why we alternate the activities, because of course they cannot focus on one activity for a long time". Another characteristic that is typical for the young learners according to T1 is that "they are more malleable" and an example of that by T1 is provided, too: "When I teach them /ə/ or /ð/, that they should put their tongue between their teeth, the third graders are willing to do it and the fifth graders, for example, if they still do not know the pronunciation and I want to teach them this, then they seem to be ashamed." Definitely, there are differences among the age groups noted by the teacher.

T2 teaches English in the second grade. Interestingly, there are not many differences between various age groups described by T2 during the interview. T2 states that

the basis is probably the good example that you give to the children. As for pronunciation, I think it's mainly about setting a good example for them. Even with the children in the second grade, we play videos in which native speakers speak, so they actually hear not only my pronunciation but also that of a native speaker, and I think that this can also be applied to fifth, sixth and seventh graders. (T2)

Still, T2 perceives also number of differences. Some of them were mentioned in the interview, such as that "in the second grade, a lot of the vocabulary we cover is about something they can point to, something they can demonstrate themselves" and she adds that "it is true that with the smaller children, it revolves a lot around what they can actually see, what they can do", and compares it with an older learner whom she teaches, too, by saying that "a girl who is in the eighth grade. So there, we can already talk about things that are more hypothetical, abstract, and the dialogue in general is simply on a different level than with



children, which is understandable.” This may even be highlighted by another answer by T2, in which she states that “If you ask the children “What is pronunciation?”, second graders, they would not be able to formulate what it is.” However, she adds that this does not influence the learners’ ability to pronounce correctly: “If you showed them objects or just pantomimed an activity that I know they can name, they can name it for you so that the pronunciation is correct in most cases. Which I think just speaks for itself.” In observations, both teachers provided a variety of activities, so it could be stated that they respect the attention span of the children. Both teachers were also using a lot of material and non-material didactic tools, such as fake food, flashcards, toys to make the topic of the lesson as concrete as possible for the children.

One of the last questions that was asked during the interview with the teachers was about the ideal way to teach pronunciation. T2 explains that according to her point of view, “the basis for the learners to learn the pronunciation correctly is that they might not even know that they learn it that way, so to teach them a little bit from an early age, the teacher has to be the correct example.” Another point concerning the ideal way to teach pronunciation according to T2 is that “the children should be exposed to different people using the language, which could be songs, recordings, videos, another teacher, so they just have more variety.” T2 also comments on the comfort of planning lessons with familiar and easy activities for both the teacher and the learners:

[...] I can’t base every lesson on the fact that we’ll show each other flashcards, or that we will just draw [...] but it should be varied [...] and not to focus on just one activity because it works from my point of view so I think it’s important to also think about that I think it works doesn’t mean that all learners are comfortable with it. (T2)

In the end, T2 summarizes the ideal way to teach pronunciation as “So giving them different options, from which they can choose what actually suits them”. T1 answers the question by stating that “I do not know. I do what I think is probably the best” and “I have no idea that there are other options. [...] What would be ideal? I guess I have no idea.” Additionally, she states that

Maybe in the future we will come across a method that will teach us more. It is certainly possible today to use, even on the Internet, today you can listen to the pronunciation of anything, which is also an advantage, and especially the children, as I see, who can listen to fairy tales in English, for example on YouTube. They learn a lot by doing that. (T1)

Even though there are advantages perceived by the teacher, she does not clearly state whether she uses YouTube in her lessons with this particular age group, and no such activity was observed in the third grade. Concerning T1's attitude towards the optimum way to teach pronunciation, based on her answer, the ideal way is to include a lot of material and non-material didactic tools, to include role-play, and similar activities.

To summarize what has been stated so far, it can be stated based on the interviews that both teachers perceive pronunciation as a key and they both include it in their English lessons. They also partly agree on the limitations of the particular age groups they teach, especially concerning the attention span of their learners. The way they teach pronunciation seems to be similar since both of them include a variety of activities focused on both segmental and suprasegmental features of pronunciation which were observed in the lessons. They also seem to agree on the use of IPA in their lessons. The only disagreement which was revealed by the interviews and the observations was the evaluation of pronunciation, in which T1 evaluates the effort given by the learners whereas T2 evaluates the comprehension of the learners.

#### **6.6.2.2 Interviews with the learners**

The interviews with learners were done separately in the second and in the third grade. However, for the purposes of this subchapter, the results of both interviews will be introduced together. To enable the further analysis of the data obtained from the interviews with the learners, several codes were created: 'Like/Dislike English', 'Pronunciation', 'How do you learn pronunciation?', 'Assessment/Feedback', 'Pronunciation at school', 'Differences between Czech and English', 'Knowing English', 'Teacher', 'How do you learn English?', 'Activities', and 'Strategies for not knowing'. All of these codes were grouped into categories. In the end, two categories were created: 'How do learners understand and view pronunciation in English', and 'Pronunciation at school and outside of school'. Again, there were multiple codes included in each of these categories. The data will be introduced in their categories. Because of the age of the learners, the interviews were carried out in Czech, so for the purposes of this part of the thesis, the interviews were translated into English. Additionally, for the reasons of confidentiality, no names will be included. Instead of the names, codes were assigned to each learner (for example L1 and L2). Since both groups were assigned the codes separately, there is a potential duplicity. Because of that, it will be stated in the text whether it is a learner from the second or the third grade. Similarly, as with the teachers' interviews, direct quotations will be included, however, less linkage to the observed lessons will be made (if any).

#### **6.6.2.2.1 How do learners understand pronunciation and how they view it?**

In this category, the codes concerned the pronunciation and the learners' perception. The codes which were created are: 'Like/Dislike English', 'Knowing English', 'Differences CZ/ENG', and 'Pronunciation'. Since the learners often connect learning pronunciation and English with the teacher, too, the codes 'How do you learn pronunciation?', 'How do you learn English?', 'Activities', 'Pronunciation at school', and 'Teacher' will be included in both categories.

Out of all the interviewed learners, there were only three who did not like English as such, learning English, or learning the correct pronunciation. The rest of the learners stated that they like learning English whether it was the subject in general, or learning specific aspects, such as vocabulary or pronunciation. The learners who are currently in the second grade explained that they like the activities their teacher is including in the lessons, such as "For example, the teacher will say, she will show us something and then we have to find a color or do something like that" (L1) or "I like that we say a color and an object and we'll draw it in a notebook" (L3). They also agreed that they like learning pronunciation and that it is important to pronounce words correctly in English. Also, all the learners from the second grade confirmed that they like learning to pronounce words in English. The learners from the third grade also answered that they like learning English, apart from four learners who clarified that they like it only to a certain level. The situation repeated when asked about learning the pronunciation – the majority of the group said that they like learning it, however, one learner was negative in the answer. As can be seen, the majority of learners view learning the correct pronunciation positively.

All learners despite the one in the third grade stated that pronunciation is sometimes difficult for them, however, they all perceive it as important mainly because of communicating abroad: "It is important so we can understand each other for example in England" (L5-second grade), "It is important because then he would not understand you and then you can't communicate with him anymore" (L6-second grade). The third graders share the same perspective: "Actually, the English won't know what we tell them" (L3) and "Yes, and they will ask each other how we speak and what are we saying" (L10). In the view of difficulty, the statements of the learners were the following: in the second grade, the learners agreed that the difficulty varies: "It's not difficult in some words, but with some words it is a little bit. With some even more" (L2) and "That maybe it's hard sometimes, sometimes it's not. That sometimes it is hard to say the word well, but sometimes it's not, that's easy" (L1). In the third grade, the statements were similar "Well, it's much more complicated to write it"

(L1) and “Of course, there are in English [...] difficult words which many people are unable to pronounce” (L10). Again, the attitude towards the difficulty of pronunciation in English seems to be shared by both groups.

Similarly, when asked about the differences between the Czech and English pronunciation, the learners from both grades agreed that there are differences. The most described one was the ‘r’ sound: “They won’t touch the upper palate. And the sound – we just don’t do it like that, but they won’t touch the upper palate” (L3-third grade) and “Well, they swallow it. That’s what our teacher told us that they want to say it and then they swallow it” (L3-third grade). In the second grade, the answers were similar: “[...] Those Englishman they have such an accent” (L6), “[...] when there is an ‘r’ we sort of swallow it, we don’t say it normally” (L1), “Like ‘k’ is always the same, it’s always ‘k’. So, it’s different than in English” (L1) and “Actually, in Czech, the letters are said and written the same” (L3). Lastly, both groups mentioned that there are words which are similar in pronunciation, or in spelling, however, in the second grade it was mainly because of a bad pronunciation of the word in English. In the third grade, the learners explained that: “[...] some are similar, some are, some - (L10) “For example, gorilla is said in almost the same way in English” (L8). The perception of the differences is similar in both grades.

Lastly, the question ‘What does it mean to ‘know English?’’ also produced similar answers among both grades since all the learners agreed that ‘to know English’ means to be able to communicate abroad. In the second grade a connection between ‘knowing English’ and pronunciation occurred: “Yes, to be able to say it means to know English” (L2).

#### **6.6.2.2.2 Pronunciation at school and outside of school**

The codes belonging to this group are ‘Assessment/Feedback’, ‘Strategies for not knowing’. As noted previously, since the learners often connect learning pronunciation and English with the teacher, too, the codes ‘How do you learn pronunciation?’, ‘How do you learn English?’, ‘Activities’, ‘Pronunciation at school’, and ‘Teacher’ will be included in this category, too.

The views of pronunciation at school were almost identical, too. The second graders were mostly describing the activities that are happening during English lessons (the identical activities which were described in the previous text about interviewing the teachers). However, the topic of assessment and feedback in connection with pronunciation produced a debate on this topic in both grades. Again, both grades agree that feedback is important. The opinions about grading pronunciation differ. In the second grade, the learners’ perspectives

are: “A bit, yes. Sometimes like when you’re in the third, fourth grade -” (L1), “Well, so in the third, fourth, fifth and so on, it will probably be better to give marks there” (L4). When asked if it would be a problem to receive no feedback at all, the reaction was: “it would be a problem, because as adults we wouldn’t be able to understand each other if we were simply in another country” (L5). In the third grade, there was not much of mutual agreement on this topic: “I know why: So that we can earn ones<sup>23</sup>! And so that we know it.” (L7), “No, but I know why! Because if we were constantly earning ones in such a way, then it would not make sense!” (L10). Providing feedback on their pronunciation is believed to be important by the third graders, especially because “so that we learn it” (L6). Generally, half of this group saw grades as important and half of the group did not. Still, they agreed that formative feedback is needed.

Some learners were describing that they in fact learn more pronunciation at home with their parents than at school. It is described as one of the strategies the learners use when they do not know the correct pronunciation of a word. In the second grade:

I learn pronunciation with my dad [...] he teaches me by telling me, for example, that ‘window’ is called ‘window’ in English. And then, for example, we eat a watermelon and then he asks me “What is the word for ‘window’ in English?” Of course, I do not have to know it the first time, but if I do, well my dad will praise me because it’s like the first time. (L6)

In the third grade, a slightly different perspective is present since almost all the learners “[...] ask mom” (L4) “or sister” (L3), however, they also “[...] ask the teacher if she happens to tell me again [...]" (L8), and if it is still not enough, “[...] I’ll just tell the teacher one more time” (L8) “or twice” (L5). Nevertheless, not all the learners choose the same strategy if they need help with pronunciation. They use Google Translate tool separately, or together with English books: “well, there is a frame to take a picture of it and it will translate [the word] for me.” (L3) Then learners then explained that they play the pronunciation in this tool. Apart from this tool and asking adults, they did not describe any other strategy.

However, in relation to asking adults, the answers varied slightly in the third grade since there were learners who stated that “I always ask my dad [...]" (L4), but also a learner who uses more detailed strategy with a parent: “[...] so mom tells me how to pronounce it and mom- and she also says to repeat it three times, to memorize it and then write it down how it

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<sup>23</sup> In this context, the learner is referring to the ,A‘, or ,1‘ grade.

should be.” (L10). The strategies used by the learners in this grade are summarized by L10: “Well, if I really don’t know, I try to look in my memory, in my head, and if I can’t find it there, I ask someone who might know and if he doesn’t know either, I ask a parent or a teacher or someone”. The learners also were split about whether their teacher suggested any strategies for them to use if they want to practice pronunciation at home. After a minute, they agreed that “No, she suggested let’s take a look, let the mothers take the textbooks, let them dictate the words to us and we write it on paper, in a notebook, or somewhere, anywhere, and we pronounce it [...]” (L3). They are not worried about learning not correct pronunciation because “That rarely happens. After all, you see what is written in the textbook” (L10) and they agree that “If we learn it wrong, we learn it again and correctly.” (L2)

The strategies described by the learners in the second grade concerning not knowing how to pronounce a word in English were: “I maybe think it up a little bit” (L1), “Translate it on your mobile” (L5) - in this case, more questions concerning pronunciation were asked and the learner explained that “If you google it, it will tell you, you play it a few times, and then you remember it” (L5), “[...] you know another one that has a similar meaning, so for example, it can be used, too” (L3) and “for example, you can also try the exclusionary method [...] that maybe you don’t know it, so you put ‘o’ there, if it doesn’t make sense, you put ‘r’ there or something like that” (L4). They also explain that “[...] we learn how to pronounce and like sometimes only, so maybe someone doesn’t learn it and then they just have to learn it at home” (L3) and that “[The teacher] is trying to make us to learn it all [...] (L1) and L5 adds: “Especially the pronunciation”.

To summarize all that has been stated so far, the learners connect good pronunciation habits mainly with being able to communicate with non-Czech speakers. Although the idea of pronunciation proved too complex in the piloting phase, the second and third grade learners were able to describe why pronunciation is important, what strategies they can use if they are unsure of pronunciation. The majority of them agree that feedback given by teachers is necessary, however, their position concerning evaluation as such is unclear and mixed.

### **6.6.3 Discussion of the results**

In the previous part of the thesis, the data collected through interviews and observations were introduced. In this part, a link to the theoretical background will be provided.

One of the first pieces of information which was discussed in the theoretical part of the thesis were the methods used for teaching pronunciation. From the data, it could be stated that both teachers do not teach according to one method only. In fact, both of them mix more methods together to ensure that all language skills would be worked on. In terms of pronunciation, both teachers are paying attention to pronunciation since the beginners level, which would indicate a feature of The Direct Method, which is even supported by the T2 scheduling the lessons in English language only. However, these are only features, which should be noted.

A perspective in which the teachers reflect to a level the books are the categorizations of especially the segmental features. The teachers do not highlight the different features of vowels and consonants, such as voicing, nor they use any terminology in this field. On the other hand, they describe and explain frequently with explanations that are on the learners' level, and they pay attention to how the learners are pronouncing the segmental features. Also, the teachers rely on the imitation of their pronunciation by the learners. A similar strategy is present in the teachers' feedback, too.

Furthermore, both teachers agree that both segmental and suprasegmental pronunciation are important and that pronunciation as such definitely should be taught. As described previously, T2 even mentions the impossibility of teaching English without teaching pronunciation, too. If the phases of teaching pronunciation are considered, the teachers who participated in the research do not seem to follow the five step distinction provided by Goodwin. The teachers explain the pronunciation features and then they practice it or drill it in their lessons. The use of diagrams or charts was not observed or described. The learners agree with this by explaining that their teachers provide simplified explanations to them and then they practice it. International Phonetic Alphabet is of limited use in the instruction of pronunciation, mainly because of the age of the learners. However, both teachers describe the ability to use IPA at least passively as important.

In terms of creating space for teaching pronunciation, it could be stated that opportunistic learning and remedial lessons are prevailing in the lessons of T1 and T2. Both teachers seem to be using bottom-up method, which was described by Goodwin, for teaching pronunciation, thus they start with the pronunciation of individual sounds and then they introduce the suprasegmental features of pronunciation. It seems from the interviews, that T2 places a slightly more importance on suprasegmental features than the T1, however, in the observations of the T2's lesson, almost no suprasegmental focus was observed.

As far as evaluation is concerned, both teachers agree that they do not evaluate pronunciation as such, but they evaluate different aspects: T1 assesses the effort the learners put into learning the pronunciation; T2 assesses the learners' comprehension. T2 also expressed their belief that mistakes in pronunciation should be addressed and worked on. T1 uses evaluation mainly for the motivational purposes. This was apparent in the interviews of the learners, in which the third grade learners, whose teacher is T1, explained that pronunciation should not be evaluated because it could be unfair, but feedback should be provided for them. On the other hand, the second grade learners believe that pronunciation should be evaluated since the fourth to fifth grade and they perceive it as the same as feedback from their teacher.

#### **6.6.4 The summary and the outcomes of the research**

The conclusion of this case study is that both learners and teachers share the same attitudes towards pronunciation. Pronunciation is seen as a key in English language teaching and learning. This could be noted in the observations, in which great attention was paid to pronunciation. Learners explained that they develop many strategies how to deal with not knowing the correct pronunciation of a word or a phrase. They also share the belief that correct pronunciation is necessary for an effective and successful communication abroad.

As expressed in the previous subchapter, the attitudes towards assessment are mixed to a degree. Both learners and teachers think that feedback is important, however, a disagreement is between the second grade learners and third grade learners in connection with marking the pronunciation. There was even a disagreement among the group of the third grade learners which was already described in this thesis. Overall, assessment is mostly perceived as important in teaching and learning pronunciation, however, none of the interviewed teachers evaluates pronunciation as such, but they focus on different aspects.



## CONCLUSION

In the introduction of this diploma thesis, the aim of the thesis was outlined as to provide an insight into what a limited number of learners and teachers think about pronunciation and if it should be taught at all. Moreover, a question was asked: What do the learners and the teachers think about pronunciation and the way pronunciation is taught in their classrooms? Does the optimum method even exist?

To answer the question and to reach the goal of this thesis, pronunciation in English was discussed in the majority of the theoretical part of the thesis. Starting with a brief introduction into the history of teaching pronunciation, the focus then relocated to the current perspective on teaching pronunciation which was described via the relevant curricular documents – the RVP and the CEFR. Then, the terminology related to pronunciation, such as ‘segmental features’ and ‘suprasegmental features’ was introduced. In the last chapter of the theoretical part of the thesis, the aim was to introduce the young learner from the perspective of cognitive, emotional and social development.

The practical part of this diploma thesis revolved around a case study in which two classes of learners took part together with their teachers. The whole process was described from the planning phase, through the piloting and the actual research phase to the data interpretation and discussion. The results of the case study are not in line with the Scrivener’s perspective which was included in the introductory part of this thesis. It was found out that the teachers who participated in the research do not use one specific method to teach pronunciation, but they are trying to implement the pronunciation focus into every lesson. To do so, they use various didactic means. Both of the teachers perceive segmental and suprasegmental features as important, thus, the whole field of pronunciation. This was also noted in the observed English lessons of the teachers since both of them included pronunciation focus there. The learners perceive pronunciation as an important part of learning English, and as important mainly when communicating abroad. They believe that without correct pronunciation, they would not be understood.

In terms of what are the teachers’ attitudes to teaching and evaluating pronunciation, they both include the phase of explaining into their teaching as well as the phase of practice in which they use various material and non-material didactic tools, however, in the explanation-related phase, both teachers rely on their explanations and no usage of charts or diagrams was observed. Learners agree with this by mentioning that their teachers explains to them how to pronounce certain segmental features. Although there were more steps provided in the

theoretical chapter discussing the optimum way to teach pronunciation by scholars, these additional steps were not described by any teacher, or learner. In the observations, the same result was noted. If mistakes, feedback and evaluation are considered in relation to teaching pronunciation, both teachers and learners' attitudes are that it is an important part of teaching and learning pronunciation because it is the feedback which provides necessary information to learn something. On the other hand, there is a discrepancy between the learners in relation to the topic of evaluation of pronunciation. In the second grade, the prevailing attitude is that pronunciation should be evaluated by marks in the fourth and fifth grade, however, the learners in the third grade share this attitude only partly. Still, all of them agreed that formative feedback should be provided for them by the teachers.

As stated previously, both teachers do not evaluate the learners' pronunciation as such, but one of them focuses on the effort of the learners to pronounce the word or utterance correctly, and the other teacher is evaluating learners' comprehension. In working with mistakes in their lessons, it was found out that both teachers use opportunistic learning in a way that if a mistake in pronunciation occurs, they try to remedy and clarify it at that particular moment. T2 also described the remedy lessons in relation to pronunciation which she does if needed. The opportunistic teaching has been observed, the remedy lesson was not. Both teachers seem to use the bottom-up method in which, firstly, the focus is on sounds, thus on segmental features, and then the focus is placed on the suprasegmental level. In this aspect, the attitudes of the teachers seem to not be similar since T1 is expressing that the segmental features are slightly more important than the suprasegmental features, however, T2 is expressing an opposite attitude.

Overall, the results are that the attitudes of the learners and the teachers who participated in the research are shared among the group since all of them believe that pronunciation in English is important and feedback should be provided for it. However, pronunciation still remains to be a complicated topic so the evolution in attitudes may appear.

## RESUMÉ

Tato diplomová práce se zabývá postoji učitelů a žáků k výuce výslovnosti v hodinách anglického jazyka, přičemž jejímž cílem je zjistit, zda výuka výslovnosti v hodinách probíhá či nikoliv, a jaké postoje k této výuce mají žáci a učitelé. Jako způsob sběru dat za účelem splnění cíle diplomové práce byly zvoleny rozhovory s učiteli, se žáky a observace v hodinách.

Teoretická část diplomové práce začíná všeobecným historickým přehledem, přičemž důraz je kladen právě na výuku výslovnosti v historické linii, tedy i na postoje společnosti vůči výslovnosti v cizích jazycích. K tomuto se pojí i různé metody a přístupy k výuce výslovnosti, které se v této kapitole objevují. Bezprostředně následující kapitola si následně klade za cíl představení současné perspektivy na výuku výslovnosti. Za účelem splnění tohoto cíle jsou v této kapitole jako zdroje zvoleny primárně aktuálně platné kurikulární dokumenty, tedy Rámcový vzdělávací program (RVP) a Společný evropský referenční rámec pro jazyky (SERR, v textu je využívána zkratka CEFR). V kontextu právě těchto kurikulárních dokumentů je diskutována již zmiňovaná současná perspektiva na výuku výslovnosti.

Třetí kapitola teoretické části diplomové práce představuje základní terminologii v rámci výslovnosti jako lingvistické disciplíny, obsahem jsou tedy definice pojmů “foném”, “znělé a neznělé souhlásky” “segmentální prvky výslovnosti”, “suprasegmentální prvky výslovnosti” a podobné. Výslovnost samotná je vydefinována právě v této části práce jako způsob, jakým mluvčí vytváří jednotlivé zvuky a slova v daném jazyce, tedy jakým způsobem daným jazykem hovoří. Důraz je kladen na již zmíněné segmentální a vybrané suprasegmentální prvky výslovnosti v anglickém jazyce, tedy na souhlásky, samohlásky, ale rovněž i na slovní a větný přízvuk, spojování slov, rytmus a intonaci. K této kapitole se následně pojí kapitola, ve které jsou představená doporučení vztahující se k výuce anglického jazyka. Všeobecná doporučení týkající se výuky výslovnosti jednotlivých segmentálních a suprasegmentálních prvků lze shrnout do doporučení dvou základních stadií, tedy do fáze “zvýšení pozornosti žáků” a do fáze “procvičování”. Janet Goodwin tato doporučení dále rozpracovává. Autoři rovněž poukazují na možnost využití různých pomůcek v obou stádiích výuky výslovnosti. V této kapitole jsou rovněž nastíněna i doporučení z odborné literatury týkající se začlenění výuky výslovnosti do vyučovacích hodin anglického jazyka, přičemž je argumentováno, že autoři odborných publikací jednoznačně toto zahrnutí doporučují a nabízejí několik způsobů, pomocí kterých lze výslovnost zahrnout – jedná se konkrétně o četnost

výskytu výuky výslovnosti. Na výuku je zde nahlíženo z perspektivy nejen vyučovacích hodin jako takových, ale i z pohledu hodnocení a cílů výuky výslovnosti.

Teoretickou část uzavírá kapitola vymezující žáky mladšího školního věku z pohledu kognitivního, emočního a sociálního vývoje, který je pro toto životní období charakteristický.

V rámci praktické části diplomové práce je důraz kladen na případovou studii, která byla realizována za účelem splnění cíle diplomové práce. V první kapitole praktické části je nejprve zahrnuta definice postoje z psychologické perspektivy. Následně je blíže popsána fáze plánování a pilotáže rozhovorů s učitelem a se žáky. Na rozdíl od pilotáže observačního archu byly pilotáže rozhovorů uskutečněny v rámci jiné základní školy, tedy i v rámci jiného kolektivu dětí a učitele. V další podkapitole praktické části jsou představeni žáci a učitelé, kteří se výzkumu zúčastnili (výzkumu jako takového, nikoliv pilotáže). Vzhledem k dodržení pravidel anonymity však nejsou uvedeny žádná jména, ale pouze obecné charakteristiky, které přímo nepoukazují na identitu dané základní školy, učitelů, ani žáků. Dále je v této části představena i výuka výslovnosti z perspektivy Školního vzdělávacího programu (ŠVP) této konkrétní základní školy.

Následující kapitola je započata popisem triangulace, která byla využita pro sběr dat v rámci práce a následně je detailně popsán průběh rozhovorů s učitelem i se žáky, i průběh a počet observací. Rozhovory s učitelem i se žáky byly polostrukturované a lišily se ve své podobě: s učitelem probíhala individuální interview, se žáky probíhala interview skupinová. Za účelem analýzy dat byly rozhovory nahrávány, o čemž byli respondenti informováni. Pro rozhovor s učitelem bylo vytvořeno celkem jedenáct otázek, které směřovaly na obecná fakta týkající se výuky výslovnosti (například zda ji v dané třídě učitel vyučuje), ale i na zjištění detailnějších informací (například zda učitel vyučuje transkripci či jak by se měla dle názoru daného učitele výslovnost vyučovat). Pro rozhovory se žáky bylo vytvořeno celkem osm otázek, které se týkaly spíše obecných postojů vzhledem k výuce výslovnosti. Otázky pro učitele i žáky byly po uskutečnění pilotáže upraveny, a to z toho důvodu, že byla kupříkladu zjištěna přílišná komplexnost konceptu výslovnosti vzhledem k věku žáků. V poslední podkapitole je popsán průběh observací. Observace byly pilotovány v jedné ze tříd, které se účastnily výzkumu a vzhledem k výsledkům pilotáže byla upravena forma observačního archu. Celkem bylo uskutečněno šest observací ve dvou třídách. Observace byly uskutečněny na přelomu května a června 2023, stejně jako rozhovory.

V rámci práce je dále popsána analýza dat, tedy nejprve transkripce rozhovorů a jejich následné kódování. Za účelem kódování byl využit software Quirkos, konkrétně jeho varianta

na internetu. Po vytvoření byly kódy dále kategorizovány a tato celá analýza byla několikrát opakována.

V poslední části diplomové práce jsou popsány výsledky případové studie, které jsou i diskutovány. Z případové studie vyplývá, že učitelé, kteří se zúčastnili výzkumu, vnímají výuku výslovnosti jako klíčovou. Výuku výslovnosti se snaží aktivně zapojit do každé své vyučovací hodiny angličtiny, což lze doložit i daty z observací. Oba učitelé dále vnímají jako důležité obě úrovně výslovnosti, tedy segmentální i suprasegmentální. Práce s chybou ve výslovnosti je rovněž vnímána jako klíčová, což lze doložit daty z rozhovorů, ale i z observací, během kterých bylo zjištěno, že oba učitelé si chyb, které žáci ve výslovnosti dělají, všímají a že s nimi dále pracují, a to jak vysvětlením celé situace, tak i v případě druhého učitele i hodinami, během kterých cílí výlučně na problematické momenty ve výslovnosti. Toto není možné doložit daty z observací, jelikož žádná taková hodina se během observací neuskutečnila. Známkování výslovnosti bylo rovněž jedním z aspektů výuky výslovnosti, na které cílily rozhovory. Oba učitelé se shodli, že neznámkuje výslovnost jako takovou, ale zaměřují se na jiné aspekty – učitel s kódem T1 se zaměřuje na snahu, kterou žáci k dosažení správné výslovnosti vyvíjejí a učitel s kódem T2 se zaměřuje na aktivity, které se týkají poslechového porozumění. Je evidentní, že učitelé jsou v rámci hodnocení výslovnosti opatrní, jelikož si uvědomují motivační aspekt hodnocení, což zmiňuje v rozhovoru učitel s kódem T1.

Z dat získaných rozhovory se žáky vyplývá, že žáci rovněž vnímají výuku výslovnosti jako velmi důležitou a jako stěžejní pro jejich budoucí život. Nedostatečnou úroveň výslovnosti si spojují zejména s neschopností domluvit se v zahraničí a s tím, že by v komunikaci s cizinci nebyli pochopeni. Jistý nesoulad v získaných datech lze pozorovat u otázky hodnocení výslovnosti v anglickém jazyce známkami. Žáci druhého ročníku věří, že v následujících letech, tedy ve třetí, čtvrté a páté třídě by výslovnost měla být známkována. Žáci v třetím ročníku tento postoj nesdílí a popisují, že pokud by byla výslovnost známkována, tak by to mohlo mít za následek neférové jednání. Je třeba podotknout, že ve skupině žáků třetí třídy nepanoval jednotný názor v souvislosti s touto otázkou. Obecně se ale žáci shodli na tom, že zpětná vazba od učitele je pro jejich výslovnost v anglickém jazyce důležitá součást učení.

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## APPENDIX A – The empty observation sheet

### Empty observation sheet – page 1

#### Lesson observation sheet

Date:

Class + Teacher:

	Tick space	Additional notes (objectives,...)
An activity focused on segmental features		
An activity focused on suprasegmental features		
IPA used		
Feedback or correction focused on pronunciation		
Raising awareness of the learners (explanation of a pronunciation feature,...)		
Drilling		

## Empty observation sheet – page 2

Other ways to practice pronunciation	Time chunk of pronunciation focus	Pronunciation appearing during the whole lesson	Activities that occurred during the whole lesson

Links to SEP:

# APPENDIX B – The filled observation sheet (T1)

## Filled observation sheet – page 1

### Lesson observation sheet

Date: 31.5.2023

Class + Teacher: C<sub>1</sub> + T<sub>1</sub>

	Tick space	Additional notes (objectives,...)
An activity focused on segmental features	I	What's in the box? → a focus on correct pronunciation of the individual words.
An activity focused on suprasegmental features	II	Information → song (Old Lady) → the children changed the information of the in their song to express their surprise. (4) Rhythm → What's in the box → repeated in a rhythm
IPA used		
Feedback or correction focused on pronunciation	II	"Tomato" → <del>the</del> learners pronounced incorrectly the words. The teacher repeated the word with "Carli" the correct pronunciation & the learners repeated the correct pronunciation.
Raising awareness of the learners (explanation of a pronunciation feature,...)		
Drilling	I	What's in the box? → in each round the learners & the teacher were repeating the words multiple times. <del>the</del>

Filled observation sheet – page 2

Other ways to practice pronunciation		
Time chunk of pronunciation focus		
Pronunciation appearing during the whole lesson	1	<p>Apart from the second activity, all of the activities included a focus on pronunciation</p>
Activities that occurred during the whole lesson	no focus on intonation →	<p>1) Good morning! Good afternoon, Hello everyone song                  2) What's your name? What's your surname? Where do you live? Where are you from? What is your favourite color (animal) subject? Drill of the answers                  3) Song: Old Lady                  4) I have got a box - What's in the box? → vegetables revision                  ↳ The teacher had various fake vegetables in a box. She was asking the learners what is this? The learners answered. Afterwards Don't look at me → the teacher was using the fake vegetables but in the box.                  environment - biscuits, a roll, croissant, chicken, cucumber                  Then the fake foods from both rounds were lined up the carpet. The teacher was asking individual students "Give me <del>the</del> X." &amp; the learners answered: Here you are.                  5) London bridge song (there was an opportunity to practice connected speech but did not happen)                  ↳ stolen                  ↳ increased                  ↳ not considered                  6) Evaluation of the lesson - what was the best ( Czech English language variety).</p>

Links to SEP: Food, The learner is able to answer simple questions about his life his hobbies variety.

# APPENDIX C – The filled observation sheet (T2)

## Filled observation sheet – page 1

### Lesson observation sheet

Date: 6.6.2023

Class + Teacher: C2 + T2

	Tick space	Additional notes (objectives,...)
An activity focused on segmental features		The activity number is 15
An activity focused on suprasegmental features		Body parts song although not all learners were singing & clearly, they focused more on finishing the song than singing it. (e.g. touching their shoulders etc.).
IPA used		
Feedback or correction focused on pronunciation		A learner said "Lemus" & the teacher corrected it [Em-bult] (this happened 2x) A learner said [Lemus] & the teacher corrected it
Raising awareness of the learners (explanation of a pronunciation feature,...)		The dictation - The teacher said the word "hanged" & drew the attention towards her pronunciation - the learners have difficulties to pronounce the word (in activity n. 2 of the feedback was not provided).
Drilling		The body parts song (they sang advanced)

Filled observation sheet – page 2

Other ways to practice pronunciation		
Time chunk of pronunciation focus		Act. 2 ; Act. 5 ; Act. 6
Pronunciation appearing during the whole lesson		
Activities that occurred during the whole lesson		<p>1) What's the weather? → It's raining. ↳ teacher ↳ learning</p> <p>2) Body parts - volunteer + description of body parts (what's this? this is a...) ↳ vocabulary revision (the learners had to say the phrase, the word as such + with the correct pronunciation)</p> <p>3) Show me your... (body part) / Touch your... (body part) ↳ The teacher is checking the understanding of the learners.</p> <p>4) Drawing in the notebook "colorful" dictation (e.g. three eyes) - again, the aim is to check the comprehension ↳ numerous</p> <p>5) Body parts song - head, shoulders, knees &amp; toes (3 rounds, different speeds)</p> <p>6) Drawing a monster + description of it (oral) } happening at the same time</p> <p>7) Snake Pairing</p>

Links to SEP: Body parts

## APPENDIX D – Example of the open coding

interviews teach...

Prepis\_rozhovoru\_U.docx

⚙️

Prepis\_rozho...

Int.: Děkuji. Ono to bylo vidět, že věděli.

T2: Věděli, co je čeká, protože takhle ty hodiny vedeme většinou, je to prostě baví tímhle stylem. Možná jste si všimla, že ty děti už potom neudíží moc pozornost, proto na posledních těch deset, pět minut si pouštíme Stevea, protože už je to na ně kolikrát dost, což si myslím, že je u dětí jejich věku tak nějak běžné.

Int.: Rozumím. A učíte i suprasegmentální prvky výslovnosti, třeba sentence stress nebo connected speech?

T2: Tak třeba jsme probírali slovíčko „like“, takže jsem dávala hodně pozor na to, aby – cvičili jsme to, že děti se vlastně ptaly svých spolužáků na takové krátké otázky – „Máš rád banán? třeba? My jsme to propojili s něčím, co jsme zrovna probírali jako to celkové téma, takže aby když je to otázka, tak aby bylo jasné, že je to otázka. Potom když třeba ta odpověď byla negativní, tak jsem jí i podporovala v tom, aby to vyjádřili i trošku tím tónem toho hlasu, když pozitivní, tak aby to zase řekli trochu mileji. Shrnula bych to tak, že ten můj přístup je takový, že dětem konkrétně neríkám, co se vlastně skrývá v tom, k čemu já je vedu, což třeba může být ten „connected speech“, což může být nějaký ten „word stress“, ale spíš se tak snažím lehce tím, že oni napodobují to, co dělám, nebo já třeba jim dám nějaký svůj komentář k tomu, co se právě vlastně stalo v tom jazyce nebo v té větě, nebo co bylo nějakým způsobem signifikantní, tak je k tomu vlastně tak skrytý vedu, ale není to tak, že bychom si rozebírali „Děti, tak toto byl word stress, to znamená to a to“, ale právě jsem ještě chtěla říct, že jsou hodiny, kdy s dětmi mluvím jenom anglicky a potom je vidět, že třeba děti zkrátka říct, že jakmile to nejsou ty „chunks“, ale je to ta celá věta, je to prostě nějaká situace, tak že mi třeba z nějakého toho důvodu nerozuměly a zpětně se k tomu vracíme, kdy jim vysvětluju, že tam třeba nějaká ta slovíčka se nám trošičku k sobě splynula, což je vlastně takový znak té přirozené komunikace, což máme i v češtině, tak si to trošku spojíme. Ale znovu: necílím na to konkrétně.

Int.: A vnímáte nějaké rozdíly ve výuce angličtiny v rámci různých věkových skupin?

T2: Myslím si, že je k tomu třeba podobně, to znamená, že děti – základ je asi ten dobrý příklad, který vy těm dětem dáváte. Co se týče výslovnosti, tak si myslím, že je to hlavně o tom jim dát dobrý příklad. I s dětmi ve druhé třídě si pouštíme videa, kde mluví rodilí mluvčí, takže vlastně slyší výslovnost nejenom moji, ale i rodilého mluvčího a myslím si, že tohle lze

Quick filter quirks



