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Diploma Thesis

CZECH PRIMARY TEACHERS' APPROACH TO ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION TEACHING

Přístup českých učitelů 1. stupně ZŠ k výuce výslovnosti anglického jazyka

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Declaration

I hereby declare that the present diploma thesis titled "Czech Primary Teachers' Approach to English Pronunciation Teaching" is a result of my own work and that the information I used has been fully acknowledged in the text and included in the reference list. I further declare that this thesis has not been used to obtain any other university degree.

Prague, July 2023 ……………………….

Emma Jirsová

Acknowledgments

Abstract

The aim of this diploma thesis is to ascertain the current state of English pronunciation teaching at primary schools in the Czech Republic by researching Czech teachers' approach to it. The thesis comprises a theoretical and practical part. The theoretical part first describes the importance, aim, and content of pronunciation teaching as well as the effectiveness of pronunciation instruction and reasons for neglecting it. Furthermore, it characterizes young learners, gives recommendations for teaching pronunciation to them, describes an integrative approach to pronunciation teaching, and looks into how pronunciation is taught at primary schools in different European countries. The practical part of this diploma thesis presents, analyzes, and discusses the findings of a survey completed by 108 Czech primary teachers focusing on their approach to pronunciation teaching. The results of the survey describe the teachers' pronunciation pedagogy training, their perspectives on pronunciation teaching, the way they implement it into their English lessons at primary schools, the reasons why some educators teach pronunciation spontaneously, and the changes which would facilitate systematic pronunciation teaching.

Keywords

English pronunciation teaching, primary level, young learners, English as a Foreign Language

Abstrakt

Cílem této diplomové práce je zjistit současný stav výuky výslovnosti anglického jazyka na základních školách v České republice. Za účelem dosažení uvedeného cíle tato práce zkoumá přístup českých učitelů k výuce anglické výslovnosti. Práce se skládá z teoretické a praktické části. Teoretická část nejprve popisuje důležitost, cíl a obsah výuky výslovnosti spolu s její efektivitou a důvody, proč bývá zanedbávána. Dále poskytuje charakteristiku žáků mladšího školního věku, uvádí doporučení pro výuku výslovnosti na prvním stupni základní školy, popisuje integrativní přístup k výuce výslovnosti a zabývá se tím, jak probíhá výuka výslovnosti na základních školách v různých evropských zemích. Praktická část této diplomové práce představuje, analyzuje a komentuje výsledky dotazníkového šetření, jehož se zúčastnilo 108 českých učitelů základních škol a které se zaměřilo na jejich přístup k výuce výslovnosti. Výsledky výzkumu popisují pedagogické vzdělání učitelů v oblasti výslovnosti, jejich pohled na její výuku, způsob, kterým ji implementují do hodin anglického jazyka, důvody, proč někteří pedagogové vyučují výslovnost nesystematicky a změny, jež by podporovaly systematickou výuku výslovnosti.

Klíčová slova

výuka výslovnosti anglického jazyka, první stupeň ZŠ, žáci mladšího školního věku, angličtina jako cizí jazyk

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INTRODUCTION

As a primary school pupil, I did not experience any pronunciation teaching. At the grammar school I then attended, the overall quality of English classes was incomparably higher, and pronunciation was implemented into them. Having said that, pronunciation was taught mostly unsystematically, for example, when a student mispronounced a word, and it was not given as much attention as grammar and vocabulary. The first systematic pronunciation teaching I experienced was at university during phonetics and phonology courses. These courses not only sparked my interest in phonetics and phonology, but also notably improved my own pronunciation. I realized that systematic pronunciation teaching was beneficial and crucial to the development of communicative competence.

With teacher training for primary education as my main study program, I also began remembering how little pronunciation learning I had experienced as a pupil at primary school. I started to wonder how English classes at the primary level had changed since I left primary school 13 years ago and, more specifically, what the current state of pronunciation teaching was. I began to pay close attention to how other teachers implemented pronunciation into their English classes when observing their lessons as part of my teaching practice. Unfortunately, I did not have many opportunities to do so, and even if I did, it would not have objectively reflected the current state of pronunciation teaching in the whole Czech Republic. Therefore, I decided to find out more about said topic by looking into recently-published literature and studies available on the internet, however, I soon found out that research concerning pronunciation teaching at Czech primary schools was scarce.

The lack of research, along with my interest in phonetics and phonology, led me to choose pronunciation teaching at the primary level in the Czech Republic as the topic of my diploma thesis. When deciding on how to research this topic, it was crucial to consider who decides about the aims, content, and methods when it comes to English classes at the primary level. In the Czech Republic, teachers need to fulfill the expected outcomes stated in the Framework Education Programme for Basic Education as well as respect the contents of their school's educational program. Having said that, the programs do not dictate the precise aims of English learning at the primary level, this decision rests on the teacher's shoulders. Therefore, to understand how pronunciation teaching is implemented into English lessons at Czech primary schools, it is necessary to look into how teachers approach it.

The aim of this diploma thesis is to find out the current state of pronunciation teaching at primary schools in the Czech Republic by researching Czech primary teachers' approach to it. To reach this aim, this paper tries to uncover whether teachers had studied phonetics and phonology and/or pronunciation teaching prior to teaching English, whether they feel well-prepared to teach English pronunciation at the primary level, and what pronunciation teaching at the primary level means and/or involves from their perspective. Furthermore, this diploma thesis sets out to find out whether Czech primary teachers teach pronunciation systematically, unsystematically, or not at all; if they teach it systematically, then how frequently, how much time they devote to it on average, which materials and techniques they use, which areas of pronunciation they focus on, whether they integrate pronunciation work into other areas, and how they correct their learners' pronunciation mistakes. If they teach pronunciation unsystematically, this thesis scrutinizes what prompts them to focus on it and how frequently they do so. Lastly, this diploma thesis intends to discover the reasons why some teachers do not teach pronunciation systematically and which changes would motivate educators to teach pronunciation systematically or make pronunciation teaching easier and/or more enjoyable to them.

To achieve these objectives and elucidate the state of pronunciation teaching primary level in the Czech Republic, this thesis surveys Czech primary teachers of English using an online questionnaire. The aim, form, distribution, data analysis, information about the respondents, results of the questionnaire, and discussion are included in the practical part of this diploma thesis.

The theoretical part first looks into pronunciation teaching in general: its importance, aim, content, the effectiveness of pronunciation instruction, and reasons for neglecting it. Secondly, it characterizes young learners, gives recommendations for teaching pronunciation to them, describes an integrative approach to pronunciation teaching, and adumbrates the current state of pronunciation teaching in chosen European countries.

1   THEORETICAL PART

1.1   English pronunciation teaching

1.1.1   Importance of pronunciation

The role of pronunciation in English language teaching has changed significantly over the years. To give an illustration, in Grammar-Translation Method, which dominated foreign language learning from the 1840s to the 1940s (Richards & Rodgers, 2001), "little or no attention is given to pronunciation" (Mora, n.d.). On the other hand, in the Audiolingual Method, most popular in the 1960s, accurate pronunciation was one of the main objectives (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

Nowadays, pronunciation is viewed as an essential part of communicative competence, which is described as a speaker's knowledge of a language and how to use it (Walker et al., 2021). What's more, in today's globalized world, it is necessary to "develop the language knowledge and usage skills needed for communicating with people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, or in other words, to develop intercultural communicative competence" (Walker et al., 2021, p. 10). With international intelligibility being an essential component of intercultural communicative competence, the teaching of pronunciation is now more relevant than ever (Walker et al., 2021).

Derwing & Munro (2015) stress the importance of pronunciation by describing how a lack of pronunciation skills can negatively influence communication. That is to say, L2 speakers experience frustration when trying to express themselves and not being understood, and speaking with a strong accent can lead to a negative evaluation of the L2 user by the listener and to responding in a discriminatory way. According to Derwing & Munro (2015, p. 2), "speakers with a strong L2 accent or low-prestige L1 pronunciation may feel considerable apprehension each time they engage with a new interlocutor because they cannot predict how the communicative exchange will go".

Gilbert (2016, p. 5) summarizes the importance of intelligible pronunciation by saying that "poor intelligibility and its likely companion, poor listening comprehension, can be socially inhibiting and damaging to a learner's ability to cope effectively in an English-speaking environment."

With the importance of pronunciation established, let us now look at how the aim of pronunciation teaching has changed through recent decades and what it is presently.

1.1.2 Aim of pronunciation teaching

Pronunciation pedagogy and its aims have long been influenced by two contradictory principles, the nativeness and intelligibility principle (Levis, 2005).

According to the nativeness principle, "it is both possible and desirable to achieve native-like pronunciation in a foreign language" (Levis, 2005, p. 370). Levis (2005) states that the nativeness principle was dominant until the 1960s, when research led to the conclusion that aiming for nativeness when teaching pronunciation was unrealistic for both the teacher and the learner. Despite that, the principle still persists and affects pronunciation teaching practices even nowadays. In an English classroom, it is common to encounter a learner who wishes to get rid of their accent or a teacher who sees a learner with native-like pronunciation as an achievable ideal (Levis, 2005).

On the other hand, the intelligibility principle states that learners simply need to be understandable (Levis, 2005). In other words, the intelligibility principle "holds that the goal is intelligible speech, irrespective of how native-like it sounds" (Derwing & Munro, 2015, p. 6). Derwing & Munro (2015, p. 7) go on to define intelligibility as "the degree of match between a speaker's intended message and the listener's comprehension." Another definition is given by van der Meer (2021), who sees intelligibility as a situation in which the speaker speaks English confidently and with ease while the listener enjoys listening as well as comprehends the message.

As mentioned above, the nativeness principle nowadays still persists in the English classroom. Having said that, "in recent decades aiming for intelligibility has moved to the forefront of English language teaching and learning" (van der Meer, 2021, p. 62). This notion can be seen in official documents, such as in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2018), which states:

In language teaching, the phonological control of an idealised native speaker has traditionally been seen as the target, with accent being seen as a marker of poor phonological control. The focus on accent and on accuracy instead of on intelligibility has been detrimental to the development of the teaching of pronunciation. Idealised models that ignore the retention of accent lack consideration for context, sociolinguistic aspects and learners' needs (p. 134).

Similarly, in the 2021 version of the Framework Education Programme for Basic Education, developing sufficiently intelligible pronunciation is part of the curriculum for the second level of primary school (Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy, 2021, p. 28).

To summarize, intelligibility has become the aim of pronunciation teaching, meaning that the teacher should not see native-like pronunciation as the ideal achievable for all his/her learners. That said, some pupils might aspire to a native-speaker accent. The teacher should strive to create an environment that respects not only the individual goals of his/her learners but also their abilities and needs. For learners to achieve their personal goals, it is possible for them to "follow the same route initially and then branch out to pursue their own personal long-term goals, whether a native-speaker accent or international intelligibility" (Walker et al., 2021, p. 14).

With the objective of pronunciation pedagogy defined, let us now move on to what to teach, in other words, the content of pronunciation teaching.

1.1.3   Content of pronunciation teaching

When deciding on the content of pronunciation teaching, the teacher has more factors to consider. According to Derwing & Munro (2015, p. 9), "intelligibility and comprehensibility should be priorities, but it is important that teachers be flexible in accommodating students' needs and wishes, keeping in mind the time available." With this in mind, let us now look at which aspects of phonology might be explored in an English classroom.

Wei (2006, p. 9) says that "in a pronunciation class, what we need to cover are intonation, stress (word level stress, sentence level stress, linking), rhythm, consonants (substitution, omission, articulation, clusters and linking) and vowels (substitution, articulation, length, reduction and linking)."

Similarly, in his Map of Pronunciation Teaching, Hancock (2014) suggests focusing on both segmental features, the sounds of a language, and suprasegmental features, such as rhythm, connected speech, intonation, and stress.

Hancock (2018) further elaborates on which features of phonology we should focus on for productive purposes by dividing them into essential and superficial features. The essential features include phoneme distinctions, syllables, and tonic stress, while the superficial features comprise weak forms, elision, assimilation, linking, and schwa. If a learner's aim is exclusively intelligibility, it is sufficient to focus on the essential features, "if on the other

hand, they would also like an easier life, in terms of the work they have to do to articulate, then they would also benefit from working on some of the superficial features" (Hancock, 2018).

Walker et al. (2021) divide what to teach into productive and receptive competence. In their summary of features that learners require for basic productive competence and that should be prioritized in order to be internationally intelligible, Walker et al. (2021) stem from Jenkins's Lingua Franca Core (2000), Field (2005), Deterding & Kirkpatrick (2006), Rajadurai (2006), Osimk (2009), and Deterding (2013). Walker et al. (2021) state that the priority pronunciation features for productive competence include the majority of consonant sounds; aspiration of /p/, /t/, and /k/ at the beginning of a word; consonant clusters at the beginning or in the middle of a word; vowel length; sentence stress; and word stress.

Concerning receptive competence, or in other words, the "capacity to understand when listening" (Walker et al., 2021, p. 16), it is important to offer learners opportunities to hear a wide range of both native and non-native speaker accents as well as guidance on how different accents in English influence what listeners can expect (Walker et al., 2021). Walker et al. (2021, p. 16) also suggest using guided exposure to improve learners' receptive accommodation, which "facilitates international intelligibility, helps learners see accent as a natural phenomenon, and increases their openness towards diversity."

Having looked at the aim and content of pronunciation teaching, it is apposite to now focus on pronunciation instruction, which is one of the factors influencing pronunciation teaching.

1.1.4   Pronunciation instruction

There are multiple factors that affect pronunciation learning. These factors include age, aptitude, motivation, personality, amount of exposure, native language, and instruction (Červinková Poesová & Uličná, 2019). Due to the limited extent of this paper, the following section deals with the factor that can be influenced by the teacher the most: pronunciation instruction.

First, it is appropriate and essential to try to answer a question that has long been a matter of debate not only among teachers but also among linguists. It is whether teaching pronunciation can lead to improvement (Derwing & Munro, 2015).

Looking back into the past, we can notice that different linguists saw pronunciation instruction differently, which was reflected in the methods and techniques they used. To give

an illustration, the Silent Way, introduced by Caleb Gattegno in 1963, saw near-native fluency as one of the main objectives of language learning, which is why correct pronunciation and mastery of prosodic elements were emphasized and practiced during a lesson using unique teaching materials such as colored rods and pronunciation charts (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Similarly, pronunciation played an essential role in the first English Language Institute in the United States, founded in 1939 in Michigan and directed by Charles Fries, who was trained in structural linguistics. In the institute, specializing in the training of teachers of EFL and in teaching ESL or EFL, language was taught through systematic attention to pronunciation and oral drilling of its basic sentence patterns (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). By contrast, Stephen Krashen, known for his input hypothesis and acquisition/learning hypothesis popular in the 1980s, paid little attention to explicit pronunciation teaching (Derwing & Munro, 2015).

Krashen's theory, along with a correlational investigation of Purcell and Suter, which was published in 1980 and concluded that factors influencing pronunciation learning were beyond the control of the teacher, caused a move away from pronunciation teaching towards the end of the 20th century (Derwing & Munro, 2015). While Purcell and Suter's work was influential, Derwing & Munro (2015, p. 48) point out problems with the conclusions of their study by saying that "the only dependent variable they considered was strength of foreign accent" and that "they did not consider speech intelligibility, comprehensibility, fluency, or any fine-grained details of their subjects' oral productions." Derwing & Munro (2015, p. 48) also highlight that Purcell and Suter's study is a correlational investigation, which "permit only relatively weak conclusions and disallow casual interpretations." These reasons lead us to view Purcell and Suter's work with considerable skepticism.

With this in mind, the question of whether some more recent studies have proven the effectiveness of pronunciation instruction arises. Pardo (2004) reviewed 25 studies published between 1970 and 2003, which studied the effect of pronunciation instruction. According to his findings, only 2 of the studies did not support the claim that pronunciation teaching positively affected learners' pronunciation. Similarly, Murphy (2017) states that multiple studies prove the positive effect of pronunciation instruction on intelligibility, comprehensibility, fluency, and the reduction of accented speech. The effectiveness of second language pronunciation instruction is also confirmed by a meta-analysis of 86 reports which proved pronunciation instruction to be effective (Lee et al., 2014).

Despite pronunciation instruction being proven effective, some teachers still avoid incorporating it into their English classes. Hence, the following subchapter looks into reasons for neglecting pronunciation teaching.

1.1.5 Reasons for neglecting pronunciation teaching

Pronunciation instruction has been proven effective, learners seem to consider it beneficial (Pardo, 2004), and they wish to improve their pronunciation (Vančura & Molnar, 2021). Despite that, pronunciation tends to be neglected in an English classroom or taught in a reactive and unplanned way (Kelly, 2000). What's more, many teachers believe "that pronunciation instruction is not effective and consider it a waste of instructional time" (Červinková Poesová & Uličná, 2019). In the following section, let us look at the reasons that might be behind "pronunciation being considered as the Cinderella of language teaching" (Levis, 2021, p. 17).

Teacher's conviction that pronunciation instruction is unnecessary

According to Walker et al. (2021), some teachers believe that pronunciation does not need to be taught and that sufficient exposure to English will lead to learners picking it up naturally. While that might be true for a few learners with a special aptitude for pronunciation learning, not all of them will be able to learn pronunciation skills independently. In addition, Henderson (2013) points out that picking up a non-native language via environment in a way similar to children picking up their mother tongue is difficult to imagine when it comes to countries that are not native English speaking.

Insufficient teacher training and knowledge

It is possible that pronunciation suffers from neglect not because of teachers' beliefs about it but rather their doubts concerning how to teach it, which might stem from their lack of knowledge about phonetics and phonology as well as of pronunciation didactics (Kelly, 2000). This statement is supported by a study that researched Croatian teachers' and learners' attitudes toward English pronunciation in elementary schools. According to the study's findings, more than 50% of the teachers strongly disagreed that they were introduced to pronunciation pedagogy during their studies (Vančura & Molnar, 2021). Vančura & Molnar (2021) add that due to these findings, it does not come as a surprise that teachers lack confidence in teaching pronunciation. Likewise, a survey questioning 598 teachers

revealed that the majority of teachers were not satisfied with the training they had received for teaching pronunciation (Henderson, 2013).

Lack of materials for teaching pronunciation

Apart from teachers' beliefs and training, the insufficient availability of materials suitable for teaching pronunciation might cause teachers to have an avoidant attitude toward teaching it. In a research that interviewed eight ESL teachers in order to discover why they found pronunciation difficult to teach, one of the reasons was the lack of suitable teaching and learning materials as well as an assessment framework that would make it easier to map students' progress and ability in pronunciation (Macdonald, 2002). Vančura and Molnar (2021) were also interested in teachers' views on the availability of pronunciation activities in textbooks. However, their research yielded inconclusive results, with the majority of their respondents choosing the "neither agree nor disagree" option when asked about the availability of pronunciation exercises in the textbooks they use. Vančura and Molnar (2021, p. 73) suggest that these results "can signal that teachers do not know whether there are pronunciation exercises in the textbooks or do not want to provide an answer" which could theoretically "indicate that teachers skip pronunciation exercises or have never come across such exercises in the textbook."

Lack of time

Walker et al. (2021) remark that teachers often find themselves under time pressure, which leads them to feel that there is not enough time to teach pronunciation. Likewise, based on a study employing a survey, teaching observations, and semi-structured interviews, Wahid & Sulong (2013) concluded that while the teachers participating in their research found pronunciation teaching important, the time constraints along with the syllabus caused them to teach pronunciation minimally. While there is no doubt that the requirements that are placed on teachers are high, and covering everything contained in the syllabus is challenging, this issue has a solution which is further described in the second chapter of the theoretical part of this diploma thesis: integrating pronunciation into work on other English skills and subskills.

Doubts concerning the assessment of pronunciation and learner goals

Another reason for neglecting pronunciation in an English classroom might be that teachers have difficulties assessing it. In his study, Macdonald (2002, p. 7) found out that "assessment

or monitoring of student progress in pronunciation also emerged as an area of difficulty or confusion for teachers, and is clearly an impediment to their teaching of pronunciation." Due to these findings, he suggests developing frameworks for the assessment of students' pronunciation, integrating them into the curricula, and instructing teachers on how to use them. Similarly, Henderson's study (2013) yielded results suggesting that most teachers did not use an established scale to assess their learners' pronunciation and lacked knowledge concerning their learners' goals. Walker et al. (2021) elaborate on the topic of goals by stating that some learners express the aim of wanting to sound like a native speaker, which might discourage teachers since aiming for nativeness when teaching pronunciation has been proven to be unrealistic for both teacher and learner. To help learners see intelligibility as the goal of their pronunciation learning, Walker et al. (2021) suggest discussing learners' reasons for learning English or the importance of international intelligibility.

Having talked about some reasons for neglecting pronunciation teaching, it is crucial to note that this subchapter only gives an illustration of them. Other reasons include insufficient implementation of pronunciation in formal curricula (Macdonald, 2002), teachers' negative assessment of their own pronunciation (Vafaei, 2013), learners' reluctant attitudes toward pronunciation exercises (Vančura & Molnar, 2021), and more.

The above-described reasons for neglecting pronunciation teaching conclude the first chapter of the theoretical part of this diploma thesis which has also summarized the importance, aim, content of pronunciation teaching, and effectiveness of pronunciation instruction. With pronunciation teaching at the primary level being the topic of this paper, the need to take its specifics into consideration arises. To do so, the next chapter characterizes a young learner's development, lists recommendations for teaching pronunciation at the primary level, describes how pronunciation can be integrated into language teaching and looks into research concerned with pronunciation teaching at primary schools in Europe.

1.2 Pronunciation teaching at primary level

1.2.1 The specifics of a young language learner

So far, the theoretical part of this diploma thesis has focused on pronunciation teaching in general, in particular its importance, aims, and content, as well as pronunciation instruction and reasons for neglecting it. While the above-described information is relevant when it comes to teaching pronunciation to young learners, working with pupils at the first level of primary school requires a specific approach that respects their unique characteristics and needs due to their young age. The following chapter first describes the specifics of young language learners, particularly their cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development. Secondly, it mentions pedagogical implications stemming from primary school pupils' unique needs and characteristics. Moreover, this chapter looks into ways of integrating pronunciation work into the teaching of other language skills. Lastly, it describes how pronunciation is taught at primary schools in chosen European countries with regard to research-based findings.

Cognitive development

Children's cognitive abilities develop profoundly throughout their attendance at primary school. Young learners have limited reasoning and logical skills, as well as short attention spans. As children get older when attending primary level, they are able to work on activities for longer, on the other hand, they might get frustrated with the demands of learning a new language and possibly start to get embarrassed by speaking English. Pupils under the age of eight mainly learn from direct experience, from objects and visual aids, and their ability to organize information to remember it is limited, as well as their metalanguage. Young learners have a very active imagination, and they like to engage in fantasy (McKay, 2006; Cameron & McKay, 2010). During learners' attendance at primary school, "they are developing abilities to think in new ways and are moving towards being able to reason in a systematic and logical fashion in adolescence" (McKay, 2006, p. 6).

Social and emotional development

McKay (2006) states that young children develop from a rather ego-centric way of thinking toward greater social awareness and that for young learners, it is crucial to learn how to function in a group. It is also important to realize that for young learners, feelings of safety, belonging, appreciation, and success are essential. Young learners are "sensitive to criticism

and their feelings of success or failure are dependent on how adults and peers respond to them" (McKay, 2006, p. 9).

Physical development

Young learners' fine and gross motor skills develop rapidly and continuously while attending primary school (McKay, 2006). Cameron & McKay (2010) point out that since learners have not entirely mastered fine motor skills at the primary level, language activities employing fine motor skills, such as coloring or cutting, should not be too physically demanding for them. Pupils develop their ability to move around and use hand-eye coordination. They require a lot of physical activity, on the other hand, they tire easily (McKay, 2006).

1.2.2   Recommendations for teaching English pronunciation to young learners

The preceding subchapter described the specifics of young learners. With this and the information from the first chapter of this diploma thesis in mind, the following subchapter gives selected recommendations for teaching pronunciation to pupils at the primary level.

Firstly, as Brown (2000) remarks, due to young learners' limited cognitive abilities, specifically their inability to grasp metalanguage and their tendency to concentrate on the here and now, abstract talk about language as well as explanations of rules must be approached with extreme caution. Instead of describing and explaining pronunciation rules, it is suggested to draw pupils' attention to specific patterns or appropriate examples and to use repetition appropriately. What's more, as has already been mentioned, young pupils learn from direct experience, meaning it is important to work with visual aids and objects when teaching pronunciation to young learners (McKay, 2006).

Secondly, the teacher needs to take into consideration the pupils' short attention spans. For young children, it is challenging to concentrate on a task for a prolonged period of time, especially when they find the task they are working on boring or difficult. That is why it is especially important when teaching pronunciation to young learners to offer activities capturing their immediate interest and to tap into children's natural curiosity (Brown, 2000). It is advised to use not only a variety of activities but also a variety of pace, organization, and voice (Scott & Ytreberg, 1990).

Some young learners encounter English for the first time in their English lessons at the primary level. It is crucial for them to develop a positive attitude toward English, stimulate

interest in the language, and provide a basis for further education (Reid, 2016). When teaching pronunciation at the primary level, the teacher should be aware that his/her students are establishing foundations they will build on in the future. It is, therefore, essential for the English teacher to correct pupils' pronunciation, as not doing so can lead to permanent errors in the learner's speech (Palupi et al., 2022).

For children to develop a positive attitude toward English, to be enthusiastic when studying an unknown foreign language, and to become familiar with the target culture, Palupi et al. (2022) suggest using songs, rhymes, and chants when teaching pronunciation. Doláková (2021, p. 38) states that young children have a notable ability to perceive the rhythm of speech and that "through the use of fun engaging activities, we can help children remember key language better, and start to develop an idea of the length of words, and the stress and flow of the language."

Apart from these suggestions, which are especially relevant when working with young learners, there are recommendations that apply to all levels. The following section lists selected recommendations for teaching pronunciation not only to young learners but also to different age groups:

- set intelligibility rather than native-like pronunciation as the goal of pronunciation teaching;
- show the learners the importance of pronunciation;
- tailor the teaching of pronunciation to the interests, needs, and abilities of learners;
- use English at an appropriate level as much as possible;
- motivate students to speak English by providing the language necessary and the need to use it;
- take a learner-centered perspective;
- create a safe environment, use praise, and encourage learners;
- create opportunities for learners to be creative;
- promote students' active learning;
- use pronunciation games to practice language as well as promote teamwork and healthy competition;
- integrate pronunciation into work on skills and subskills

(Cameron, 2001; Cameron & McKay, 2010; Červinková Poesová & Uličná, 2019; Walker et al., 2021).

The last point of the list brings us to this chapter's next subsection, which presents possible ways of integrating pronunciation teaching into language instruction.

1.2.3 An integrated approach to pronunciation teaching

Having characterized young learners and given recommendations for teaching pronunciation to them, the question of how to incorporate pronunciation into English lessons at the primary level arises. This chapter attempts to answer this question by describing the benefits of an integrated approach to pronunciation teaching as well as specific activities integrating pronunciation with vocabulary, grammar, speaking, listening, and reading which can be used when teaching English at the primary level.

Integrating pronunciation with vocabulary

Ahmad (2016) says that providing pronunciation instruction when working on vocabulary skills is beneficial to learners' intelligibility because not learning the stress of new words can lead to an inability to recognize them in spoken form as well as being misunderstood when speaking. When we integrate pronunciation and vocabulary in an English classroom, we provide our learners with an opportunity to develop awareness about patterns associated with spoken English, which they can then apply when exposed to new words and expressions. This can be done by focusing on word stress, vowels, consonants, and word endings when learning new words, as well as understanding the importance of linking, rhythm, or intonation when learning word combinations.

There are many ways of integrating pronunciation with vocabulary in an English classroom. The following section gives an illustration of it by describing a few specific activities and techniques. Walker et al. (2021) suggest addressing problematic consonants, vowels, consonant clusters, and word stress in vocabulary before a speaking activity so that learners would not be distracted by them when speaking. Ahmad (2016) describes using word families (e.g., cat, fat, rat, bat) in order to associate vocabulary with pronunciation. He also proposes employing content-based learning, for example, by learning the names of cities and countries in association with focusing on peak vowel sounds and word stress. Doláková (2021) recommends engaging young learners in pronunciation practice by encouraging them to feel the rhythm of speech. She proposes an activity called Fruit chant, which connects

pronunciation work and learning fruit vocabulary. In this activity, pupils are introduced to the names of different types of fruit, which are made up of different numbers of syllables, through chants and visual aids. The goal is for the learners to recognize the number of syllables and sort the fruit vocabulary into groups with the same number of syllables.

With the benefits of integrating pronunciation and vocabulary stated, along with a selection of activities that can be used when working with young learners, it is now time to look at integrating pronunciation work with another subskill, grammar.

Integrating pronunciation with grammar

Integrating pronunciation with grammar at the primary level is challenging due to the difficulty of making a complex subject accessible to young learners. When learning spoken grammar, the emphasis should be on improving prosodic features (e.g., word stress, rhythm, linking, and intonation) that play a vital role in a learner's intelligibility. Doing so helps students master grammar more easily and remember it better; furthermore, it can prevent the fossilization of incorrect patterns (Miller & Jones, 2016).

To give an illustration of integrating pronunciation with grammar, Miller & Jones (2016) elaborate on the role of prosodic features when dealing with grammatical endings in an English classroom. Linking plays a key role here, and learning about it as well as about "how the pronunciation of words can change in connected speech improves speech comprehension along with fostering fluent speech" (Miller & Jones, 2016, p. 94). Specific techniques that can be used when working on the pronunciation of grammatical endings include listening for meaning, dictations, or listening and identifying. Another recommended technique is recording students' speech in order for them to develop self-monitoring skills (Miller & Jones, 2016).

Integrating pronunciation with speaking and listening

The relationship between pronunciation and spoken communication is a highly interconnected one since "pronunciation defines the ways a person speaks English, through both segmentals (the vowel and consonant sounds) and suprasegmentals (word stress, rhythm, prominence, and intonation)" (Muller Levis & Levis, 2016, p. 28).

Muller Levis & Levis (2016) suggest integrating two particular suprasegmental features, prominence and final intonation, into teaching oral communication since they find them especially important. When teaching prosody, it is possible to make use of exercises that

involve "focused listening, individual and choral mimicry of a teacher or recording, reading dialogues aloud, and production of students' own language" (Muller Levis & Levis, 2016, p. 31). Muller Levis & Levis (2016) disclose that when integrating pronunciation with speaking or listening, the teacher can make use of controlled, bridging, and communicative activities. During a controlled activity, such as mimicry, the focus is on language form, while communicative activities, such as free speech, pay attention to communicating meaning. *Bridging activities,* which represent a bridge from controlled to communicative activities, should not be overlooked in an English classroom as they allow learners to focus on both form and meaning.

Walker et al. (2021) point to the usefulness of integrating pronunciation and listening by stating that pronunciation can help learners deal with bottom-up and top-down processing, two operations that make up the skill of listening. They recommend working with minimal pairs in order for learners to recognize the difference between various sounds as well as targeted pronunciation work that can help pupils notice the weak forms of function words.

A specific activity that can be used when integrating pronunciation with speaking and listening at the primary level is described by Cameron & McKay (2010). The activity, called Playing parrots, starts with the teacher choosing a situation in which there is emotion in the speaker's voice. The teacher can use their own voice or a recording. After that, the teacher instructs the pupils to repeat everything she/he says in the way she/he says it, like parrots. The pupils then repeat the sentences they hear while also matching the speaker's intonation and speed. This activity helps learners become aware of rhythm and intonation in English.

Doláková (2021) describes a version of Bingo that integrates pronunciation with listening as well as vocabulary practice. The teacher comes up with three to four examples of words representing distinct syllable patterns and writes them on small cards. Learners are given 3x3 bingo boards with different syllable patterns written in their squares. The teacher then shuffles the set of cards and successively reads words from it while learners listen, count the words' syllables, and cover the bingo square with the corresponding number of dots/syllables. The learner who first covers three squares in a line or all nine squares and shouts "Bingo!" is the winner. A variation of this game that also includes speaking practice involves pupils working in groups and reading the words themselves.

The last technique to mention is Carolyn Graham's Jazz Chants, "which connect the rhythm of spoken American English to the beat of jazz" (Oxford University Press). Jazz Chants

represent a fun and practical way of focusing on stress and rhythm in English. What's more, they can be used with learners of different ages in classes of any size, and they do not require musical ability (Thompson).

Integrating pronunciation with reading

While the role of pronunciation for speaking and listening is clear, "a new role for pronunciation training has emerged as a powerful tool to be used in the reading process; specifically, pronunciation training can facilitate the critical first step of phonemic awareness . . . and phonics" (Woo & Price, 2016, p. 129). Woo & Price (2016) point out that research has shown a strong connection between phonics instruction and reading. They also call attention to the fact that written text must be converted into speech sounds in the phonological loop so that meaning can be extracted using long-term memory, and reading comprehension could happen. In order to master the skill of reading, the learner needs to be able to learn the operations of processing print and overall comprehension, which work in collaboration but require the development of distinct skills. Print processing requires bottom-up skills and is strongly connected to pronunciation.

Regarding specific activities integrating pronunciation with reading, Woo & Price (2016) propose minimal pairs practice for the development of phonetic awareness. To learn phonics, working with a phonemic alphabet and matching phonemic sounds to the English spelling system is advised. According to Cameron (2001), phonics work can be incorporated into story reading, songs, and rhymes.

An example of an activity suitable for young learners that incorporates reading, listening, and pronunciation is given by Doláková (2021). Pupils are presented with a printed chant with pictures instead of stressed words. They listen to the chant recited by a teacher, which can be accompanied by pupils clapping or snapping their fingers with each picture. The activity helps pupils feel the stress and discover that it can be very regular.

Lastly, it is important to mention a well-known infamous activity that integrates reading and pronunciation, reading out loud. Houltby (2013) remarks that reading out loud focuses on bottom-up skills, and it can lead to learners reading without understanding the text. Having said that, he proposes activities proven successful that use video with an accompanying reader. One of the activities includes students reading dialogues from the reader after having watched the first few scenes from the video. Another suggested activity consists of acting

out parts that can motivate learners to read out loud from the dialogues in the reader as well as the transcript of the video. When carried out correctly, these activities can create an opportunity to integrate pronunciation work with reading.

Integrating pronunciation with reading concludes this subchapter which deals with an integrated approach to pronunciation teaching. The subchapter has described the theoretical basis underlying the integration as well as specific activities which can be used in an English classroom. It is important to note that the activities included do not represent a complete list, they are mere illustrations of how pronunciation can be incorporated with vocabulary, grammar, speaking, listening, and reading.

1.2.4 Research-based insights into English pronunciation teaching in chosen European countries

Having explored the theoretical basis of pronunciation teaching in the theoretical part of this diploma thesis, it is fitting to look into what research-based findings tell us about the reality of it. This chapter looks into research from three European countries to adumbrate the current state of pronunciation teaching at primary schools in the chosen countries. Since research on this topic is scarce in the Czech Republic, this chapter explores the findings of three research studies from Slovakia, Croatia, and Poland. These researches were chosen due to their recentness, the proximity of the countries to the Czech Republic, and the similarity of the official languages spoken in the countries to the Czech language.

The Teaching of Pronunciation in English Classes at Primary Schools in Slovakia

The first research study was done in Slovakia, a country historically connected to the Czech Republic and similar in quite a few ways, including education. The research examined how teachers implemented pronunciation into their English classes, more precisely, "which aspects of pronunciation (segmental, supra-segmental) they pay attention to, if this attention is focusing on differences between L1 and L2 and how pronunciation activities are carried out, particularly, which teaching techniques and materials are employed in English language lessons" (Reid & Debnarova, 2020, p. 1741). In the study, Reid & Debnarova (2020) used observations and interviews as their methods for collecting data. Twenty English language lessons from ten teachers at two different primary schools were observed, and the teachers were then interviewed using a semi-structured interview. The data from the two stages of the research was then compared to ensure the research's validity.

The research showed that concerning techniques for teaching pronunciation, corrections done by the teacher, drills, and listen-and-repeat activities were the most common (Reid & Debnarova, 2020). Songs and rhymes/chants accompanied by clapping hands were also popular. On the other hand, techniques such as recoding of pronunciation, ear training, and minimal pairs were not used at all. The most commonly used materials for teaching pronunciation were textbooks, CDs, and videos. Regarding aspects of pronunciation, the teachers mainly focused on practicing new words and phrases from the textbooks the class was working with. The practice of segmental features occurred when working with the phonics exercises included in the textbooks. All the teachers claimed not to focus on supra-segmental features in their classes; however, the practice of rhythm and intonation was observed in some of the lessons. The teachers did not tailor the process of teaching pronunciation to the particular needs of Slovakian learners. Instead, the pronunciation teaching was determined by the contents of the textbooks the classes were working with (Reid & Debnarova, 2020).

Teacher's Attitudes Towards English Pronunciation in Croatian Elementary Schools

The second research was carried out in Croatia by Vančura & Molnar (2021), and it explored Croatian learners' and teachers' attitudes toward teaching pronunciation at elementary schools. The research's subjects were 152 learners and 31 teachers. Since this diploma thesis focuses on teachers' approach to pronunciation teaching, this subchapter mainly examines the research's findings concerning teachers' attitudes.

Using questionnaires, Vančura & Molnar (2021) gathered answers from 31 teachers teaching in 14 different Croatian elementary schools. The questionnaire focused on the relationship between the education of the teachers and the pronunciation methods and techniques they used, the teachers' views on the availability of pronunciation activities in textbooks, and the pronunciation activities they used in their English classes.

Concerning attitudes toward pronunciation, Vančura & Molnar (2021) discovered that most teachers found pronunciation as important as any other language skill. Similarly, most teachers were willing to invest their time and resources into bettering their pronunciation. The next section of the research focused on teacher training. Interestingly, over half of the respondents stated they were not introduced to pronunciation pedagogy during their studies. By contrast, "the teachers who had taken a course in English phonetics and phonology used more varied pronunciation teaching techniques, such as phonetic symbols, and also paid

attention to instructing their learners about high-value prosodic features" (Vančura & Molnar, 2021, p. 79). Regarding textbook materials, the responses were inconclusive, with a quarter of teachers saying that their textbooks included activities for teaching pronunciation and more than 40% stating the opposite. The research also included a section about teaching practices which showed that the most commonly used pronunciation methods were listen-and-repeat activities and corrective feedback given by the teacher. Only a few teachers reported teaching phonetic symbols in their English classes. When asked about the aspects of pronunciation that the teachers focus on, the majority of teachers claimed to teach suprasegmental features.

English Pronunciation Teaching at Primary Schools in Poland

In the third study, Szyszka (2016) aimed to investigate teachers' actions and beliefs toward pronunciation teaching at different educational levels in Poland. This diploma thesis is concerned with pronunciation teaching at the primary level; therefore, this subchapter looks into the research's findings from Polish primary schools.

A survey was conducted to determine the teachers' beliefs about pronunciation teaching, how competent they felt regarding pronunciation, and what the most frequently used pronunciation teaching techniques were. The respondents were 20 primary teachers from Polish state schools.

The research findings showed that teachers found it important "how their students spoke English, and they considered teaching English pronunciation at school valuable" (Szyszka, 2016, p. 172). According to Szyszka (2016), primary teachers mostly stated they were competent enough to teach pronunciation and evaluated their own pronunciation as good or slightly above. In relation to pronunciation teaching techniques, teachers stated that "their use of pronunciation teaching techniques was neither high nor low in terms of frequency" (Szyszka, 2016, p. 174). The most common pronunciation teaching techniques the subjects claimed to use were acting out dialogues, listen-and-repeat activities, reading aloud, and direct instructions on pronouncing certain pronunciation aspects. On the other hand, the least employed techniques were recording pronunciation, using the dictionary to check pronunciation, using minimal pairs, and recognizing phonemic symbols (Szyszka, 2016).

When comparing the findings of the three above-described research papers, it is possible to notice some similarities between them. Each of the aforementioned studies looked into

techniques and methods for teaching pronunciation and found out that the most commonly used ones included listen-and-repeat activities and corrective feedback given by the teacher. On the other hand, both Vančura & Molnar (2021) and Szyszka (2016) reported that working with phonetic symbols was one of the least employed techniques. Two of the studies researched areas of focus when teaching pronunciation. The majority of Vančura & Molnar's (2021) respondents claimed to teach suprasegmental features. On the contrary, all the teachers participating in Reid & Debnarova's (2020) research stated that they did not focus on supra-segmental features in their classes; however, the practice of some suprasegmentals was observed in some of the lessons.

Having described pronunciation teaching in different European countries, the question of the reality of it in the Czech Republic arises, which brings us to the practical part of this diploma thesis.

2 PRACTICAL PART

The practical part of this diploma thesis consists of four chapters. The first chapter describes the aim of the practical part as well as the research questions. Next, the methodology of the practical part is described, more specifically, the content of the employed questionnaire, the procedure, data analysis, and the research participants. The third chapter analyzes the results of the questionnaire in six subchapters. The Discussion chapter, concluding the practical part of this diploma thesis, connects the findings to the existing research, interprets the survey results, states its limitations, and provides implications for practice. With the structure of the following practical part described, let us move on to stating the aim and research questions.

2.1 Aim and Research Questions

The aim of the practical part of this diploma thesis is to ascertain the current state of pronunciation teaching at the primary level in the Czech Republic and to find out what the approach of Czech primary teachers to English pronunciation teaching is. In order to reach this aim, the research questions shown in Table 1 were posed.

Table 1: Research questions

RQ1	How prepared do Czech teachers feel to teach English pronunciation at the primary level?
RQ2	How do Czech primary teachers approach English pronunciation teaching?
RQ3	Which changes would help Czech primary teachers to teach English pronunciation systematically?

2.2 Method

To answer the research questions stated above, a survey employing a questionnaire directed at Czech primary teachers of English was constructed. The content of the questionnaire, the form and distribution of it, its respondents, and data analysis are described in this subchapter. The complete questionnaire in the form that was presented to the respondents can be found in the Appendix of this thesis.

2.2.1 Content of the questionnaire

The questionnaire comprised a cover letter and 19 to 27 questions, depending on the respondents' answer to question number 17 and whether they had decided to answer the optional questions. The content of the questionnaire was designed with regard to the aim of the questionnaire, research questions, and theoretical information included in the theoretical part of this diploma thesis. The content was also inspired by questionnaires devised by Vančura & Molnar (2021), Szyszka (2016), Vykoukhová (2014), and Reid & Debnarova (2020). The design of the cover letter and the questions the questionnaire included are described in the following section.

The cover letter included a thank you to everyone participating in the research, the topic of the questionnaire, and information about who the questionnaire was intended for, that is to say, to teachers of English at Czech primary schools. The respondents were also informed about the time needed to complete the questionnaire, which was 5 to 15 minutes; about the necessary steps that had to be taken in order for their answers to be saved; and about the language of the questionnaire (English) as well as the possibility of answering in Czech if they did not feel comfortable answering in English. Furthermore, the participants were requested to participate in the research even if they felt like they did not teach pronunciation in their English lessons, they were assured of the anonymity of their responses and acquainted with the fact that their responses would be used for academic purposes.

After the cover letter, the questionnaire questions were shown. Most of the questions included were compulsory. Furthermore, the vast majority of the questions was close-ended to ensure easy processing of the answers and respondents' willingness to complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire included different types of close-ended questions: YES/NO questions, questions with one possible answer from a list, and questions with more than one possible answer. The questions with one possible answer were visually differentiated from

the ones with more possible answers. Most of the close-ended questions included an "Other:" option, which the respondents could utilize if the presented list did not contain an answer accurately describing their approach. The questionnaire also included one Likert scale, two compulsory open-ended questions, and three optional open-ended questions.

The questions were presented in three parts. The first part was called "PART 1 – PERSONAL INFORMATION & EDUCATION" and the second one "PART 2 – PRONUNCIATION TEACHING AND ME". These two parts were intended for all respondents, irrespective of their answers. The last question of the second part, question number 17, divided the respondents into three groups based on how they implemented pronunciation teaching into their lessons and redirected them to one of the three versions of part three, "PART 3 – SYSTEMATIC PRONUNCIATION TEACHING", "PART 3 – UNSYSTEMATIC PRONUNCIATION TEACHING" or "PART 3 – ABSENT PRONUNCIATION TEACHING". After the respondents finished answering the questions in part three, they were redirected to the final part of the questionnaire, "PART 4 – FINAL COMMENTS," which was again identical for all of the respondents.

Let us now look at the first part of the questionnaire concerned with the respondents' personal information and training. The first questions included were about the participant's gender and age. After that, the questions aimed at collecting data about the respondent's general teaching practices and experience, namely how long they had been teaching English at the primary level; the grade(s) they currently taught English in; the English textbook(s) they currently worked with; whether they taught English at the primary level and other subjects, or only English at the primary level, or English at the primary and lower-secondary level. The question that followed inquired about the region in which the school the respondents taught at was situated. When preparing the questionnaire, the question of whether to ask the respondents to state the name of their school arose; however, to ensure the anonymity of the questionnaire, letting the respondents disclose only the region in which their school was seemed more appropriate. The next section of the first part focused on the respondents' training, precisely the highest level of education they had completed, and the qualifications they had for teaching English. The questions then moved on to asking whether the participants had studied phonetics and phonology during their studies, whether they had studied English pronunciation teaching for the primary level, and if the training they had received made them well-prepared to teach English pronunciation at the primary level. The

first part of the questionnaire was concluded by requesting the respondents to state their English level and how intelligible they found their own pronunciation.

The second part of the questionnaire included an open-ended compulsory question asking the respondents what they thought teaching pronunciation at the primary level meant and/or involved. Subsequently, it inquired whether the participants taught pronunciation in their English lessons. This question included four possible answers:

- yes, I teach pronunciation systematically (I plan and prepare pronunciation activities and/or I focus on pronunciation regularly in my classes),
- yes, I teach pronunciation unsystematically and/or spontaneously (when an opportunity arises during a lesson, e.g., when someone mispronounces something),
- yes, I teach pronunciation both systematically and unsystematically (according to a plan and also when an opportunity arises during a lesson, e.g., when someone mispronounces something),
- no, I do not teach pronunciation at all.

If the respondents chose the first or the third answer, they were redirected to the section „PART 3 – SYSTEMATIC PRONUNCIATION TEACHING". If they chose the second option, the questionnaire redirected them to the section "PART 3 – UNSYSTEMATIC PRONUNCIATION TEACHING", and if they stated that they did not teach pronunciation at all, the algorithm of the questionnaire took them to "PART 3 – ABSENT PRONUNCIATION TEACHING."

The first version of part three was designated for the teachers who taught pronunciation systematically or both systematically and unsystematically. First, it aimed to ascertain how frequently they taught pronunciation in their English lessons at the primary level and how much time they devoted to it on average. Secondly, it focused on the materials used in their lessons to teach pronunciation, more specifically, the source of the materials employed. Thirdly, it included questions about the techniques and practices the teachers used to teach pronunciation, giving options such as "listen-and-repeat" or "minimal pairs activities" in the list of answers. The next question inquired about the areas of pronunciation that the respondents focused on in their lessons, with possible answers such as "consonants," "silent letters," "linking," and "intonation" in the options list. The following two questions asked the participants whether they integrated pronunciation work into speaking, listening,

reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary, or spelling; and about their usual reaction to a learner making a pronunciation mistake, for instance, if they corrected the learner and told him/her to repeat after them, if they signaled a mistake and let the learner correct himself/herself, or if they did not correct them at all. Furthermore, a question was asked to determine which changes would make teaching pronunciation easier and/or more enjoyable for the teachers. To answer this question, the respondents could choose from five options or use an "Other:" option. The offered options were, for example, "I'd find teaching pronunciation easier and/or more enjoyable if I could improve my overall English level" or "...if I knew where to find materials and/or ideas for teaching pronunciation at the primary level."

This version of part three was enclosed by an optional open-ended question asking the respondents whether they could think of a successful pronunciation activity and/or technique in which pronunciation was involved and write a few lines about it.

The second version of part free was intended for the respondents who stated that they taught pronunciation unsystematically and/or spontaneously in their English lessons at primary school. The first question meant to find out what prompted the teachers to focus on pronunciation in their lessons, whether it was, for example, a learner mispronouncing something or a new word coming up. The participants were also asked about the frequency of incorporating pronunciation work into their lessons. The subsequent question scrutinized the reasons behind the teacher's decision to teach pronunciation unsystematically. To answer the question, the respondents could choose from twelve reasons as well as answer freely using the "Other:" option. The selected reasons were formulated based on chapter 2.1.5 of this diploma thesis, "Reasons for neglecting pronunciation teaching," and inspired by the questionnaires cited at the beginning of this subsection. To give an illustration, the proffered options were, for example, "I don't have enough pedagogical training in this area" or "I think it is enough when the learners are sufficiently exposed to English."

The last question of this version of part three asked about the changes which would motivate the respondents to teach pronunciation more regularly and/or systematically. The respondents could choose from five options as well as an "Other:" option; the specific options were the same as in the first version of part three and are described above.

The third version of part three, meant for teachers stating that they did not teach English pronunciation at all, was similar to the above-described second version of part three. Firstly, information about why the teachers decided not to teach pronunciation was collected.

Subsequently, the respondents were asked which changes would be necessary in order for them to start teaching pronunciation in their lessons.

The final part of the questionnaire, named "PART 4 – FINAL COMMENTS", to which all the respondents were redirected after having completed part three, offered the respondents the option of leaving any additional comments or questions. Moreover, it offered the participants the option of contacting the author of this thesis or the supervisor if they wanted to speak more about pronunciation teaching or receive the research results and thanked them for participating.

2.2.2 Procedure

After having established the aim and research questions as well as the content of the questionnaire, an online version of the questionnaire was created. The Google Forms online form creator was utilized for this purpose as it had proven to be user-friendly and offered the option of redirecting respondents based on their answers.

Once the online form of the questionnaire was designed, it was apposite to test it. For the piloting of the questionnaire, two primary teachers of English were chosen. Intentionally, the teachers chosen were quite dissimilar, with the first one having no pedagogical training but 20 years of experience and the second one being a beginning teacher and having completed both a pedagogical high school and a master's study program focused on teacher training for primary education with a specialization in English. With regard to the findings that were bought to light thanks to the piloting of the questionnaire, some questions were slightly reformulated to ensure the respondents' understanding of them. In addition, the approximate time required to complete the questionnaire was revealed to be 5 to 15 minutes.

With the questionnaire tested and finalized, it was time to distribute it. To increase the chance of a high response rate and to enable contacting schools all over the Czech Republic, the online form of the questionnaire was chosen to be sent out. However, before doing so, the respondents of the questionnaire had to be chosen. With more than 80 000 teachers working at primary schools in the Czech Republic, contacting the teachers directly was not found feasible. Instead, schools to which the questionnaire would be sent were chosen. In the Czech Republic, there are around 4000 primary schools dispersed through 14 regions. Systematic sampling, a probability sampling method, was employed to obtain a representative sample. A list of primary schools in each region was obtained from this website:

http://www.seznamskol.eu/typ/zakladni-skola/. Every tenth school was chosen from the list, and its name was copied into a separate document. This way, a list of 391 schools was generated. Subsequently, e-mail addresses to the chosen schools were acquired on the internet, specifically, the school's, headteacher's, or deputy headteacher's e-mail addresses. Afterward, an e-mail was composed describing the purpose of the e-mail, the respondents sought, the time needed to complete the questionnaire, its aim, assurance of anonymity, and other practical information concerning the questionnaire, along with a link to the online questionnaire and a request to forward the e-mail to primary teachers of English at the addressee's school. Finally, the e-mail was sent, and responses began to be collected. The online questionnaire was accepting responses for a total time of six weeks in May and June 2023.

2.2.3 Data analysis

After six weeks of data collection, the questionnaire was deactivated, and the collected responses analyzed. Some of the data was analyzed using the graphs and charts generated by Google Forms. In some cases, the spreadsheet software program Microsoft Excel was employed, especially when analyzing correlations between answers given by respondents. Using these two tools, the data collected from the responses of 108 Czech primary teachers was converted into percentages and transformed into tables, graphs, and figures. Since the questionnaire was not sent to the potential respondents directly, it was not possible to determine the total number of teachers who had received the questionnaire; therefore, it was unfeasible to calculate the response rate.

2.2.4 Participants

The following section describes the participants' age, gender, and region where they teach. Further information about the respondents is presented in the Results chapter. In total, the questionnaire was answered by 108 primary teachers of English from the Czech Republic, out of which 94.4% were female and 5.6% were male. As can be seen in Figure 1, which depicts the respondents' age, the highest number of respondents stated that they were between 40 and 49 years old. The other age groups were represented by between 10% and 20% of the respondents. Concerning the regions where the schools the respondents were teaching at were situated, the data collected and shown in Figure 2 was diverse, which can be seen as positive in terms of this research's aim to map the current state of pronunciation teaching at the primary level in the whole Czech Republic. Between 10% and 15% of the

respondents stated they worked as English primary teachers in the Moravian-Silesian, Southern Moravia, Pardubice, and Central Bohemia Region. The rest of the regions were represented by less than 10% of the respondents; South Bohemian Region was the only region from which no contacted teachers filled in the questionnaire.
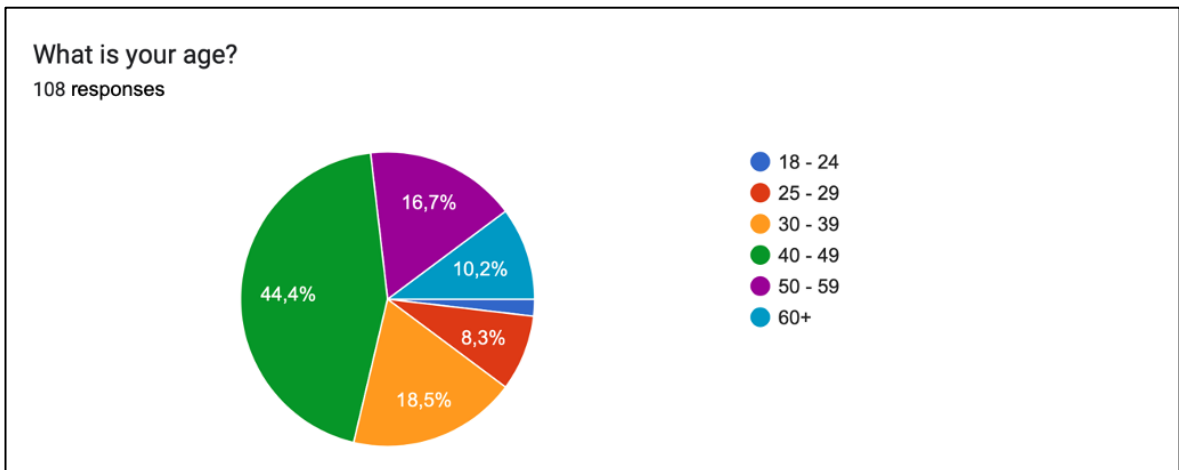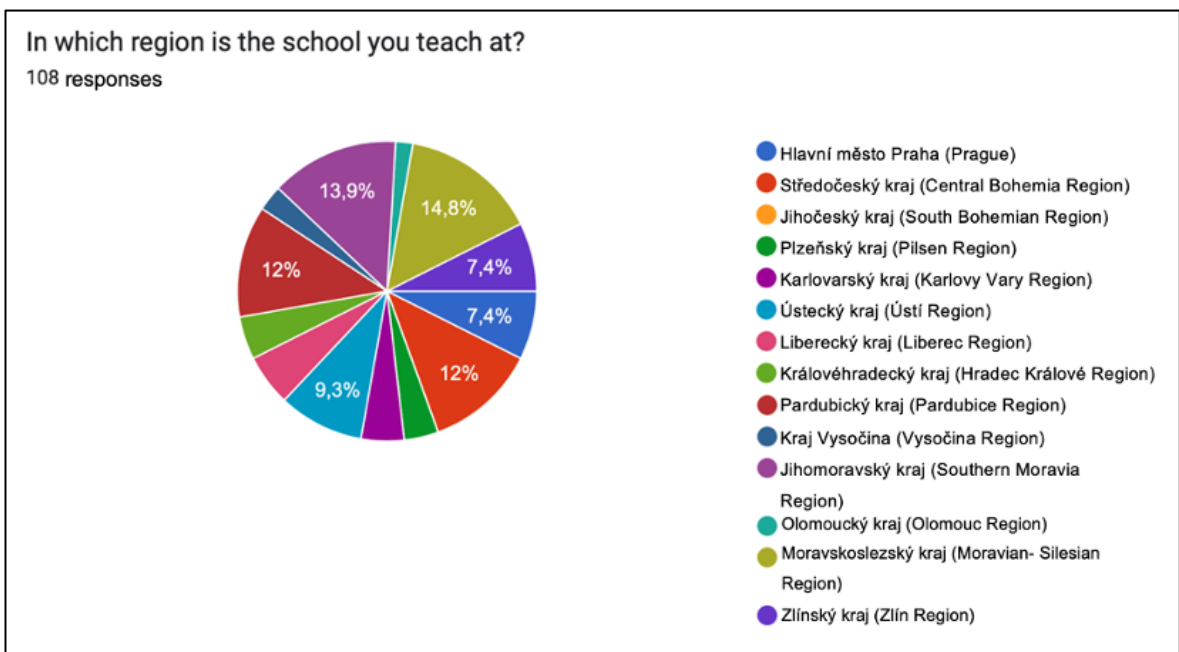
Figure 1: Respondents' age

Figure 2: Regions in which respondents taught

2.3   Results

In this chapter, the research questions stated in chapter 3.1 of this diploma thesis will be answered by analyzing the data collected from the questionnaire. The findings are presented in seven subchapters. First, further information concerning the respondents' experience and general practices when teaching English is presented. Second, the teachers' language skills, qualifications and training is described. Subsequently, results concerning teachers' perspectives on pronunciation teaching and the process of pronunciation teaching at the primary level are presented. Lastly, this chapter describes teachers' reasons for not teaching pronunciation systematically and changes encouraging systematic pronunciation teaching.

2.3.1   Further information about the respondents

Respondents' teaching experience and general practices in teaching English

Concerning the number of years that the respondents had spent teaching English at the primary level at the time of completing the questionnaire, the majority (31.5%) stated that they had 11 - 20 years of teaching experience. The rest of the options were represented by a comparable percentage of respondents, as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Years of teaching English at the primary level
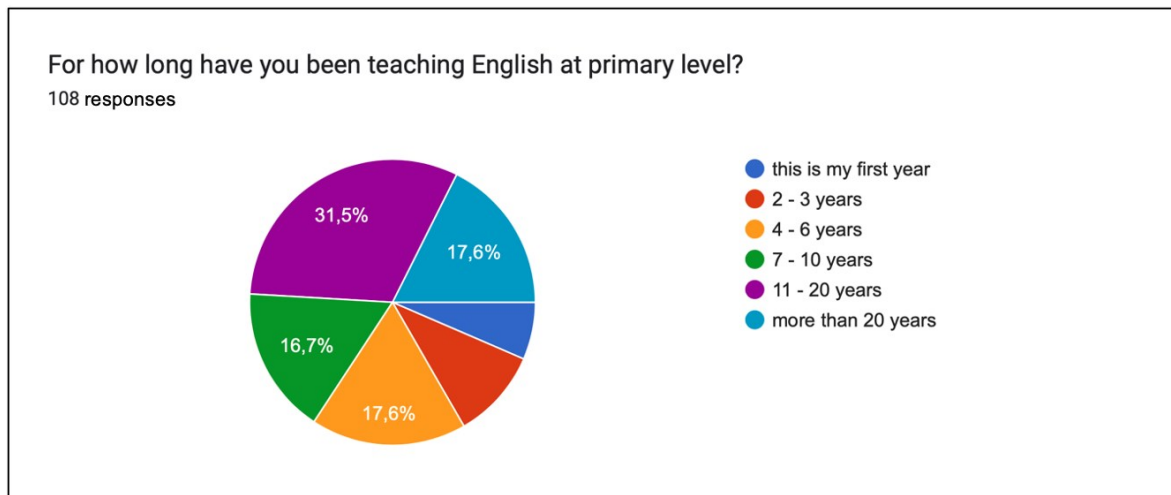
Regarding the grades in which the respondents stated that they taught English, the answers were relatively balanced, with 53.7% of the respondents stating that they taught English in the 4th grade, between 44% and 50% declaring that they taught in either the 1st grade, 3rd grade or the 5th grade, and 36.1% stating that they taught English in the 2nd grade.

When asked which textbook/textbooks the respondents currently worked with, the participants' answers were very diverse, and many different textbook series were mentioned, as depicted in Table 2. Table 2 also includes the percentage of teachers who stated that they worked with the specific textbook series and the number of times the textbook was mentioned. Many respondents stated that they worked with multiple textbooks; therefore, the total number of textbook series mentioned, 166, does not correspond with the total number of respondents, 108. Every fourth teacher stated that they worked with Happy Street or Project. 17.6% of the respondents said that the textbook they were using was Explore Together, 16.7% mentioned the textbook series Chit Chat, and 10.2% stated they were currently using Happy House. The rest of the textbooks, which can be seen in Table 2, was mentioned by less than 10% of the respondents.

Table 2: Textbooks employed

NAME OF THE TEXTBOOK SERIES	PERCENTAGE OF TEACHERS WORKING WITH THE TEXTBOOK	NUMBER OF MENTIONS
Happy Street	25.0%	27
Project	25.0%	27
Explore Together	17.6%	19
Chit Chat	16.7%	18
Happy House	10.2%	11
Bloggers	9.3%	10
Hello, Kids!	7.4%	8
Start with Click/Click with Friends	7.4%	8
Let's Explore	6.5%	7
Funpark	4.6%	5
Project Explore	3.7%	4
Listen and Play	2.8%	3
Listen and Speak	2.8%	3
Kid's Box	1.9%	2
More!	1.9%	2

No textbook	1.9%	2
Academy Stars	0.9%	1
Angličtina (publisher Tobiáš)	0.9%	1
Angličtina Expres	0.9%	1
Angličtina pro nejmenší	0.9%	1
Angličtina pro základní školy (publishers Didaktis)	0.9%	1
English World	0.9%	1
MATT the Bat	0.9%	1
Tracks	0.9%	1
Way to Win	0.9%	1
Wow!English	0.9%	1

Regarding the subjects that the respondents said to teach, the majority of them (65.7%) stated that they taught English at the primary level and also other subjects at the primary level, 19.4% stated that they taught English at primary and lower-secondary level, and 10.2% said that they only taught English at primary level. Five respondents (4.5%) mentioned teaching English at the primary level and other subjects at the lower-secondary level.

Respondents' language skills

When the respondents were asked about their own English level according to the CEFR scale, the two most common answers were C1 English (28.7%) and B2 English (27.8%). 14.8% of respondents stated that their English proficiency level was B1, and less than 10% said that their level of English was C2. Every tenth respondent admitted to not knowing their English level.

Figure 4: Respondents' English level

What is your level of English?
108 responses

- A1 English (Elementary)
- A2 English (Pre-intermediate)
- B1 English (Intermediate)
- B2 English (Upper Intermediate)
- C1 English (Advanced)
- C2 English (Proficient)
- I don't know
- I don't have tests and exams
- C1-C2

28,7% 9,3% 10,2% 27,8% 14,8%
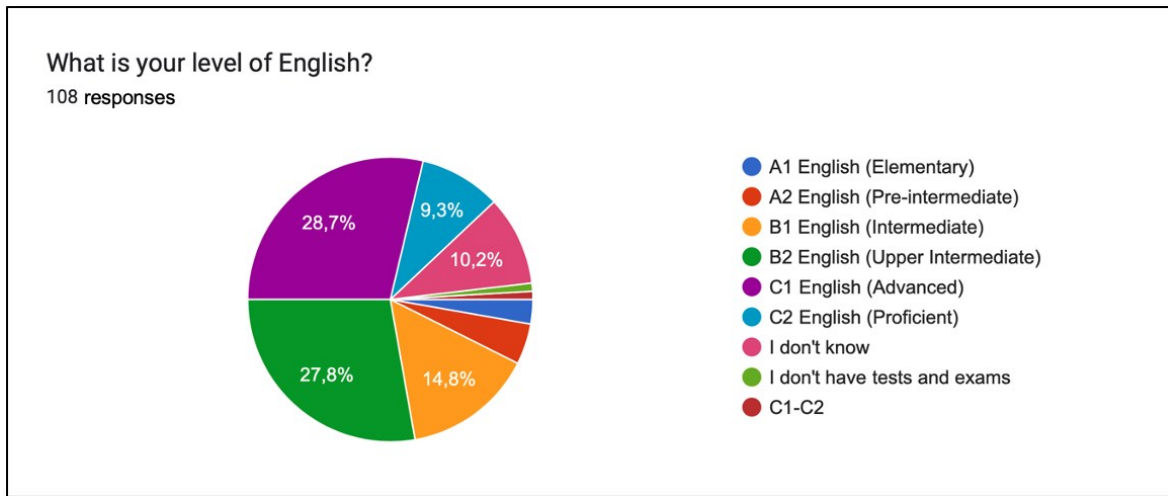
In regard to how the respondents assessed their own intelligibility, more than half of them declared that their English pronunciation was intelligible, a fifth said that it was very intelligible, and the same number of respondents admitted to their pronunciation being quite intelligible, as can be seen in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Respondents' Intelligibility

How do you view your own English pronunciation? (intelligible = srozumitelná)
108 responses

- very intelligible
- intelligible
- quite intelligible
- not very intelligible

20,4% 57,4% 20,4%
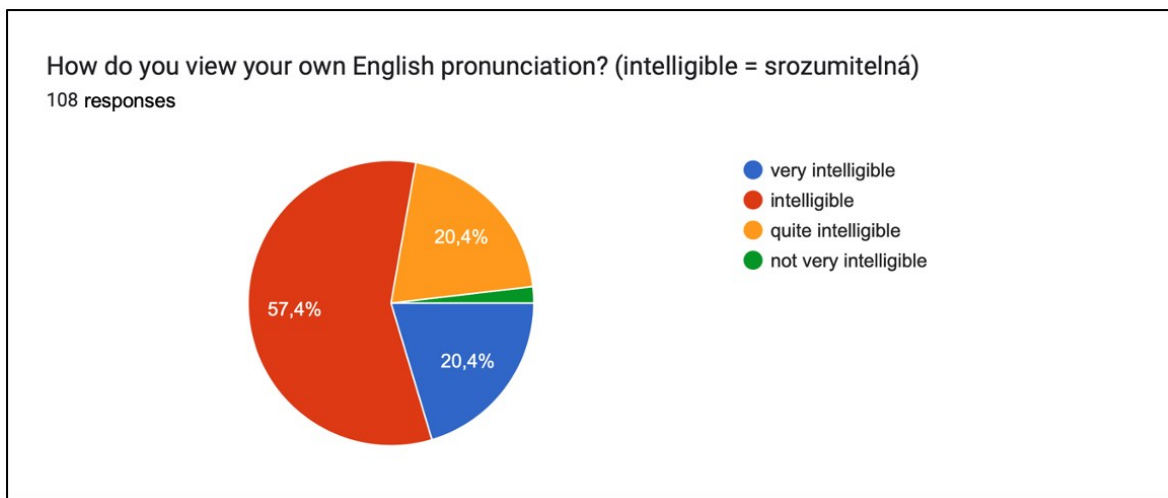
Respondents' qualifications and training

When asked about the highest level of education the respondents had completed, the majority (63.9%) stated that they had finished a master's study program in the field of pedagogical sciences. 15.7% of participants said that they had completed a master's study program in another field. The rest of the respondents, altogether 20.4%, completed different levels of education, which are described in further detail in Table 3.

Table 3: Respondents' highest level of education completed

HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION COMPLETED	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS	NUMBER OF RESPONSES
master's study program in the field of pedagogical sciences	63.9%	69
master's study program in another field	15.7%	17
bachelor's study program in the field of pedagogical sciences	7.4%	8
high school/pedagogical high school	4.6%	5
doctoral program	2.8%	3
other	5.6%	6

Concerning the respondents' qualifications for teaching English, a quarter of respondents stated that they had completed a master's study program Teacher Training for Primary Education with a specialization in English. The second most commonly chosen option was not having any qualifications for teaching English, to which admitted 23.1% of the respondents. 20.4% of participants said that they had completed a master's study program Teacher Training for Primary Education, and while they did not specialize in English during their studies, they had completed an English didactics course. The rest of the respondents chose other options when describing their qualifications for teaching English, these options are represented by less than 15% of the respondents, as can be seen in Table 4. Some respondents employed the "Other:" option when answering this question. Two of them mentioned their long-term stay in an English-speaking country as their qualification for teaching English, and six respondents referred to obtaining a certification proving their level of English, such as the First Certificate in English or the "maturita" exam in English.

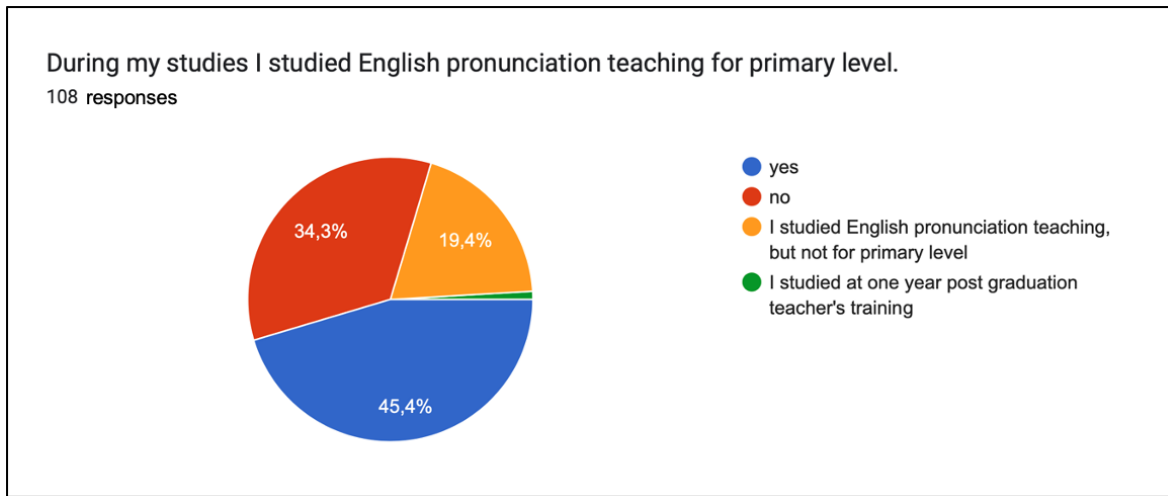**Table 4: Respondents' qualifications for teaching English**

QUALIFICATIONS FOR TEACHING ENGLISH	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS	NUMBER OF RESPONSES
master's study program Teacher Training for Primary Education - specialization in English	25.0%	27

no qualifications for teaching English	23.1%	25
master's study program Teacher Training for Primary Education - no specialization but completing an English didactics course during studies	20.4%	22
other master's study program focused on English	12.0%	13
additional courses focusing on teaching English	10.2%	11
bachelor's study program English Language Oriented at Education	8.3%	9

With the aim of finding out what kind of phonetics and phonology training the participants had received, the participants were asked to express their agreement or disagreement with the following statement: "During my studies, I studied English phonetics and phonology." The majority of the respondents, 67.6%, stated that they had studied English phonetics and phonology, the rest admitted to the opposite.

Concerning the respondents' training in pronunciation didactics, as can be seen in Figure 6, the majority said that they studied English pronunciation teaching for primary level, approximately 20% of the participants indicated that they studied English pronunciation teaching but not for the primary level, and the rest admitted to not having any training in pronunciation didactics. In an optional follow-up open-ended question asking whether the respondents learned about pronunciation and/or pronunciation teaching elsewhere, seven respondents stated that they attended additional courses, and two teachers saw simply being exposed to English as a way of learning pronunciation.

Figure 6: Respondents' training in pronunciation didactics for primary level

During my studies I studied English pronunciation teaching for primary level.
108 responses

- yes
- no
- I studied English pronunciation teaching, but not for primary level
- I studied at one year post graduation teacher's training

34,3% 19,4% 45,4%

To ascertain whether teachers felt well-prepared to teach English pronunciation at the primary level, the respondents were requested to express their level of agreement with the following statement: "The training I have received makes me well-prepared to teach English pronunciation primary level." The results presented in Figure 7 show a somewhat inconclusive pattern, with the majority (42.6%) saying they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement and jointly 44.4% of respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing with it. In comparison, only 13% chose the disagree or strongly disagree option when reacting to the statement.

Figure 7: Teachers' responses concerning their preparedness for teaching English pronunciation at the primary level

The training I have received makes me well-prepared to teach English pronunciation at primary level.
108 responses

	1 strongly disagree	2 disagree	3 neither agree nor disagree	4 agree	5 strongly agree
	6 (5,6 %)	8 (7,4 %)	46 (42,6 %)	28 (25,9 %)	20 (18,5 %)
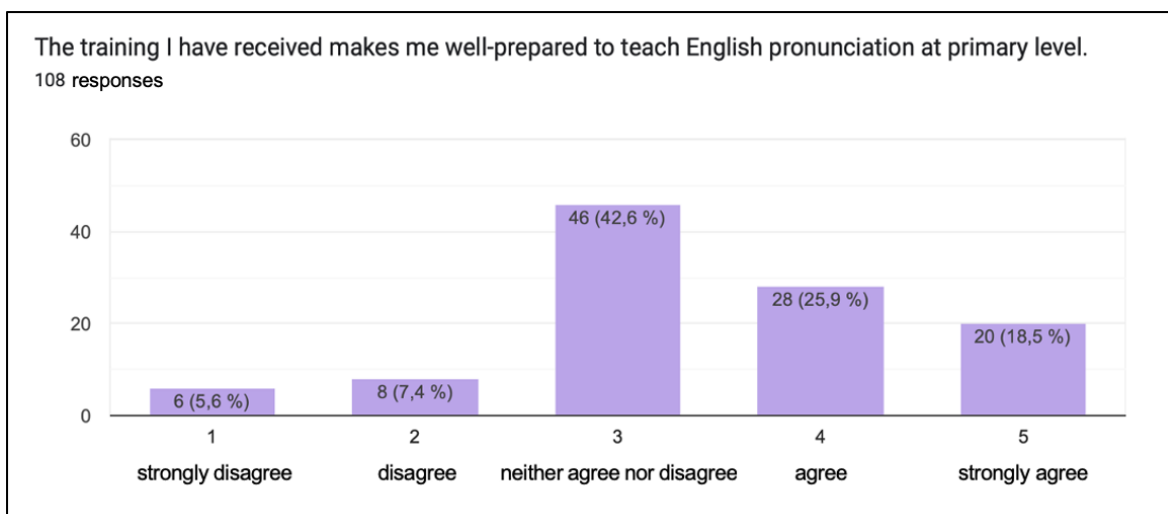
### 2.3.2 Teachers' perspectives on pronunciation teaching

In order to find out how the respondents viewed pronunciation teaching, they were asked to freely answer the question of what pronunciation teaching at the primary level meant and/or involved from their perspective. The question was open-ended and intentionally phrased in general terms. The respondents' answers were noticeably diverse; having said that, a synthesis of the collected data has brought to the surface some prevailing notions concerning pronunciation teaching. Out of the 108 teachers questioned, 22.2% mentioned working on receptive skills, and productive skills were brought up by 15.7% of the participants. 19.4% of the respondents named songs and rhymes, and 11.1% said that teaching pronunciation at the primary level involves using listen-and-repeat activities. Quite a few teachers (12%) stated that they viewed pronunciation as an important part of learning a language. Nine teachers (8.3%) stressed the importance of sufficient exposure to English, especially the role of a teacher as an English model. Focus on individual sounds of English was mentioned by 7.4% of the respondents, and the same percentage of respondents brought up suprasegmental features. The use of corrective feedback was stressed by 5.5% of the teachers; pronunciation games, tongue twisters, using phonetics symbols, mouth training, and listening to native speakers were all mentioned by 3.7% of the respondents. Other areas, such as differences between Czech and English pronunciation, stress patterns, and devoicing, were pointed out by three respondents or less. Only two respondents (1.9%) mentioned viewing intelligibility as the aim of pronunciation teaching; on the other hand, one respondent saw native-like pronunciation as the goal of it.

2.3.3 Pronunciation teaching at the primary level in the Czech Republic

In order to expound on what the process of pronunciation teaching at primary schools in the Czech Republic looked like, it was, first and foremost, vital to find out whether the respondents taught pronunciation systematically, unsystematically, both systematically and unsystematically, or not at all. To do so, the participants were asked if they taught pronunciation in their English lessons and requested to answer by choosing one of the options shown in Figure 8. A finding that can be seen as positive is that almost two thirds of the respondents (63%) said that in their lessons, they taught pronunciation either systematically or both systematically and unsystematically. Approximately a third of the teachers questioned (36.1%) affirmed that in their English lessons at the primary level, they

taught pronunciation unsystematically and/or spontaneously. Only one teacher said that she did not teach pronunciation at all.

Figure 8: Pronunciation teaching at the primary level
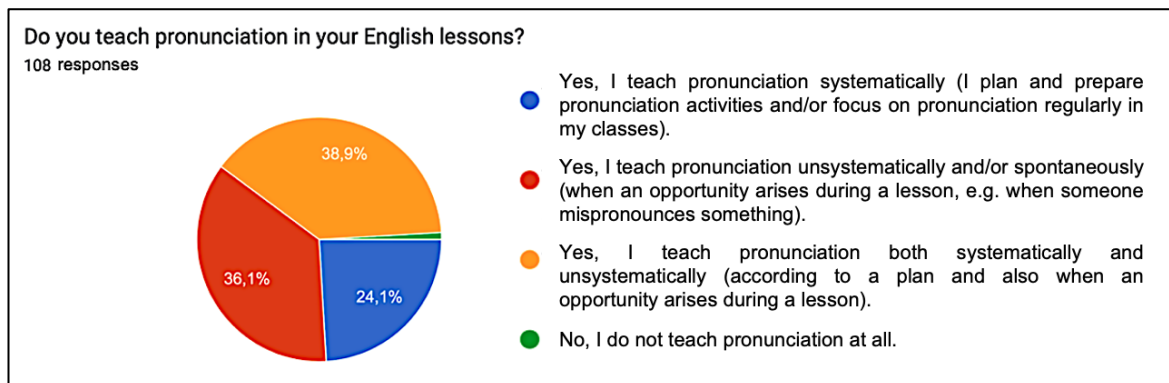
The following section describes findings from the version designed for the 68 teachers who stated that they taught pronunciation either systematically or both systematically and unsystematically.

Systematic pronunciation teaching

Before analyzing how the respondents who said that they taught pronunciation systematically incorporated it into their lessons, let us briefly present data about these teachers' qualifications and training, which were collected in the first part of the questionnaire and later analyzed separately as it might help shed light on the teachers' decision to teach pronunciation regularly and according to a plan. Concerning these teachers' assessment of their language skills, the vast majority (86.8%) described their own pronunciation as intelligible or very intelligible, and just under 70% evaluated their own English level as B2 or higher. Approximately 70% of the respondents who teach pronunciation systematically said that during their studies, they were introduced to phonetics and phonology, as well as pronunciation teaching. Of the 68 teachers who stated that they taught pronunciation systematically, 60% felt they were well-prepared to teach English pronunciation at the primary level. These findings are further interpreted in the Discussion chapter of this practical part. Now, it is apposite to look into how pronunciation is taught at the primary level in the Czech Republic if incorporated systematically.

Firstly, data regarding the frequency of pronunciation teaching was collected. The results, depicted in Figure 9, can be interpreted as positive since more than 70% of the respondents

said they either implemented pronunciation work into every lesson or into more than half of their English lessons.

Figure 9: Frequency of pronunciation teaching

Secondly, the 68 teachers who stated that they taught pronunciation systematically/both systematically and unsystematically were asked how much time, on average, they devoted to pronunciation teaching when they decided to implement it into their lesson. The prevailing answer to this question was 5 – 10 minutes, which was chosen by 42.6% of the respondents. The second most common answer was 11 – 15 minutes (chosen by 20.6%), and the third most frequently selected option, chosen by 14.7% of participants, was less than 5 minutes. Every tenth teacher (10.3% of respondents) affirmed that when they taught pronunciation in their English lessons, they devoted 15 – 20 minutes to it on average. When asked how much time the respondents spent teaching pronunciation on average, five of them stated that "it depends"; however, most of them did not specify on what their decision depended.

Moving on to materials used for pronunciation work, the most frequently selected source of materials was the textbook, chosen by 79.4% of the respondents. When analyzing the data, we looked into whether there was a correlation between choosing the textbook as the source of materials to teach pronunciation and the specific textbook series the teachers said to use in their English lessons at the beginning of the questionnaire. However, none of the textbook series was mentioned by more than 20% of the respondents. Many respondents also stated that to teach pronunciation in their lessons, they used other sources, such as the internet or books, as shown in Table 5. Half of the respondents said they used materials made by themselves to teach pronunciation at the primary level.

Table 5: Source of materials used for teaching pronunciation

| TO TEACH PRONUNCIATION IN MY ENGLISH LESSONS, I USE...	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS	NUMBER OF RESPONSES
...materials from the textbook.	79.4%	54
...materials from other sources (the internet, books,...).	73.5%	50
...materials I make myself.	51.5%	35
...no materials.	4.4%	3
...songs and videos.	2.9%	2

Concerning techniques and practices used to teach pronunciation at the primary level, the results shown in Figure 10 point to the fact that teachers use a wide variety of techniques and practices to teach pronunciation systematically or both systematically and unsystematically. However, some techniques and practices prevail, namely listen-and-repeat, chosen by almost all the 68 respondents, and songs and rhymes, which 91.2% of respondents said to use. The third most commonly chosen option, selected by three quarters of the respondents, was reading out loud, and approximately two thirds of the questioned teachers pointed out the employment of either mouth training or tongue twisters. Despite phonetics symbols being the least frequently chosen option, it was still selected by 36.8% of the respondents.

Figure 10: Techniques and practices used to teach pronunciation

Which techniques and practices do you use to teach pronunciation at primary level?
68 responses

listen-and-repeat	66 (97,1 %)
reading out loud	51 (75 %)
using phonetic symbols (e.g. /w/, /ə/, /ŋ/, /ɵ/)	25 (36,8 %)
songs and rhymes	62 (91,2 %)
tongue twisters	46 (67,6 %)
pronunciation games (e.g. pronunciation bingo)	33 (48,5 %)
minimal pairs activities (e.g. three and free)	29 (42,6 %)
recording pronunciation	29 (42,6 %)
ear training (practicing the reception of sounds)	34 (50 %)
mouth training (practicing the production of sounds)	47 (69,1 %)
using pictures and/or props	37 (54,4 %)
I don't know	1 (1,5 %)

When asked about the areas of pronunciation that the respondents focused on in their English lessons, the answers were diverse and relatively balanced, as seen in Figure 11. Approximately two thirds of the respondents stated that they focused on vowels, consonants, intonation, and silent letters. Around half of the teachers affirmed that they taught aspiration, rhythm, word stress, pronunciation of grammatical endings, and linking. Less than half of the participants focused on differences between American and English pronunciation or weak forms.

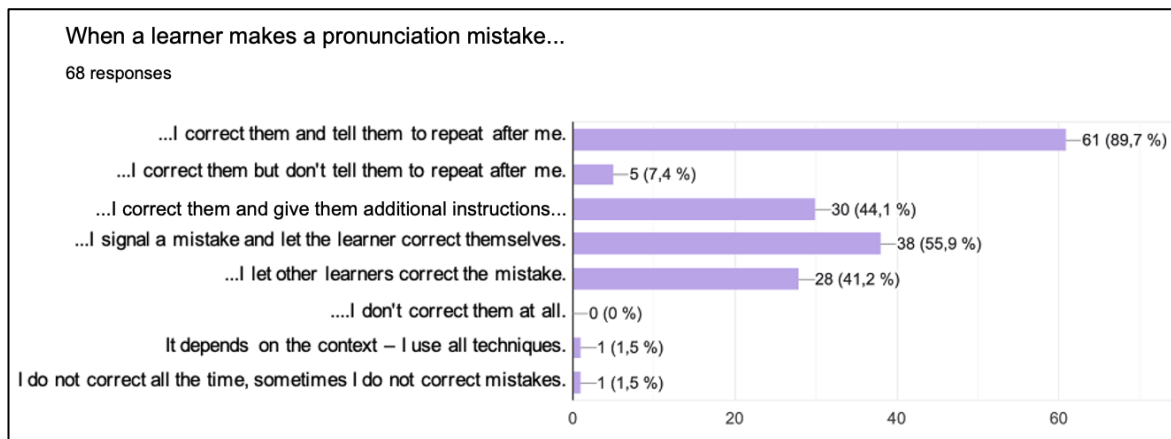**Figure 11: Areas of focus when teaching pronunciation**
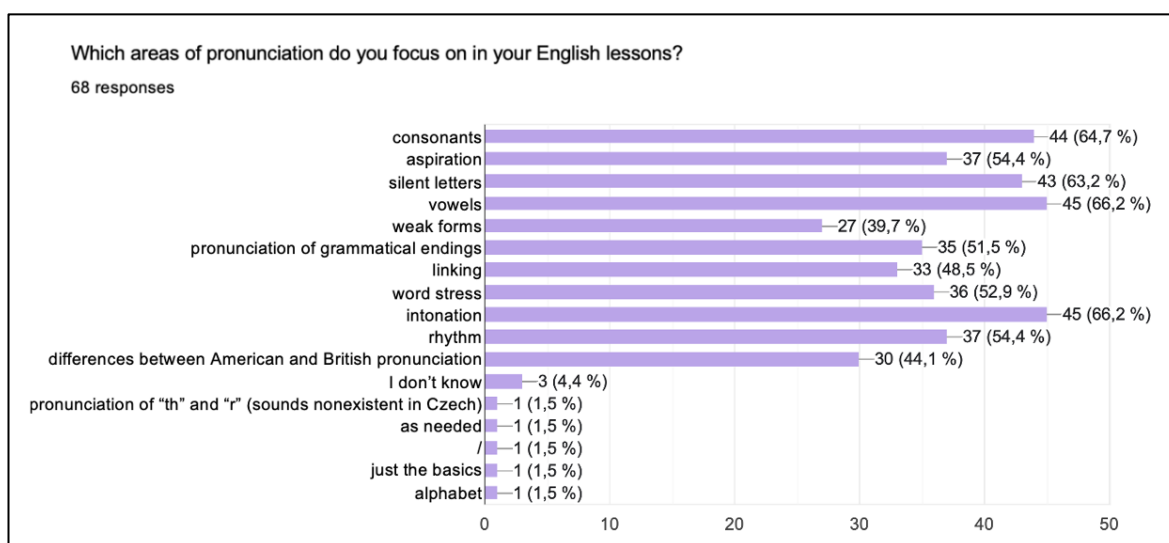
The next question aimed at finding out whether the 68 respondents who proclaimed that they taught pronunciation either systematically or both systematically and unsystematically integrated pronunciation into work on other skills or subskills. None of the participants admitted to not integrating pronunciation into any of the skills/subskills. The vast majority of the participants (91,2%) integrated pronunciation into speaking. 80% of the respondents integrated pronunciation into reading, and three quarters into vocabulary or listening. Slightly less than 50% of the respondents integrated it into spelling, 38.2% into grammar, and a third of them into writing.

The last compulsory question concerning the process of pronunciation teaching asked the respondents which forms of corrective feedback they employed. As can be seen in Figure 12, the majority of respondents stated that when a learner made a pronunciation mistake, they corrected him/her and told him/her to repeat after them. Slightly more than half of the respondents said that when a pupil mispronounced something, they signaled a mistake and let the learner correct themselves. Approximately 40% of the teachers corrected the learner

and gave them additional instructions on how to pronounce the mispronounced segment or let other learners correct the mistake.

Figure 12: Corrective feedback

When a learner makes a pronunciation mistake...
68 responses

...I correct them and tell them to repeat after me.	61 (89,7 %)
...I correct them but don't tell them to repeat after me.	5 (7,4 %)
...I correct them and give them additional instructions...	30 (44,1 %)
...I signal a mistake and let the learner correct themselves.	38 (55,9 %)
...I let other learners correct the mistake.	28 (41,2 %)
....I don't correct them at all.	0 (0 %)
It depends on the context – I use all techniques.	1 (1,5 %)
I do not correct all the time, sometimes I do not correct mistakes.	1 (1,5 %)

An optional question inviting the 68 teachers to share details of a successful pronunciation activity and/or technique in which pronunciation was involved concluded the version of the third part of the questionnaire meant for respondents teaching pronunciation systematically or systematically and unsystematically. One teacher mentioned inviting a native speaker to their class, watching a short movie in English with subtitles, and looking for a classmate with a card displaying a word with similar pronunciation. Another teacher brought up pronunciation bingo or a sound and picture memory game. Other mentioned activities include role-playing dialogues, reading a comic while listening, pictionary, and going on bear hunt activities. One respondent recommended the following article by Sylvie Doláková: https://clanky.rvp.cz/clanek/c/z/21117/jak-ucit-vyslovnost-tak-aby-to-zaky-bavilo-.html.
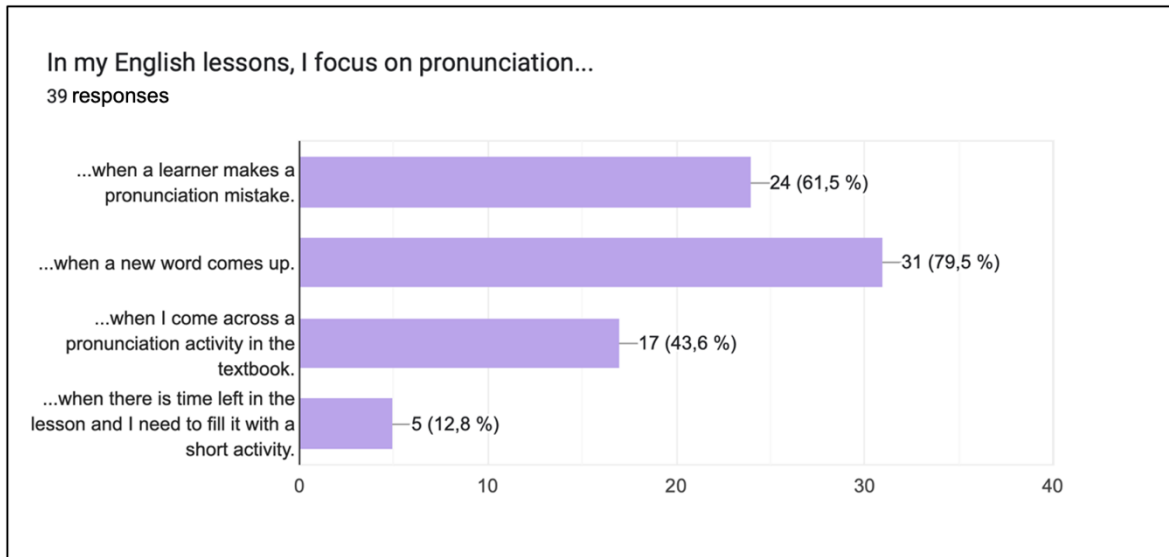
Unsystematic pronunciation teaching

So far, this subchapter has analyzed the responses of the teachers who said that they taught pronunciation systematically or systematically plus unsystematically. Let us now look at the answers of teachers who stated that they taught pronunciation unsystematically and/or spontaneously, specifically on what prompted them to focus on pronunciation in their lessons and the frequency of incorporating pronunciation work.

Most commonly, teachers focused on pronunciation when a new word came up in their English lesson. As shown in Figure 13, 61.5% of the respondents focused on pronunciation when a learner made a mistake, and 43.6% when they came across a pronunciation activity

in the textbook. Only five respondents stated that they employed pronunciation work when there was time left in the lesson and they needed to fill it with a short activity.

Figure 13: Factors prompting teachers to focus on pronunciation

After looking into what led teachers to pronunciation work in their lessons if they did not teach it systematically, it was apposite to analyze how often they focused on it in their English classes. As can be seen in Figure 14, the results show a rather inconclusive pattern, with 35.9% of the respondents saying that they taught pronunciation every lesson on one side and the same number of respondents stating that they either focused on pronunciation in less than half of their English lessons or rarely/occasionally on the other side.

Figure 14: Frequency of pronunciation teaching
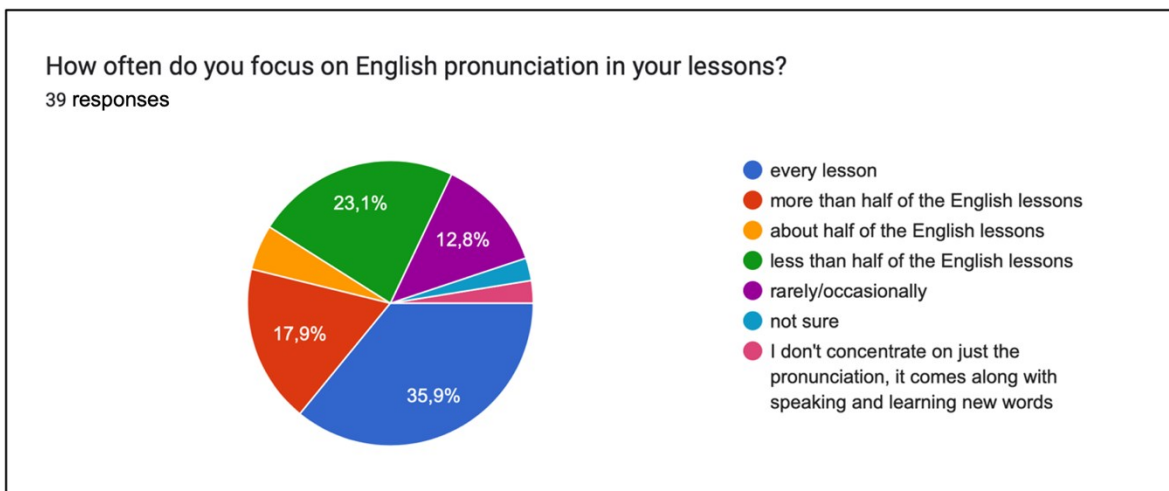
2.3.4 Reasons for not teaching pronunciation systematically

Having analyzed responses concerning how pronunciation is taught at the primary level in the Czech Republic, it is crucial to also look into why the respondents who teach pronunciation unsystematically or not at all choose to do so.

The prevailing option, chosen by 43.6% of the 39 respondents who declared that they taught pronunciation spontaneously, was that they felt sufficient exposure to English (such as the teacher being a good language model or watching enough videos in English) was enough. A third of the teachers stated that they taught pronunciation unsystematically because they lacked pedagogical training in this area. This particular finding concerning insufficient pedagogical training was compared to the answers this group of respondents had previously given when questioned about their qualifications and training. The analysis has revealed that while around 60% of the participants stated that they had studied English phonetics and phonology as well as English pronunciation teaching during their studies, most of them were unsure whether they felt well-prepared to teach English pronunciation at the primary level. Returning to the data regarding the 39 teachers' reasons for teaching pronunciation unsystematically, 15% of the participants said that they either did not believe that systematic pronunciation teaching was effective, they felt like their learners did not enjoy working on their pronunciation, or they did not have time for it in their lessons. Interestingly, only one respondent stated they did not know how to integrate pronunciation work into the lesson. Lacking knowledge about phonetics and phonology, as well as an insufficient number of pronunciation activities in the textbook, were both options chosen by 10% of the respondents. Three teachers said they did not teach pronunciation systematically because they did not know where to find materials to teach pronunciation besides the textbook. It is also worthy of note that only one respondent stated that they taught pronunciation unsystematically because their pronunciation was not intelligible enough or because their overall level of English was insufficient. If we compare this finding with this group of respondents' answers when asked to assess their language skills at the beginning of the questionnaire, 64% of them said that their level of English was B2 or higher, and the same percentage evaluated their pronunciation as intelligible or very intelligible. Three teachers also utilized the "Other:" option to express their beliefs. The first respondent remarked that, in her opinion, proper pronunciation depended on good musical hearing, which was a gift. The second respondent pointed out that children had trouble with pronunciation even in the

Czech language; contrastingly, the third respondent said that "pupils are good at pronunciation at their level, they don´t need it." None of the respondents chose pronunciation not being in their school's educational program as the reason for not teaching pronunciation systematically.

As mentioned above, only one teacher admitted to not teaching pronunciation at all. The reasons for not teaching pronunciation include the respondent stating that she did not have enough pedagogical training in this area, she saw her pronunciation as not intelligible enough, she felt like her learners did not enjoy working on their pronunciation, and she did not know how to integrate pronunciation work into the lesson. These reasons correlate with the respondents' previous answers, in which she affirmed that her level of English was A2 (pre-intermediate) and her pronunciation was not very intelligible. The respondent, 50 to 59 years old with 11 – 20 years of teaching experience, also previously stated that while she had completed a master's study program in the field of pedagogical sciences, she had no qualifications for teaching English as well as no training in phonetics and phonology or English pronunciation teaching for primary level.

2.3.5 Changes encouraging systematic pronunciation teaching

After looking into how teachers implement pronunciation into their lessons if they teach it systematically and into the reasons Czech primary teachers have for teaching it unsystematically or not at all, it is constructive to scrutinize what would help teachers at Czech primary schools teach pronunciation systematically.

First, let us look at the answers of the 68 respondents who stated that they already taught English pronunciation systematically. When asked what would make pronunciation teaching easier and/or more enjoyable for them, most options were represented by a similar number of responses, as seen in Figure 15. However, three options stood out since more than a third of the respondents selected them. The most commonly elected response, chosen by 41.2% of the participants, was that the teachers would find pronunciation teaching easier and/or more enjoyable if they could improve their overall level of English by, for example, taking an English class. More than 35% of the respondents stated that either improving their own pronunciation or knowing where to find materials for teaching pronunciation would facilitate pronunciation teaching to them. Slightly less than 30% said that they would find it beneficial if they could learn about pronunciation teaching at the primary level and/or phonetics and phonology by attending university courses, conferences, seminars, etc. The least frequently

chosen option, selected by 11.8%, was "I'd find teaching pronunciation easier and/or more enjoyable if I could learn about pronunciation teaching at primary level and/or phonetics and phonology by reading blogs, articles, books." Four respondents answered using the "Other:" option. The first participant stated: "I think it's just important to listen to a lot of English... We also have children with special educational needs at our school, so I definitely don't usually try to perfect pronunciation with them, but rather just give them some basics." This response indicates the teacher's varied approach to pronunciation teaching based on the specific needs of her pupils. Another teacher stated that she would find systematic pronunciation teaching preferable if she had more time. Two participants declared that they were satisfied with how they taught pronunciation.
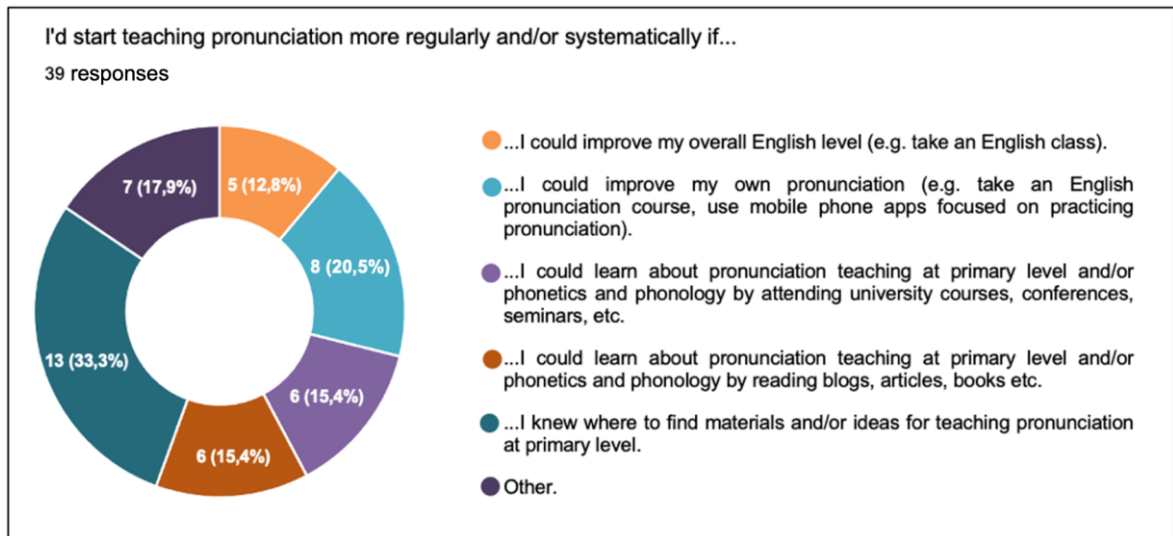
Figure 15: Changes facilitating pronunciation teaching to teachers who already teach pronunciation systematically
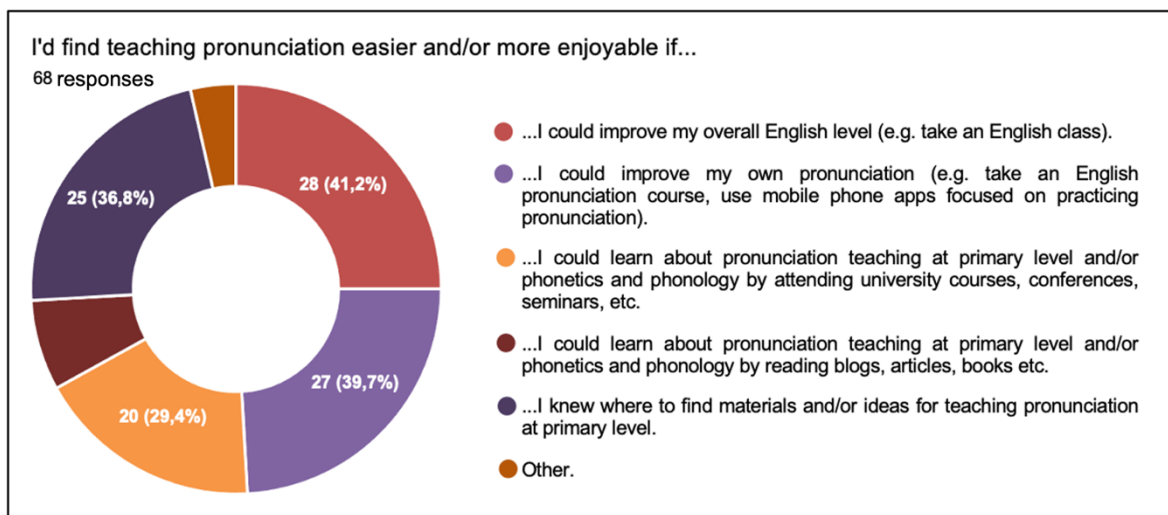
In order to find out which changes would motivate teachers who taught pronunciation unsystematically and/or spontaneously to start teaching it systematically, the respondents were requested to choose from the same five options as the teachers who said that they taught pronunciation systematically. The prevailing response, chosen by 33.3% of the participants, was, "I'd start teaching pronunciation more regularly and/or systematically if I knew where to find materials and/or ideas for teaching pronunciation at the primary level." The other four options described in Figure 16 were selected by between 10% and 15% of the respondents. Seven respondents answered using the "Other:" option. Two of them stated that their pronunciation teaching was sufficient despite being unsystematical. Another respondent asserted that she did not think teaching pronunciation to young learners was

important. A different participant said she would start teaching pronunciation more regularly and/or systematically if she had students who needed it. One teacher stated, "I wouldn't, unless it was patently necessary in a particular class," another remarked that she would start employing pronunciation work systematically in her lessons if her learners were keen on it.

Figure 16: Changes motivating teachers to start teaching pronunciation systematically

I'd start teaching pronunciation more regularly and/or systematically if...
39 responses

- ...I could improve my overall English level (e.g. take an English class).
- ...I could improve my own pronunciation (e.g. take an English pronunciation course, use mobile phone apps focused on practicing pronunciation).
- ...I could learn about pronunciation teaching at primary level and/or phonetics and phonology by attending university courses, conferences, seminars, etc.
- ...I could learn about pronunciation teaching at primary level and/or phonetics and phonology by reading blogs, articles, books etc.
- ...I knew where to find materials and/or ideas for teaching pronunciation at primary level.
- Other.

If we compare the data collected from the two above-described groups of respondents, we can notice that both groups would appreciate knowing where to find materials for teaching pronunciation. The respondents who systematically teach pronunciation wish to improve their pronunciation, which was the second most commonly chosen option among those who teach pronunciation unsystematically. The former group would also find it motivating if they could improve their overall English level; by contrast, this option was the least frequently chosen one by the latter group. Interestingly, when we separately analyzed data concerning these two groups of respondents' assessment of their own language skills, which were collected at the beginning of the questionnaire, and compare them, we noticed that the group of participants who taught pronunciation systematically assessed their overall level of English as well as pronunciation slightly more highly than the respondents who taught it spontaneously. Specifically, almost 70% of the respondents who plan their pronunciation work and regularly teach it see their English level as B2 or higher, and 86.8% of this group view their pronunciation as intelligible or very intelligible. If we compare these findings to the responses of the second group, we can notice that the respondents who teach pronunciation unsystematically evaluate their English level similarly (64% stated that their

English was B2 or higher); however, only 64% said that their pronunciation was intelligible or very intelligible, which is 22% less compared to the first group.

The one teacher who stated that she did not teach pronunciation at all said that she would start teaching pronunciation if she could learn about pronunciation teaching at the primary level and/or phonetics and phonology by attending, e.g., university courses and seminars.

2.3.6 Final comments

The questionnaire was concluded with an open-ended question allowing the respondents to express any additional comments or questions. A few respondents employed this option and left some interesting insights. One teacher said that from her point of view, phonics should be part of an English lesson. On the other hand, another respondent said that "English is spoken and written differently, unlike Czech. I definitely wouldn't let pupils write pronunciation to vocabulary, I do that exceptionally when I can see children are not sure." Two teachers complained about the current state of English teaching in the Czech Republic. One admitted to only knowing the basics of English and not being qualified for teaching English but teaching it anyway since there is a lack of English teachers in the Czech Republic. She said this should be a matter of concern for the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, which should attempt to change this state of affairs. Another respondent also commented on this issue: "Your research topic is very important. There are still many English teachers who don't speak English but "Czenglish" and they teach it to their students - especially young learners. Luckily many children watch English films and videos and they improve their English pronunciation on their own." Two other participants brought up the benefits of being exposed to English by saying that "English is everywhere, advertisements, films, PC games, songs.... it helps to learn pronunciation naturally," and "fortunately, there is the possibility of pronunciation exercises on PCs, mobile phones, etc., which I use a lot." The last respondent spoke about the benefits of using pronunciation activities before the pupils are able to identify written words in the 3rd grade; on the other hand, she stated that she did not follow any specific pronunciation teaching strategy.

Having analyzed the data collected using the questionnaire, let us now move on to an interpretation of the results.

2.4 Discussion

The survey presented in the practical part of this diploma thesis aimed at finding out the current state of English pronunciation teaching at Czech primary schools by researching Czech teachers' approach to it. Before connecting the survey findings to existing research, describing its limitations, and stating implications for practice, it is apposite to first summarize and interpret the key findings of our survey.

Concerning teacher training and the respondents' language skills, a quarter of the participants said that they completed a master's degree focused on primary education and specialized in English; on the other hand, the second highest number of respondents, 23%, said that they had no qualifications for teaching English. 65% of the respondents assessed their English level as B2, and slightly less than 80% of the participants described their pronunciation as intelligible or very intelligible. The majority of the teachers studied phonetics and phonology and received training in pronunciation teaching. Despite that, 42.6% of the respondents were unsure whether they felt well-prepared to teach English pronunciation at the primary level. Having said that, jointly 44.4% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

While Kelly (2000, p. 13) says that "there are two key problems with pronunciation teaching . . . it tends to be neglected . . . [and] when it is not neglected, it tends to be reactive to a particular problem that has arisen in the classroom rather than being strategically planned.", the data collected from our survey seem to contradict this statement. The majority of the respondents (63%) said that in their lessons, they taught pronunciation either systematically or both systematically and unsystematically, only 36% taught pronunciation spontaneously, and just one respondent admitted to not teaching pronunciation at all, which can be interpreted as a positive finding. In order to unearth whether there is a correlation between the teachers' training and their decision to teach pronunciation systematically or unsystematically, data concerning the qualifications and language skills of the respondents from these two groups were analyzed separately and then compared. Interestingly, there was not a considerable contrast between the percentage of respondents from the two groups who had received phonetics and phonology and pronunciation teaching training. However, when we compared how prepared the two groups of respondents felt to teach pronunciation at the primary level, the data differed. 60% of the respondents who taught pronunciation systematically felt well-prepared to teach pronunciation; by contrast, the majority of the

participants who taught pronunciation unsystematically were unsure whether they felt well-prepared to teach English pronunciation at the primary level. It is possible that these teachers were not able to transform the knowledge they had received during their training into their teaching practice; another reason might be that the quality of the training the two groups of teachers had received differed. However, to truly unearth why some teachers did not feel prepared to teach pronunciation despite receiving training in it, further research would be needed, such as interviews with the teachers.

The responses of the teachers who teach pronunciation systematically or both systematically and unsystematically draw a picture of the current state of systematic pronunciation teaching at primary schools in the Czech Republic. More than half of the 68 respondents taught pronunciation in every lesson, and they mostly used materials from the textbook or from other sources, such as the Internet. It may be interpreted positively that these teachers used a wide range of techniques, focused on a variety of areas of pronunciation, integrated pronunciation into work on other skills/subskills, and used corrective feedback, specifically teacher corrections with subsequent repetition of the mispronounced segment by the learner.

The 24% of respondents who taught pronunciation unsystematically, mainly when a learner made a mistake, most frequently stated that the reason for not teaching pronunciation systematically was either that they believed that being sufficiently exposed to English was enough, or they did not have enough pedagogical training in the area. The latter finding is in line with the discovery that while the majority of the 39 respondents who taught pronunciation spontaneously had received training in pronunciation teaching as well as phonetics and phonology, they did not feel very well-prepared to teach pronunciation at the primary level.

A change that would facilitate systematic pronunciation teaching to both the respondents who teach pronunciation systematically as well as the ones who teach it unsystematically would be knowing where to find materials for teaching pronunciation. The former group would also find it helpful if they could improve their overall level of English and their own pronunciation. Concerning the latter group, the change concerning the betterment of the teachers' own pronunciation was the second most commonly chosen option.

With the results of the conducted survey summarized and interpreted, the following section compares the data to other research concerned with pronunciation teaching. Firstly, let us look into findings relating to teacher training. In their study exploring Croatian learners' and

teachers' attitudes toward the teaching of pronunciation at elementary schools, Vančura & Molnar (2021) found out that the majority of their respondents (58.1%) did not receive training in pronunciation teaching during their studies. These findings contrast the data collected from our research since most of the teachers who participated in the conducted survey said that they studied phonetics and phonology and received training in pronunciation teaching during their studies.

According to the findings of our research, the most commonly utilized techniques used when teaching pronunciation at the primary level in the Czech Republic were listen-and-repeat, songs and rhymes, reading out loud, mouth training, and tongue twisters, teachers also commonly use corrections. Similarly, Szyszka (2016) notes that repetitions and reading out loud were pronunciation teaching techniques with a high frequency of application. Reid & Debnarova (2020) also present data consistent with these findings since drills/listen-and-repeat, songs, and corrections were the most frequently used pronunciation teaching techniques observed in 20 lessons of English at two primary schools in Slovakia. Having said that, Reid & Debnarova (2020) report that while corrections were observed in every lesson, the teachers only corrected the pupils but did not tell them to repeat correctly, which contrasts the answers of our respondents, who in 90% of cases stated that when a learner made a mistake, they corrected them and told them to repeat after them. In regard to areas of pronunciation, Vančura & Molnar (2021) found out that teachers predominantly chose to teach aspects of prosody, especially word and sentence stress. While word stress was the seventh most commonly chosen area of pronunciation in our questionnaire, and areas such as vowels, consonants, intonation, and silent letters were selected more frequently, it was still chosen by 52.9% of our respondents.

Regarding teachers' reasons for not teaching pronunciation systematically, our survey's findings lead to the conclusion that teachers who teach pronunciation spontaneously do so because they believe that being sufficiently exposed to English is enough, or they do not have enough pedagogical training in the area. While it is a common belief that pronunciation does not need to be taught because learners simply pick it up by being exposed to it (Henderson, 2013; Walker et al., 2021), research has shown that pronunciation instruction is effective (Pardo, 2004; Lee et al., 2014; Murphy, 2017). Concerning the lack of pedagogical training, Vančura & Molnar (2021) state that due to the fact that the majority of the participants of their research stated that their training in pronunciation pedagogy was

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inadequate, it does not come as a surprise that they had limited confidence when it came to teaching pronunciation. Interestingly, while Henderson (2013) found out that teachers were not satisfied with the pronunciation teaching training they had received, they saw pronunciation as being important, which is why they independently acquired enough necessary skills so that they would not find pronunciation teaching extremely difficult.

Regarding the changes that would encourage systematic pronunciation teaching, the respondents who already teach pronunciation systematically would welcome the possibility of improving their overall level of English and their own pronunciation. An option frequently chosen by both the respondents who teach pronunciation systematically and unsystematically was that they would find it motivating if they knew where to find materials for teaching pronunciation. This result is in correlation with the recommendations proposed by Macdonald (2002), who states that in order to overcome teacher reluctance in the area of pronunciation teaching, it is necessary to promote existing materials, make them available to teachers, develop new ones, and encourage teachers to develop their own pronunciation materials.

Having compared our survey's findings to research from other countries, it is crucial to point out the limitations of our research. First and foremost, we realize that only one method, a questionnaire, was employed in our research. This decision was made due to the limited extent of this diploma thesis. In order to develop a truly comprehensive understanding of how pronunciation is taught at the primary level in the Czech Republic, more methods ought to be utilized, such as observations or interviews with teachers, which creates possibilities for future research. Secondly, while the number of respondents was sufficient for a quantitative analysis, the reliability of the research's findings would increase if more teachers filled in the questionnaire. Thirdly, despite having invited even teachers who feel like they do not teach pronunciation to participate in the research as well as having assured the respondents of the anonymity of the research, it is possible that teachers who do not teach pronunciation were less likely to participate in the research than those who do since they might not feel comfortable admitting to neglecting pronunciation during their teaching. What's more, the teachers who decided to fill in the questionnaire might have been dishonest in their answers due to their desire to meet the researcher's expectations.

Let us now move on to the implications of our research to practice. The first recommendation concerns teacher training. Given that a high percentage of respondents felt unsure about their

preparedness for pronunciation teaching at the primary level, the need to further research why they feel this way arises, especially since the majority of them stated that they had studied phonetics, phonology, and pronunciation teaching during their studies. With quite a high number of respondents claiming that they would welcome the possibility of improving their pronunciation or English in general, offering additional language courses to teachers might be beneficial as well. The next implication concerns materials for teaching pronunciation. 80% of the respondents who teach pronunciation systematically in their lessons use materials from the textbook to do so; therefore, further research might look into the representation of pronunciation activities in the textbooks used in English lessons at primary schools in the Czech Republic. What's more, our research has shown that teachers would feel more motivated to teach pronunciation systematically if they knew other sources of ideas and materials for teaching pronunciation. While some activities were described in subchapter 2.2.3, along with ideas for integrating English pronunciation, it seems fitting to recommend other resources which offer ideas for teaching pronunciation. Firstly, we would like to point out the work of Sylvie Doláková, who offers webinars focused on pronunciation teaching. She also describes specific activities that can be used to teach pronunciation to young learners, which can be found, for example, in issue 64 of the Speak Out! journal cited in the reference list of this diploma thesis. Another author whose work might prove helpful is Mark Hancock, who not only is the author of the PronPack pronunciation teaching resource books, but he also offers free pronunciation teaching materials on his website along with links to his talks and articles. Above all, the Internet has, thankfully, brought a plethora of free materials suitable for teaching pronunciation at the primary level.

The Discussion chapter of this diploma thesis has summarized the key findings of the conducted survey, connected them to existing research, described the survey's limitations, and stated implications for practice. As has already been mentioned, conducting further research on the topic of pronunciation teaching at the primary level in the Czech Republic is necessary, specifically observations of English lessons, interviews with teachers, and analysis of textbooks. Our research has yielded positive findings, which point to the fact that Czech primary teachers of English approach pronunciation teaching actively in their lessons. Having said that, providing teachers with ELT training, information about further development, English courses, and sources for pronunciation teaching might be favorable.

CONCLUSION

This diploma thesis aimed at establishing the current state of pronunciation teaching at Czech primary schools. In order to do so, three research questions were posed. The first question was formulated with the objective of finding out how prepared Czech teachers felt to teach English pronunciation at the primary level, the second question aimed to ascertain how the respondents approached English pronunciation teaching, and the third research question intended to unearth the changes which would help Czech primary teachers to teach English pronunciation systematically. With the research questions in mind, a survey employing an online questionnaire was designed and distributed. At the end of the data collection, the questionnaire was completed by 108 Czech primary teachers, predominantly women in their thirties, forties, and fifties, teaching in all parts of the Czech Republic. The data was then analyzed and used to answer the research questions.

Based on an analysis of the respondents' answers, we could conclude that a prevailing number of teachers had received training in phonetics, phonology, and pronunciation teaching. Approximately 40% of the respondents felt well-prepared to teach pronunciation at the primary level; on the other hand, a similar percentage of respondents were unsure about their level of preparedness concerning English pronunciation teaching at the primary level. The survey yielded positive results concerning how Czech primary teachers approached English pronunciation teaching since the teachers who stated they taught pronunciation either systematically or both systematically and unsystematically made up the majority of the respondents. When separately analyzing and consequently comparing the data of the respondents who stated that they taught pronunciation systematically/both systematically and unsystematically, and the ones who taught pronunciation unsystematically, it was found out that the participants who taught pronunciation systematically felt more prepared to teach pronunciation than those who taught it spontaneously despite the number of respondents who received training in phonetics, phonology, and pronunciation teaching being comparable in both groups. Regarding how the respondents approached systematical pronunciation teaching, the majority claimed to teach it frequently while using materials from the textbook or from other sources, integrating it with work on other skills/subskills, utilizing diverse techniques, such as listen-and-repeat activities, songs, rhymes, and corrections as well as focusing on varied areas of pronunciation, including both segmentals and suprasegmentals. The teachers who stated that

they taught pronunciation unsystematically mostly did so when a new word came up. According to the research results, the teachers who taught pronunciation spontaneously most commonly did so either because they believed that being sufficiently exposed to English was enough or because they lacked pedagogical training in the area. These teachers might start teaching pronunciation systematically if they knew where to find materials for teaching pronunciation, this change would also make pronunciation teaching easier and/or more enjoyable to the educators who already teach it systematically, along with the opportunity to improve their overall level of English and their own pronunciation.

The results of our research imply that teachers might appreciate additional general language courses or opportunities for the betterment of their pronunciation. Furthermore, to improve the state of pronunciation teaching at primary schools in the Czech Republic, the data collected from the survey highlights the fact that teachers might embrace ideas for pronunciation activities or information on where to find them.

The research carried out as part of this diploma thesis outlines how pronunciation is taught in English lessons at the primary level in the Czech Republic; however, to fully grasp the reality of it, further research is needed. To get a comprehensive picture of the state of pronunciation teaching at Czech primary schools, future practitioners might consider observing how pronunciation is implemented into English lessons, conducting interviews with teachers to gain a deeper understanding of their beliefs concerning pronunciation teaching, or looking into the representation of pronunciation activities in the textbooks that are used in English lessons at primary schools in the Czech Republic. Despite the limitations of our research, the survey yields results that might be interpreted as positive since the approach of Czech primary teachers to English pronunciation teaching seems to be active.

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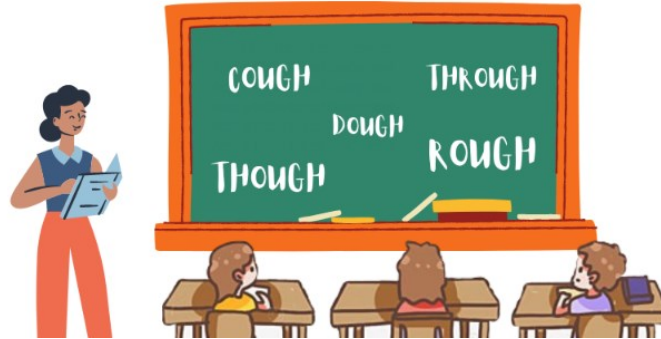
Teaching pronunciation: WHY (not) & HOW

Dear teacher,

thank you very much for participating in this research aimed at pronunciation teaching.

Please fill in this questionnaire if you **teach English at a Czech state primary school.** Completing this questionnaire takes from **5 to 15 minutes**. For your answers to be saved, it is important to **complete the whole questionnaire** and **click on "Odeslat"** at the end**.** Please, fill in the questionnaire even if you feel like you do not teach pronunciation in your English lessons.

This questionnaire is in English. If you do not feel comfortable answering in English, please answer in Czech.

Your answers are completely **anonymous** and will be used for academic purposes.

Once again, thank you very much for your time. I hugely appreciate your help.

PART 1

<u>PERSONAL INFORMATION & EDUCATION</u>

1. **What is your gender? ***[1]

   ○ female

   ○ male

   ○ other: _____

2. **What is your age? ***[2]

   ○ 18 – 24

   ○ 25 – 29

   ○ 30 – 39

   ○ 40 – 49

   ○ 50 – 59

   ○ 60+

3. **For how long have you been teaching English at the primary level? ***

   ○ this is my first year

   ○ 2 - 3 years

   ○ 4 - 6 years

   ○ 7 - 10 years

   ○ 11 - 20 years

   ○ more than 20 years

   ○ other: _____

---

[1] Compulsory questions are marked by a star *.

[2] Questions with only one possible answer have circles before individual answers, questions with more than one possible answer have squares before individual answers.

4. **In which grade do you currently teach English? ***

(if you teach English in more than one grade, mark all of them)

- ■ 1st grade
- ■ 2nd grade
- ■ 3rd grade
- ■ 4th grade
- ■ 5th grade

5. **Which textbook do you currently work with? ***

(e.g., Click with Friends 3; MATT the Bat 1; Happy Street 2)

(if you work with multiple textbooks, please write all of them)

Your answer _____

6. **Do you only teach English or do you teach multiple subjects? ***

- ○ I teach English at the primary level and also other subjects.
- ○ I teach only English at the primary level.
- ○ I teach English at the primary and the lower-secondary level.
- ○ other: _____

7. **In which region is the school you teach at? ***

- ○ Hlavní město Praha (Prague)
- ○ Středočeský kraj (Central Bohemia Region)
- ○ Jihočeský kraj (South Bohemian Region)
- ○ Plzeňský kraj (Pilsen Region)
- ○ Karlovarský kraj (Karlovy Vary Region)
- ○ Ústecký kraj (Ústí Region)
- ○ Liberecký kraj (Liberec Region)
- ○ Královéhradecký kraj (Hradec Králové Region)
- ○ Pardubický kraj (Pardubice Region)

- ○ Kraj Vysočina (Vysočina Region)

- ○ Jihomoravský kraj (Southern Moravia Region)

- ○ Olomoucký kraj (Olomouc Region)

- ○ Moravskoslezský kraj (Moravian- Silesian Region)

- ○ Zlínský kraj (Zlín Region)

8. **What is the highest level of education you have completed? ***

- ○ high school (např. gymnázium, střední odborná škola, obchodní akademie)

- ○ pedagogical high school (střední pedagogická škola)

- ○ bachelor's study program in the field of pedagogical sciences (např. Anglický jazyk se zaměřením na vzdělávání)

- ○ bachelor's study program in another field (např. Anglická filologie)

- ○ master's study program in the field of pedagogical sciences (např. Učitelství pro 1. stupeň ZŠ)

- ○ master's study program in another field

- ○ doctoral program in the field of pedagogical sciences

- ○ doctoral program in another field

- ○ other: _____

9. **What are your qualifications for teaching English? ***

- ■ master's study program Učitelství pro 1. stupeň ZŠ - specializace AJ (Teacher Training for Primary Education - specialization in English)

- ■ master's study program Teacher Training for Primary Education - no specialization but completing an English didactics course during my studies

- ■ bachelor's study program Anglický jazyk se zaměřením na vzdělávání (English Language Oriented at Education)

- ■ follow-up master's study program English Language

- ■ TEFL course

- ■ TESL course

- ■ TESOL course

- ■ I have no qualifications for teaching English

- ■ other: _____

10. **During my studies, I studied English phonetics and phonology. ***

○ yes

○ no

○ other: _____

11. **During my studies, I studied English pronunciation teaching for primary level. ***

○ yes

○ no

○ I studied English pronunciation teaching, but not for primary level

○ other: _____

12. **If you learned about pronunciation and/or pronunciation teaching elsewhere, please specify.**

If not, skip this question.

Your answer _____

13. **The training I have received makes me well-prepared to teach English pronunciation at the primary level. ***

	1	2	3	4	5	
strongly disagree	○	○	○	○	○	strongly agree

14. **What is your level of English? ***

○ A1 English (Elementary)

○ A2 English (Pre-intermediate)

○ B1 English (Intermediate)

○ B2 English (Upper Intermediate)

○ C1 English (Advanced)

○ C2 English (Proficient)

○ I don't know

○ other: _____

15. **How do you view your own English pronunciation? ***

(intelligible = srozumitelná)

○ very intelligible

○ intelligible

○ quite intelligible

○ not very intelligible

○ other: _____

PART 2

<u>PRONUNCIATION TEACHING AND ME</u>

16. **In your opinion, what does teaching pronunciation at the primary level mean and/or involve? ***

    Your answer _____

17. **Do you teach pronunciation in your English lessons? ***

    ○ Yes, I teach pronunciation systematically (I plan and prepare pronunciation activities, and/or I focus on pronunciation regularly in my classes).[3]

    ○ Yes, I teach pronunciation unsystematically and/or spontaneously (when an opportunity arises during a lesson, e.g., when someone mispronounces something).[4]

    ○ Yes, I teach pronunciation both systematically and unsystematically (according to a plan and also when an opportunity arises during a lesson, e.g., when someone mispronounces something).[5]

    ○ No, I do not teach pronunciation at all.[6]

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[3] If the respondents chose this answer, they were redirected to the section „PART 3 – SYSTEMATIC PRONUNCIATION TEACHING."

[4] If the respondents chose this answer, they were redirected to the section „PART 3 – UNSYSTEMATIC PRONUNCIATION TEACHING."

[5] If the respondents chose this answer, they were redirected to the section „PART 3 – SYSTEMATIC PRONUNCIATION TEACHING."

[6] If the respondents chose this answer, they were redirected to the section „PART 3 – ABSENT PRONUNCIATION TEACHING."

PART 3

<u>SYSTEMATIC PRONUNCIATION TEACHING</u>

18. **How often do you teach English pronunciation in your lessons? ***

    ○ every lesson

    ○ more than half of the English lessons

    ○ about half of the English lessons

    ○ less than half of the English lessons

    ○ rarely/occasionally

    ○ other: _____

19. **When you teach pronunciation in your English lessons, how much of your lesson time do you devote to it on average? ***

    ○ less than 5 minutes

    ○ 5 - 10 minutes

    ○ 11 - 15 minutes

    ○ 15 - 20 minutes

    ○ 20 - 30 minutes

    ○ more than 30 minutes

    ○ other: _____

20. **To teach pronunciation in my English lessons, I use... ***

    ■ ...materials from the textbook.

    ■ ...materials from other sources (the internet, books,...).

    ■ ...materials I make myself.

    ■ ...no materials.

    ■ other: _____

21. **Which techniques and practices do you use to teach pronunciation at the primary level? ***

- listen-and-repeat
- reading out loud
- using phonetic symbols (e.g. /w/, /ə/, /ŋ/, /ɵ/)
- songs and rhymes
- tongue twisters
- pronunciation games (e.g. pronunciation bingo)
- minimal pairs activities (e.g., three and free)
- recording pronunciation
- ear training (practicing the reception of sounds)
- mouth training (practicing the production of sounds)
- using pictures and/or props
- I don't know
- other: _____

22. **Which areas of pronunciation do you focus on in your English lessons? ***

- consonants (souhlásky)
- aspiration (přídech u hlásek /p/, /t/, /k/)
- silent letters
- vowels (samohlásky)
- weak forms (e.g., pronouncing "at" as /ət/, "your" as /jə/, "him" as /ɪm/)
- pronunciation of grammatical endings (e.g., the past tense "-ed" can be pronounced as /t/ o /d/)
- linking (words are pronounced together, not separately)
- word stress
- intonation
- rhythm
- differences between American and English pronunciation
- I don't know
- other: _____

23. **Do you integrate pronunciation work into the following areas:** speaking, listening, reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary, spelling?

- ■ Yes, into speaking.
- ■ Yes, into listening.
- ■ Yes, into reading.
- ■ Yes, into writing.
- ■ Yes, into grammar.
- ■ Yes, into vocabulary.
- ■ Yes, into spelling.
- ■ No.
- ■ I don't know.
- ■ other: _____

24. **When a learner makes a pronunciation mistake... ***

- ■ ...I correct them and tell them to repeat after me.
- ■ ...I correct them but don't tell them to repeat after me.
- ■ ...I correct them and give them additional instructions on how to say the mispronounced segment.
- ■ ...I signal a mistake and let the learner correct themselves.
- ■ ...I let other learners correct the mistake.
- ■ ...I don't correct them at all.
- ■ other: _____

25. **I'd find teaching pronunciation easier and/or more enjoyable if... ***

- ■ ...I could improve my overall English level (e.g., take an English class).
- ■ ...I could improve my own pronunciation (e.g., take an English pronunciation course, use mobile phone apps focused on practicing pronunciation).
- ■ ...I could learn about pronunciation teaching at the primary level and/or phonetics and phonology by attending university courses, conferences, seminars, etc.
- ■ ...I could learn about pronunciation teaching at the primary level and/or phonetics and phonology by reading blogs, articles, books, etc.

- ...I knew where to find materials and/or ideas for teaching pronunciation at the primary level.
- other: _____

26. *OPTIONAL*

    Can you think of a successful pronunciation activity and/or technique in which pronunciation was involved? Can you write a few lines about it?

    Your answer _____ [7]

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[7] After answering this optional question or question number 25, respondents were redirected to PART 4.

PART 3

UNSYSTEMATIC PRONUNCIATION TEACHING

18. **In my English lessons, I focus on pronunciation... ***
   - ◼ ...when a learner makes a pronunciation mistake.
   - ◼ ...when a new word comes up.
   - ◼ ...when I come across a pronunciation activity in the textbook.
   - ◼ ...when there is time left in the lesson and I need to fill it with a short activity.
   - ◼ other: _____

19. **How often do you focus on English pronunciation in your lessons? ***
   - ◼ every lesson
   - ◼ more than half of the English lessons
   - ◼ about half of the English lessons
   - ◼ less than half of the English lessons
   - ◼ rarely/occasionally
   - ◼ other: _____

20. **In my English lessons at the primary level, I teach pronunciation unsystematically** (without planning the pronunciation work in advance) **because...**
   - ◼ ...I don't have enough pedagogical training in this area.
   - ◼ ...I don't have enough knowledge about phonetics and phonology.
   - ◼ ...my overall level of English is not sufficient.
   - ◼ ...my own pronunciation is not intelligible (= srozumitelný) enough.
   - ◼ ...I don't believe systematic pronunciation teaching is effective.
   - ◼ ...I think it is enough when the learners are sufficiently exposed to English (e.g., the teacher is a good model; they watch enough videos in English).
   - ◼ ...I feel like my learners don't enjoy working on their pronunciation.
   - ◼ ...there are not enough pronunciation activities in the textbook I work with.
   - ◼ ...I don't know where to find materials to teach pronunciation besides the textbook.
   - ◼ ...I don't have time for it in my lessons.

- ...I don't know how to integrate pronunciation work into the lesson.
- ...pronunciation is not in my school's educational program (ŠVP).
- other: _____

21. **I'd start teaching pronunciation more regularly and/or systematically if... ***

- ...I could improve my overall English level (e.g., take an English class).
- ...I could improve my own pronunciation (e.g., take an English pronunciation course, use mobile phone apps focused on practicing pronunciation).
- ...I could learn about pronunciation teaching at the primary level and/or phonetics and phonology by attending university courses, conferences, seminars, etc.
- ...I could learn about pronunciation teaching at the primary level and/or phonetics and phonology by reading blogs, articles, books, etc.
- ...I knew where to find materials and/or ideas for teaching pronunciation at the primary level.
- other: _____ [8]

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[8] After answering this question, respondents were redirected to PART 4.

PART 3

<u>ABSENT PRONUNCIATION TEACHING</u>

18. **In my English classes, I don't teach pronunciation because... ***
    - ■ ...I don't have enough pedagogical training in this area.
    - ■ ...I don't have enough knowledge about phonetics and phonology.
    - ■ ...my overall level of English is not sufficient.
    - ■ ...my own pronunciation is not intelligible (= srozumitelný) enough.
    - ■ ...I don't believe systematic pronunciation teaching is effective.
    - ■ ...I think it is enough when the learners are sufficiently exposed to English (e.g., the teacher is a good model; they watch enough videos in English).
    - ■ ...I feel like my learners don't enjoy working on their pronunciation.
    - ■ ...there are not enough pronunciation activities in the textbook I work with.
    - ■ ...I don't know where to find materials to teach pronunciation besides the textbook. ...I don't have time for it in my lessons.
    - ■ ...I don't know how to integrate pronunciation work into the lesson.
    - ■ ...pronunciation is not in my school's educational program (ŠVP).
    - ■ other: _____

19. **I'd start teaching pronunciation if... ***
    - ■ ...I could improve my overall English level (e.g., take an English class).
    - ■ ...I could improve my own pronunciation (e.g., take an English pronunciation course, use mobile phone apps focused on practicing pronunciation).
    - ■ ...I could learn about pronunciation teaching at the primary level and/or phonetics and phonology by attending university courses, conferences, seminars, etc.
    - ■ ...I could learn about pronunciation teaching at the primary level and/or phonetics and phonology by reading blogs, articles, books, etc.
    - ■ ...I knew where to find materials and/or ideas for teaching pronunciation at the primary level.
    - ■ other: _____ [9]

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[9] After answering this question, respondents were redirected to PART 4.

PART 4

FINAL COMMENTS

If you have any comments or questions, please, do not hesitate to write them below.

Your answer

If you'd like to speak more about pronunciation teaching with me or my supervisor, or if you like to receive the results of this research, please contact me at jirsovaemma@gmail.com.

THIS IS THE END OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE. THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR COMPLETING AND THEREFORE HELPING ME WITH MY RESEARCH.