

## **Abstract (in English)**

The present thesis explores the issue of teaching heritage language learners and returnee students in English as a foreign language (EFL) classes in Czech secondary schools. The aim of the thesis is to examine the experiences of heritage language learners and returnees in the EFL classroom, their strengths and weaknesses in English, their attitude towards English language learning in terms of potential anxiety and motivation, as well as heritage language learners' wishes in relation to language instruction. These issues are investigated from the perspective of the students themselves. The theoretical part reviews the relevant literature on heritage language acquisition and teaching, and on the effects of experience abroad on language acquisition. Moreover, it is complemented by discussions of differentiated instruction and language education for the gifted, two areas which can prove helpful in terms of finding suitable solutions to the problems encountered by the target population in foreign language classes. The empirical part is qualitative and consists of the analysis of in-depth semi-structured interviews with three participants, *gymnázium* students from Prague. Insights are provided about the interconnectedness of the students' life experiences, their general beliefs about language learning, and their opinions on what constitutes effective language instruction.