**Bc. KLÁRA MIČUNKOVÁ**

2. ročník – prezenční studium

Obor: Učitelství anglického jazyka pro 2. stupeň základních škol – Učitelství německého jazyka pro 2. stupeň základních škol

# COMMON PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES FACED BY CZECH LEARNERS OF ENGLISH

**Diplomová práce**

Vedoucí práce: Mgr. Jana Kořínková, Ph. D.

OLOMOUC  2015

**Prohlášení**

Prohlašuji, že jsem závěrečnou písemnou práci zpracovala samostatně a použila jen prameny uvedené v seznamu literatury.

V Olomouci 15. 4. 2015

…….....................................
Podpis

# Contents

# Abstract

For my diploma thesis, I chose the topic Common pronunciation difficulties faced by Czech learners of English. I decided to deal with this topic in order to demonstrate that Czech lower-secondary pupils have several difficulties in pronunciation in reading tasks and I made efforts to determine why it is so. So the aim of the thesis is to find out the fields which are problematic for Czech pupils and the reasons for these difficulties.

## Introduction

The diploma thesis deals with common pronunciation difficulties which are faced by Czech learners of English in reading tasks. Both the segmental and suprasegmental areas of pronunciation are examined. The whole thesis is divided into the theoretical and practical part.

As for the theoretical part, first, I try to define the basic terms which are related to pronunciation and to present the distinctions between the Czech and English phonological inventories. Secondly, I define simple vowels, diphthongs, triphthongs and consonants. I divide them into categories, show the differences between the Czech and English language, and I mention the unique English phonemes. Thirdly, I deal with suprasegmental features of pronunciation, such as stress, rhythm and intonation. They are discussed and compared with the Czech phenomena. Similarly, aspects of connected speech such as assimilation, elision and linking are stated and described.

Concerning the practical part, methods of performance analysis, interview and observation are used to detect the most common pronunciation mistakes made by Czech lower-secondary pupils. The Czech respondents were asked to read several words and a short text, and their performances are compared with native speakers' ones. The findings which were gained in interviews and observations are summarized and introduced in the end.

# 1 Phonetics and phonology

This chapter deals with basic terms which are connected with pronunciation. First, phonetics and phonology are defined, secondly, features of pronunciation are described, and then, general differences between the Czech and English phonological systems are discussed.

Krčmová (1990) writes that **phonetics** is a linguistic discipline which deals with the material side of sound expressions of language at two levels. It is "the level of learning, description of mechanism of speech origin, its acoustic structure and auditory perception of sound signals, and the general level of phonemes and prosodic features which are used in certain communication community" Krčmová (1990). She explores the sound area from three points of view: the physiological – articulation treats the formation of sounds, the way of formation of phonemes and their connecting; the auditory branch explores the work of auditory organs and identifies heard things which lead to understanding; the acoustic approach deals with analysis of created signal and speaker´s pronunciation. Roach (1991) specifies phonetics as "the comparatively straightforward business of describing the sounds that we use in speaking" (Roach, 1991, p. 43). Crystal (2008) defines phonetics as "the science which studies the characteristics of human soundmaking, especially those sounds used in speech, and provides methods for their description, classification and transcription" (Crystal, 2008, p. 363). Similarly to Krčmová (1990) and Palková (1994), he recognizes three branches of phonetics: articulatory, acoustic and auditory.

**Phonology**, on the other hand, pursues "how phonemes function in language, and the relationships among the different phonemes – when, in other words, we study the abstract side of the sounds of language" (Roach, 1991, p. 43). Krčmová (1990) presents that phonology studies the sound of speech focused on features which are meaning-making in certain language. These are the tone of voice, speed of speech or precision of pronunciation. It researches the system of sound distinguishing units and rules for their use in the communication system.

As for Crystal (2008), "phonology is concerned with the range and function of sounds in specific languages, and with the rules which can be written to show the types of phonetic relationships that relate and contrast words and other linguistic units" (Crystal, 2008, p. 365).

In phonetics, the smallest segment is a phone (the physical realization of phoneme), in phonology, it is a phoneme. Segment or segmental feature is "any discrete unit that can be identified, either physically or auditorily, in the stream of speech" (Crystal, 2008, p. 426). In the initial part of this thesis, segmental features are pursued. These are vowels, diphthongs, triphthongs and consonants.

## 1.1 Differences in the phonological inventory

English and Czech language have different phonological structures. According to Krčmová (1990), the Czech language has 39 phonemes and English has 44 phonemes. Skaličková (1982) states that a large difference is seen in the proportion of these phonemes. In English, there are 24 consonant elements and 20 vowel elements. Skaličková (1979) adds that there are 12 simple vowels and 8 vowels with modification. While in Czech, according to Skaličková (1982), there are 26 consonant and 13 vowel segments. It means that English has quite a balanced number of phonemes but Czech has twice as many consonant segments.

# 2 Vowels

In this chapter, simple vowels as segmental features are defined. Division into categories is mentioned, the differences between the Czech and English vowels are discussed and English vowels with no Czech equivalents are presented.

Roach (1991) defines vowels as "sounds in which there is no obstruction to the flow of air as it passes from the larynx to the lips" (Roach, 1991, p. 10). "They are sounds articulated without a complete closure in the mouth or a degree of narrowing which would produce audible friction; the air escapes evenly over the centre of the tongue" (Crystal, 2008, p. 517).

Skličková (1977) divides vowels into eight categories. She distinguishes the movement of the tongue vertically (low, mid, high), the movement of the tongue horizontally (front, central, back), the degree of openness (open, close), the articulation tension (tense, lax), the interpretation of articulation (full, reduced), the participation of lips (rounded, spread), the quantity (long, short, medium) and the participation of nasal cavity (nasalized, non-nasalized).

## 2.1 Differences between the Czech and English vowel system

As it is mentioned above, Czech and English differ in their phonological systems. The main differences considering vowels are presented in the following part in general and also certain vowels distinctions are covered.

Skaličková (1982) states that there is the difference between English and Czech in the **number of vowels**. There are simple 12 vowels in English /iː, ɪ, e, æ, ɑː, ʌ, ɒ, ɔː, ʊ, uː, ə, ɜː/ and 10 simple vowels in Czech /a, e, i, o, u, á, é, í, ó, ú/.

Secondly, there are **timbre differences** which are more important in English than in Czech. Skaličková (1979) refers that the Czech vowel pairs are divided primarily according to their quantity in proportion 1:2 and the timbre differences are minimal. Each timbre area is filled with

one representative and the quantity makes two phonemes from it. There is a-area represented by /a, á/; e-area represented by /e, é/ and so on. But in English, one area is represented by more phonemes. For instance, there are /ʌ, ɑ:, aɪ, aʊ/ in a-area and /e, æ, eə, eɪ/ in e-area. To sum up, in Czech, the quantity is the main feature according to which the vowels can be distinguished but in English, it is the quality (Skaličková, 1979). Ladefoged and Johnstone (2011) refer that the quality differences are also shown in the signs of phonological transcription. There is the difference between *sheep* /ʃi:p/ and *ship* /ʃɪp/ in the length and also in the quality of *i* sound. That is way it is not enough to use the length mark.

Thirdly, according to Skaličková (1982), there are some **articulation differences** between the Czech and English vowels. These differences concern mainly the tongue position. In Czech, the tip of the tongue almost always touches the base of the oral cavity (lower teeth, gums, soft part of the base) but in English, the tip of the tongue hardly ever touches these parts. It rather sticks out freely forthright.

Skaličková (1982) shows differences between certain vowels in both languages. There are some articulation, qualitative and quantitative differences.

### 2.1.1   Articulation differences

Articulation differences are similar for the most vowels. Cruttenden and Gimson (2008) state that English /ɑ:/, /ɒ/, /ɔ:/, /ʊ/ and /u:/ are produced in the back part of oral cavity and the tip of the tongue is sticking freely forwards. The producing of the English /ɪ/, /i:/, /e/and /æ/ is moved forwards. Skaličková (1982) presents that in case of the Czech /i/, /í/, /e/, /é/, /o/, /ó/, the tip of the tongue touches the boundary between lower teeth and gums but at the Czech /u/, /ú/, the tip is oriented down and do not have to be in contact with the lower part of oral cavity.

Labial aperture at /ɪ/ and /i:/ is spread in English and it is passively spread in Czech. It means that the shape of lips depends on the distance and angle of jaws. The aperture at /e/ can be

sharpened in English but in Czech, lips do not actively participate in the production of it. This means that in English, there is smaller difference between /e/ and /i/ than at corresponding Czech vowels. The labial aperture at the English /æ/ is opened more than at the Czech /é/; it is neutral at /ʌ/ both in English and Czech; it is larger during producing the Czech /á/ than the English /ɑ/ and it is rounded at /ɒ/, /ɔ/, /ʊ/, /u/ and at their Czech equivalents. The English variety of /ɔ/ is more rounded than the Czech one and also the English /u/ is rounded even stronger than its Czech variety or the short /ʊ/ (Skaličková, 1982).

### 2.1.2    Qualitative differences

For Skaličková (1982), the English /ʊ/, /u:/, /ɪ/ and /i:/ sound higher than the Czech corresponding vowels. Cruttenden and Gimson (2008) write that in some English words, /ʊ/ is replaced by /ə/ (*would, could, should, good*) and the pronunciation of /u:/ sometimes balances between /u:/ and /ju:/. The English /ɪ/ sounds the lower the further it is from the stressed syllable. Words beginning with unstressed *bre-, pre-, re-* or words with suffix *–ible, -ace, -ate, ain, -et* can have more varieties of realization, either /ə/ or /ɪ/. For example *before* can be pronounced as /bɪˈfɔ:/ or as /bəˈfɔ:/. Similarly, *possible* can be pronounced /pɔsəbl/ or /pɔsɪbl/. There are also words with functional opposite of vowels. In this case, there is no variation, for instance *affect* /əˈfekt/ is not be pronounced as *effect* /ɪˈfekt/ and *accept* /əkˈsept/ is not pronounced as *except* /ikˈsept/.

In Skaličková's (1982) opinion, the English /ʌ/, /ɑ:/, /ɒ/ and /ɔ:/ sound lower than their Czech varieties.

The English /e/ has more varieties and each of them has different pitch level. There is an open variety /æ/ which sounds lower than the Czech /e/ and a close variety /e/ which sounds higher that the Czech corresponding vowel. In view of the fact that there is only one variety in Czech, Czech speakers have to pay attention to distinguish between /e/ and /æ/.

### 2.1.3 Quantitative differences

From the quantitative point of view, the following consonant does not really influence the features of a vowel in Czech but it causes quantitative differences in English. According to Kelly (2000), the English long vowels are fully long only before lenis consonants or in the final positions. If they are before fortis consonants ("a sound made with a relatively strong degree of muscular effort and breath force, compared with some other sound, known as lenis" Crystal, 2003, p. 197), their length is almost the same as the length of short ones which stand before lenis consonants. Skaličková (1982) writes that the Czech long vowels are in the same conditions almost always twice as long as their short varieties. Similarly, as Kelly (2000) put it, the English short vowels are very short in the position before fortis consonants but before lenis consonants, they have the same length as long ones before fortis, so they lengthen. As examples of that, there are words: *meat, team, kit* and *Tim* which all contain either long /i/ or short /ɪ/. To compare their vowel lengths, /i/ in *team* is pronounced the longest, in *meat* and *Tim* it has similar length, and it is the shortest in *kit*.

To sum up, the contrast between the Czech and English vowels lies not only in their articulation but also in their quality, which is more relevant distinguishing character for English vowels than for the Czech ones, and the quantity of separate vowels, which is in English influenced by following consonants.

## 2.2 The English vowels with no Czech equivalents and special vowels

There exist some vowels which are used only in English, not in Czech, and an unusual vowel which has an equivalent but in spite of that it is demanding to pronounce by Czech speakers. Skaličková (1982) discusses the English vowels which have no functional equivalents in Czech. These are /ə/ and /ɜː/ and she also adds the special vowel /æ/.

Firstly she speaks about the English short mixed vowel /ə/. It is typical for English unstressed syllables, the articulation is very variable and the labial aperture is in neutral position. It is often

used in diphthongs but it is stressed there. Kelly (2000) adds that it is the most common English vowel sound and "differs from other phonemes, in that its contrast with similarly articulated long sound /ɜ:/ does not involve a change of meaning" (Kelly, 2000, p. 32). The sound got the name from Hebrew /ʃəwɑ:/ and means emptiness or nothing (Kelly, 2000).

According to Skaličková (1982), /ə/ has three varieties. The first one is the non final variety. It is an equivalent to the transitional vowel which tends to disappear in more syllable words and before a vowel. For example *history* can be pronounced as /hɪstərɪ/ or as /hɪstrɪ/, similarly *social* is pronounces as /səʊʃəl/ or as /səʊʃl/. It cannot be omitted before *r* because *r* is realized only before vowel or syllabic *l*. The initial variety has e-character as in *above* /əˈbʌv/ or *along* /əˈlɔŋ/. The second variety is back variation. It is shifted due to the influence of the neighbouring velar consonant and has slight o-character. Examples are *condemn* /kənˈdem/ or *back again* /bæk ˌəˈgeɪn/. The third is the final variant which has slight a-character, for instance *sofa* /səʊfə/ or *collar* /kɔlə/.

Then Skaličková (1982) speaks about the English long mixed vowel /ɜ:/ which is acoustically similar to /ə/. It has more possibilities of realization and the labial aperture is mildly spread. It is longer before lenis (*heard* /hɜ:d/) and shorter before fortis consonant (*hurt* /hɜ:t/). Cruttenden and Gimson (2008) add that sometimes, it is incorrectly replaced by /ö/ and the r-phoneme is added to it in the American variety.

Skaličková (1982) suggests that the vowel /æ/ has an equivalent is Czech, despite this, it is a kind of special vowel because it has features of both short and long vowels. Among the features of short vowels is that it cannot stand in the final position and occurs before /ŋ/. As for the features of long vowels, it is not part of diphthongs and has similar quantitative features. Interesting information is that /æ/ is not rhymed with /e/ in poetry like the other vocalic pairs in English. Eeyore.uh.cz (2005) and Millin (2011) state that Czech speakers do not usually make the differences between /e/ and /æ/, and then they pronounce *sat* and *set* in the same way.

Here is the diagram which shows the position of vowels. "Vertical position on the diagram denotes the vowel closeness, with close vowels at the top of the diagram, and horizontal position denotes the vowel backness, with front vowels at the left of the diagram" (Skandera, 2005, p. 33-34).
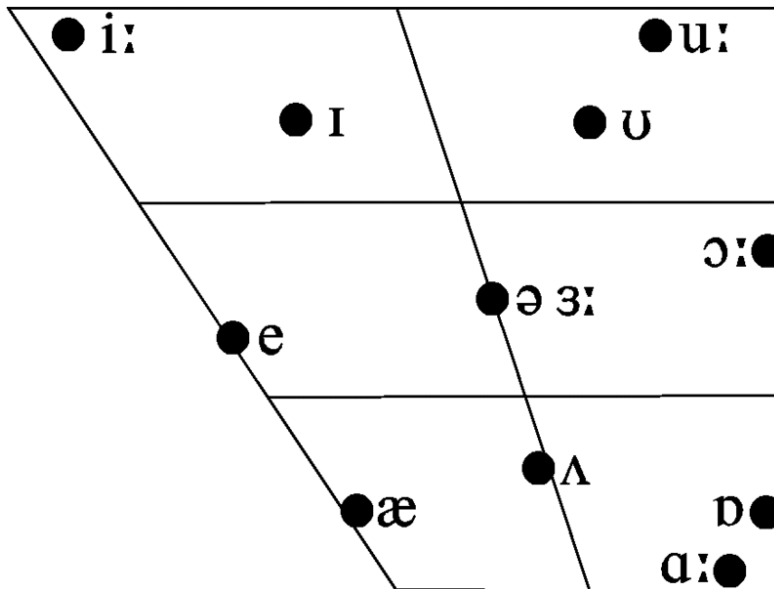
Figure 1

# 3 Diphthongs

The next chapter is dedicated to diphthongs. First, they are defined and described and then, the differences between the English and Czech diphthongs are discussed. English diphthongs with no Czech counterpart are introduced and a special diphthong is described.

As Cruttenden and Gimson (2008), Kelly (2000), Ladefoged and Johnstone (2011) and Roach (1991) put it, diphthongs are movements or glides from one vowel to another. They also concur that in English, the first part of the diphthong is usually more prominent, longer and stronger, than the second one.

## 3.1 Differences between the Czech and English diphthongs

Skaličková (1982) claims that there are several articulation, qualitative and quantitative differences between the English (/əʊ, aʊ/) and Czech diphthongs (/ou, au/), and the English diphthongs (/aɪ, eɪ, ɔɪ/) and the Czech connections vowel + /j/ (/aj, ej, oj/).

The articulation is very similar to individual elements. The Czech forms are pronounced with the contact of the tongue with the lower part of oral cavity. In English, there is just minimal movement of the tongue and jaws, and the tongue sticks freely forwards.

Kelly (2000) presents that the English /aɪ/, /eɪ/, /ɔɪ/, /aʊ/ and /əʊ/ fluctuate between frontal and back varieties. Skaličková (1982) claims that the quality of diphthong is similar to the Czech and English simple vowels or the Czech /j/. In the Czech forms /a+j, e+j, o+j/, vowels are produced more frontally because of the following palatal /j/. Whereas /j/ and /u/ are always fully realized in Czech, /ɪ/ and /ʊ/ are rather indicated in English.

As for **qualitative differences** in Czech, Skaličková (1982) writes that articulation of both elements in a diphthong is obeyed and the auditory effect does not differ from the effect of

realization of separate vowels. But in English, the quality of certain vowels can be different and can vary at the beginning and at the end of a diphthong.

**Quantitatively**, both elements in a diphthong are realized equally (1/2 : 1/2) in Czech but in English, the first element is pronounced longer than the second one (2/3 : 1/3) (Skaličková, 1982). Moreover, Cruttenden and Gimson (2008) say that in English, the character of diphthongs is influenced by the following consonant. The English /aɪ/, /eɪ/, /ɔɪ/ are shorter before fortis and they are lengthened before lenis consonant or in final positions, so according to Skaličková (1982) the Czech /áj/, /éj/, /ój/ are nearer equivalents than /aj/, /ej/, /oj/. As Cruttenden and Gimson (2008) mention, the impact of following elements at /aʊ/ and /əʊ/ is not so intensive. The /ɔɪ/ modification tends to disappear before /ə/ and /ɪ/ as in *boyish* or *annoying* but it appears very intensively before /n/, for example *coin* or *point*.

As it was written, the English diphthongs are articulated in a different way than the Czech ones but the articulation of diphthongs is not distinct from the articulation of simple vowels. There is also the difference in the realization of the second element and its length. Smolka (1998) adds that so called i-diphthongs /aɪ, eɪ, ɔɪ/ in English are often replaced by /aj, ej, oj/ connections by Czech speakers. However, in English the second element is not fully realized but only signalized.

## 3.2   The English diphthongs with no Czech equivalents and a special diphthong

Similarly to simple vowels, also certain diphthongs are uniquely English. As they are not known in Czech, they are difficult to pronounce by the Czech speakers. One special diphthong is pointed out, but its pronunciation is effortless for Czechs.

Firstly, Skaličková (1982) presents the English /ɪə/. It is used in several phoneme combinations. The first one is the central oriented diphthong /ɪə/ in words *dear* /dɪə/, *fears* /fɪəz/ where the articulation of /ɪ/ moves in /ə/ modification. The second one is the combination of /ɪ + ə/ which

has rather two syllables as in *idea* /aɪˈdɪə/ where the second element is usually longer and more open than the first element. The third combination is used instead of /iə/ in unstressed syllables and mainly on the boundary of morphemes as in *India* /ˈɪndɪə/. The last one is the variety before muted *l* where the uncertain vowel timbre mingles with the final stage of /ɪə/. The diphthong changes in i-element. The difference can be heard in *idea - ideal*.

Secondly, there is the diphthong /eə/. It consists of opened /e/ and the final mixed vowel which causes rather closed jaws. Sometimes the pronounced /ə/ merges with *r* intention before *r* as in *dairy* or *Mary*. In some words, /eə/ can alternate with /æ/ before pronounced *r*. For instance, *apparent* can be pronounced as /əˈpærənt/ and also as /əˈpeərənt/.

Thirdly, Skaličková (1982) mentions the diphthong /ʊə/. In English, it exists in two varieties. The first one is realized in one syllable; for instance *poor* /pʊə/ or *sure* /sʊə/. Nowadays, /ʊə/ moves over /ɔə/ to /ɔ/. The second one is the group of /ʊ+ə/ seen in words like *valuable* or *newer* (Skaličková, 1982).

Ladefoged and Johnstone (2011) add the special diphthong /ju:/. They point out that it is different from the other diphthongs in the way that it has the prominent part at the end. "Because it is the only vowel of this kind, many books on English phonetics do not even consider it a diphthong; they treat it as a sequence of a consonant followed by a vowel" (Ladefoged and Johnstone, 2011, p. 93). Despite that, they are convinced, it follows the diphthong patterns.

The following diagram shows the positions and glides of particular diphthongs apart from /ju:/. As it is said previously, /ju:/ is rarely regarded as a diphthong so authors do not usually include it to the diagrams. "Vertical position on the diagram denotes the vowel closeness, with close vowels at the top of the diagram, and horizontal position denotes the vowel backness, with front vowels at the left of the diagram" (Skandera, 2005, p. 33-34).
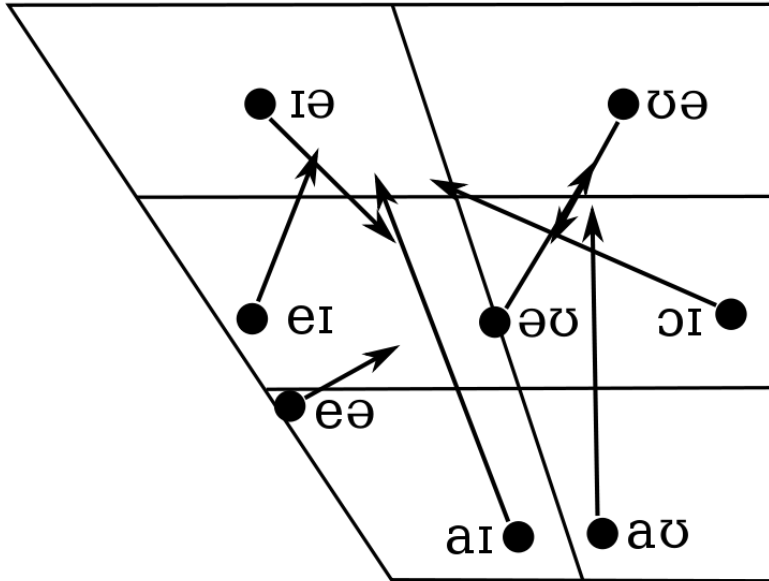
Figure 2

# 4  Triphthongs

This chapter deals with triphthongs as one of the pronunciation components. The disagreements about their existence are presented and the examples of triphthongs are shown.

Cruttenden and Gimson (2008), Krčmová (1990), Ladefoged and Johnstone (2011), Palková (1994) and Skaličková (1979) are convinced that triphthongs do not exist, and it is just the group of diphthong with schwa – aɪ + ə (not aɪə). But Crystal (2008), Kelly (2000) and Roach (1991) suggest the opposite.  Triphthong is "the most complex English sound of the vowel type. It is a glide from one vowel to another and then to a third, all produced rapidly and without interruption" (Roach, 1991, p. 23). As Crystal (2008) puts it, "it refers to a type of vowel where there are two noticeable changes in quality during a syllable" (Crystal, 2008, p. 496 – 497). Roach (1991) mentions five triphthongs in English: /eɪə/ in *player* /pleɪə/, /aɪə/ in *fire* /faɪə/, /ɔɪə/ in *royal* /rɔɪəl/, /əʊə/ in *lower* /ləʊə/ and /aʊə/ in *power* /paʊə/.

# 5  Consonants

This chapter is concerned with another segmental element, the element of consonants. First of all, consonants are defined, they are integrated to several groups, further divided according to other features such as place or manner of articulation. Unique English and Czech consonants are mentioned and the differences between the English and Czech consonants are stated.

Consonants are "sounds made by a closure or narrowing in the vocal tract so that the airflow is either completely blocked, or so restricted that audible friction is produced" (Crystal, 2008, p. 103).

Skaličková (1977) distinguishes eight categories of consonants. According to the participation of voice (voiced, voiceless), the place of articulation (bilabials, labiodentals, interdentals, dentals, alveodentals, alveolars, palatals, velars, uvulars, glottal), the manner of articulation (occlusives, semiocclusive, constrictives), the participation of nasal cavity (nasals, orals), the quantity (continuants, non-continuants), the strength of articulation (fortis, lenis), the auditory perception (plosives – affricates; fricatives – sibilants, vibrant, rolled consonants) and the category of paired (p – b, t – d, k – g, f – v, s – z, ʃ – ʒ, ʧ – ʤ) and unpaired consonants (w, j, l, r, m, n). Cruttenden and Gimson (2008) suggest the division of obstruents and sonorants which is used to describe separate consonants in the following part of this chapter.

## 5.1  Obstruents

Obstruent is term used "to refer to sounds involving a constriction which impedes the flow of air through nose or mouth" (Crystal, 2008, p. 338). Plosives, affricates and fricatives are considered to be the parts of this group taking account of manner of articulation.

### 5.1.1 Plosives

Kelly (2000) says that they are sometimes referred to as stops. Krčmová (1990) says that plosives are consonants which are based on creating a stricture. The stricture is cancelled by moving of an active articulation organ. Cruttenden and Gimson (2008) describe several phases in which plosives are produced. They are the closing, compression and release stage. Roach (1991) divides the phases similarly and adds one more. He introduces the closure, hold, release and post-release phase. "The first phase is when the articulator or articulators move to form the stricture for the plosive, the second one is when the compressed air is stopped from escaping, the third phase is when the articulators used to form the stricture are moved so as to allow air to escape and the fourth one is what happens immediately after the third phase" (Roach, 1991, p. 31).

Cruttenden and Gimson (2008) presents six plosives which are *p, t, k* (voiceless) and *d, b, g* (voiced). Taking into consideration the place of articulation, he classifies *p* and *b* as bilabial, *t* and *d* as alveolar, and *k* and *g* as velar.

### 5.1.2 Affricates

Cruttenden and Gimson (2008) state that affricates are "any plosives whose release stage is performed in such a way that considerable friction occurs approximately at the point where the plosive stop is made" (Cruttenden and Gimson, 2008, p. 181). They "begin as plosives and end as fricatives" (Roach, 1991, p. 47). As Krčmová (1990) puts it, affricates also have a stricture but it is weak and changes into narrow within one consonant. The phoneme has two phases, therefore in some languages, affricates are considered as two phonemes – c /t + s/. Affricates are divided into prealveolars (/t+s/, /d+z/) which have the closure in the front part and postalveolars (/t+ʃ/, /d+ʒ/) where the closure is in the back part of the oral cavity. As for the place of articulation, both /tʃ/ (voiceless) and /dʒ/ (voiced) are palate-alveolar.

### 5.1.3 Fricatives

Krčmová (1990) states that fricatives also belong to the group of consonants with a narrow. These consonants are based on partial obstruction which is caused by narrowing in the place of articulation. The consonant arises due to the turbulence of air flow which has to pass through the narrowed place. Roach (1991) defines fricatives as "consonants with the characteristic that when they are produced, air escapes through a small passage and makes a hissing sound. Fricatives are continuant consonants, which means that you can continue making them without interruption as long as you have enough air in your lungs" (Roach, 1991, p. 47).

The place of articulation is according to Cruttenden and Gimson (2008) represented by labiodentals *f* (voiceless), *v* (voiced); dentals /θ/ (voiceless), /ð/ (voiced); prealveolars *s* (voiceless), *z* (voiced); postalveolars /ʃ/ (voiceless), /ʒ/ (voiced) and glottal *h*. Krčmová (1990) points out that *h* is voiced mainly in the Czech language, in the most of other languages, it is unvoiced.

## 5.2 Sonorants

Sonorants are consonants which are "produced with a relatively free airflow, and a vocal fold position such that spontaneous voicing is possible" (Crystal, 2008, p.442).

### 5.2.1 Nasals

"The basic characteristic of nasal consonant is that the air escapes through the nose. The soft palate must be lowered; in the case of all the other consonants and vowels, the soft palate is raised and air cannot pass through the nose" (Roach, 1991, p. 56). He considers *m, n* and ŋ as nasals, all of them voiced.

Cruttenden and Gimson (2008) distinguish bilabial *m*, alveolar *n* and velar ŋ as for the place of articulation. Furthermore, ŋ never occurs in initial positions (together with ʒ, they are the only

ones in this position), it also never occurs after a diphthong or long vowel. There are only five vowels (/ɪ/, /e/, /æ/, /ʌ/, /ɒ/) which precede this consonant.

### 5.2.2 Lateral

A lateral *l* is a voiced consonant "in which the passage of air through the mouth does not go in the usual way along the centre of the tongue; instead, there is a complete closure between the centre of the tongue and the part of the roof of the mouth where contact is to be made – the alveolar ridge" (Roach, 1991, p. 58). Krčmová (1990) adds that the lateral *l* has the narrow placed across the axis of the tongue.

Cruttenden and Gimson (2008) distinguish clear *l*, devoiced clear *l* and dark *l*. Clear *l* occurs before vowels and /j/ in: word-initial (look, let), word-initial clusters (blow, glad), word-medial (silly, collar) and word-final (feel it, all over). Devoiced clear *l* appears as: fully devoiced clear *l* (play, please), partially devoiced *l* following voiceless plosives (hopeless, clarinet) and partially devoiced *l* following voiceless fricatives (slow, earthly). Dark *l* is to be found in word-final, after vowel (fell, canal); after vowel, before consonant (help, salt) and as a syllabic consonant (table, final).

### 5.2.3 Approximants

*R* is described as a post-alveolar approximant and it is difficult to describe. Roach (1991) says that "it is an articulation in which the articulators approach each other but do not get sufficiently close to each other to produce a complete consonant such as a plosive, nasal or fricative" (Roach, 1991, p. 59).

Millin (2011) writes that the consonant /r/ is wrongly articulated by Czech speakers. In English, /r/ is postalveolar and not vibrating; in Czech, it is alveolar and vibrating. It is also incorrectly realized in the positions where it is written but not pronounced (before a consonant and in the

final positions where it cannot be connected to a vowel of the following word) as in *barking* /baːkɪŋ/ or *far* /faː/.

Roach (1991) also mentions consonants *j* and *w* which are called semivowels, lately rather approximants. These phonemes are phonetically similar to vowels and phonologically to consonants (Roach, 1991). Krčmová (1990) claims that approximants are characterized not only by the movement of the tongue (as vowels) but the speech organs are approaching certain position without reaching it and without creating the distinct obstruction (as consonants). The intention of articulation rather takes place, not the progress. All approximants are voiced.

This chart presents all consonants and specifies their classifications according to several characters.

| | MANNER | VOICING | PLACE | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Bilabial | Labiodental | Interdental | Alveolar | Palatal | Velar | Glottal |
| Obstruent | Stop | Voiceless | p | | | t | | k | ʔ |
| Obstruent | Stop | Voiced | b | | | d | | g | |
| Obstruent | Fricative | Voiceless | | f | θ | s | ʃ | | h |
| Obstruent | Fricative | Voiced | | v | ð | z | ʒ | | |
| Obstruent | Affricate | Voiceless | | | | | tʃ | | |
| Obstruent | Affricate | Voiced | | | | | ʤ | | |
| Sonorant | Nasal | Voiced | m | | | n | | ŋ | |
| Sonorant | Liquid Lateral | Voiced | | | | l | | | |
| Sonorant | Liquid Rhotic | Voiced | | | | | r (ɹ) | | |
| Sonorant | Glide | Voiced | w | | | | j | (w) | |

Figure 3: Eulenberg (2011)

## 5.3  Differences between the Czech and English consonants

This part of the diploma thesis shows the differences between consonants in English and Czech. It is focused mainly on differences in the frequency, function, articulation stages, opposites, aspiration, clustering and articulation.

Skaličková (1982) writes that the number of Czech and English consonants is almost the same. But there are some consonant sounds in Czech which do not have any equivalents in English and vice versa. They are /θ, ð, w/ in English and /ř, ť, ď, ň, x/ in Czech.

Eeyore.uh.cz (2005), Millin (2011), Pesce (2014) and Marian (2013) concur that Czech speakers wrongly articulate when they produce /ð, θ/ because they put their tongue between their teeth. The correct articulation place for /θ, ð/ is behind the back part of the upper teeth. The tip of the tongue can either move towards to it (in case of /θ, ð/ in the final positions or before consonants) or it can slightly touch this part and then the narrow is created (in /ð/ before vowels and in initial positions). /ð/ is often incorrectly produced as /dz/ or /d/, and it can change the meaning of the word such as *then* /ðen/ - *den* /den/.

Consonants sounds which more or less correspond with each other have often different **function, frequency, distribution or position** in different languages. As an example, Skaličková (1982) mentions velar /ŋ/. It is a separate phoneme in English but in Czech, it is a variety of alveolar /n/ before /k, g/. Eeyore.uh.cz (2005) and Millin (2011) emphasize that Czech speakers have problems with realization of the final and prevocalic velar /ŋ/. Instead of *sing* /siŋ/ they say /sin/ or /siŋk/. This is caused because of the fact that there is the velar /ŋ/ only before /k, g/ in Czech. They also incorrectly pronounce /ŋ/ without following /g/ which normally belongs there in English pronunciation. For example, finger /fiŋə/ should be pronounced as /fiŋgə/.

Phoneme /f/, according to Skaličková (1982), is frequently used domestic phoneme in English but in Czech, /f/ is considered as a foreign element used mainly in assimilation position, adopted

and onomatopoetic words. Further, /ʤ/ is common consonant in English but the Czech /dž/ is hardly ever part of domestic words. It is used in foreign words or in assimilation positions (léčba - /lédžba/). Finally, consonants such as /c/, /ž/, /š/ are common in the Czech language but their English equivalents /ts/, /ʒ/, /ʃ/ are rarely used in English. On the other hand, /g/ is foreign in Czech but very common in English.

Skaličková (1982) points out also the difference in **articulation stages** where Czech and English consonants are identified. These stages are called intention, tension and detention. Intention means the movement towards peak position and tension is the peak position. Detention means leaving the peak position and in non-final position, it means the transition to following articulation. For instance, she presents /ŋ/. In Czech, it exists only in intention stage but in English, /ŋ/ can be realized in all three stages. In the word *long* /lɒŋ/, there is the intention stage, in *longish* /lɒŋɪʃ/, it is detention stage and in the phrase *we can go* /wi kŋ gəʊ/, there is the tension stage. Another example is /r/ which can appear in Czech in all stages but in English in detention stage which occurs only before vowel or syllabic /l/. Similarly, /j/ exists in English only in detention position but in Czech in detention and also intension positions. Further, the Czech plosives are always in detention stage but the English plosives are always in intention one (Skaličková, 1982).

Another difference is seen in the substance of opposite of **consonants pairs** by Skaličková (1982). In Czech, the difference between consonant pairs is based on the opposite of voiced and voiceless consonants (b – p, d – t, z – s, ž – š). The duration of voiced consonants is shorter and articulation is weaker in comparison with voiceless consonants. Vowels are lengthened before and after voiced consonants. Whereas in English, the difference between consonant pairs is based on the opposite of voicedness (voiced – voiceless), articulation tension (lenis – fortis) and on the opposite of aspiration (aspirated – not aspirated realization).

The next difference between the Czech and English consonants is the difference in the **aspirated pronunciation** of the English fortis plosives and not aspirated pronunciation of Czech phonemes. Aspiration is a physical feature which exists before a vowel and in a final position in English (Skaličková, 1982). It is "a term in phonetics for audible breath which may accompany a sound's articulation, as when certain types of plosives consonant are released" (Crystal, 2008, p. 38).

For Skaličková (1982), the strongest aspiration is with /k/ and has /x/-aspect, weaker aspiration is with /t/ and sounds like hissing and the weakest aspiration is with /p/ where the acoustic characteristics are obeyed according to the articulation of following vowel. Millin (2011) presents that the aspiration of /p, t, k/ is wrongly realized by Czech speakers. Although the aspiration is signalized as $p^h$, $t^h$, $k^h$, it has a different character.

Another contrast is seen in different possibilities in **grouping of consonants**. Czech and English vary in composition of different consonant clusters and also in the possibility of their placement. Some consonant clusters are seen in both languages but in one language, they can be for example placed initially, in the second language, they are placed in the final position. Skaličková (1982) presents as an example /čt/=/tʃt/ in the Czech word *čtyři*, the consonant cluster is in the initial position and in English *reached*, it is in the final position. Similarly, /ps/ in Czech *psát* and in English *heaps*, /tn/ in the Czech word *tnout* and in English *mutton* or /zn/ in Czech *znak* and in the English word *prison*. Generally, we can say that in Czech, the clusters are typical at the beginning of words but they are usually in the end in English.

The last difference Skaličková (1982) mentions is the difference in **articulation**. The place of articulation of English consonants is more willing to adapt than in Czech.

To summarize the differences, English consonants in comparison with the Czech ones have different functions and positions in the word, they are realized in diverse stages, they differ in the area of voicedness and clustering, and the Czech language does not allow aspiration.

# 6 Suprasegmental features of pronunciation

The following chapter deals with another type of pronunciation features – suprasegmental. This component contains the definition of suprasegmental features, word stress, sentences stress, rhythm and intonation. Later on, aspects of connected speech such as assimilation, elision and linking are outlined. The basics of all these categories are described and the differences between the Czech and English language are discussed.

The term suprasegmental is used "to refer to a vocal effect which extends over more than one sound segment in an utterance" (Crystal, 2008, p. 466). As Kelly (2000) puts it, suprasegmental features are characteristics applied to groups of phonemes.

## 6.1 Syllable

To describe the substance of this feature, syllable as a term need to be defined. It is the simplest and smallest articulation unit of speech which complies with understanding of functional features (Krčmová, 1990). It is "a unit of pronunciation typically larger than a single sound and smaller than a word" (Crystal, 2008, p. 467).

Ladefoged and Johnstone (2011) claim that nearly each syllable consists of a vowel and consonant. There are some exceptions such as *eye*, *owe* which contain only vowels, and *bottle, button, suppose, today* whose certain syllables contain only syllabic consonants. These are alveolar lateral *l*, nasal *n*, fricative *s* and plosive *t*.

Skaličková (1977) and Wong (1987) distinguish graphically opened (contain a vowel which appears at the end of the syllable) and closed (contain a consonant at the end of the syllable)

syllables in English. In case of **graphically opened syllable**, the vowels have the same pronunciation as they have when spelt in the alphabet. It is so called long pronunciation. *A* /eɪ/ is pronounced long in *mane /*meɪn/, *e* /iː/ in *be* /biː/, *i, y* /aɪ/ in *mine* /maɪn/, *by* /baɪ/, *o* /əʊ/ in *no* /nəʊ/ and *u* /juː/ in *use* /juːz/.

In **graphically closed syllables**, the pronunciation of *e, i, o* does not distinct much from their written forms, so they are pronounced /e, ɪ, ɒ/. It is so called short pronunciation. The pronunciation changes only in *a* which is pronounced /æ/ as in *bad* and at *u* which is pronounced /ʌ/ as in *us*. *E* is pronounced /e/ in *bet* /bet/, *i* /ɪ/ in *bit* /bɪt/ and *o*/ɒ/ in *not* /nɒt/.

Skaličková (1977) argues that when we add the ending or suffix to the base of the word, we have to follow the original graphical closeness or openness to keep the correct pronunciation. That is the reason why it is important to double the originally final consonant. Examples are *bet* which changes to *betting* or *tip* which becomes *tipping*. When the base of the word already has two consonants in the end, there is no need to add any other consonant as in *luck* which turns into *lucky*, or *list* which becomes *listing* without any doubling.


## 6.2   Word stress

In this part of the chapter dealing with suprasegmental features, word stress is presented. First, the term is explained, then the differences between stressed and unstressed syllables are mentioned and also functions of word stress are defined. At the end, the distinction between primary and secondary stress is pointed out and the position of stress in a word is explained.

As Krčmová (1990) puts it, word stress means the prominence of the syllable within one word. Word stress is sometimes replaced by the term *accent* to distinguish it from the sentence stress, for example by Cruttenden and Gimson (2008) or Ladefoged and Johnstone (2011). According to Roach (1991), stressed syllables are usually louder and longer. They are pronounced on higher pitch and have different quality than unstressed ones. Skaličková (1982) points out that in Czech,

a vowel in an unstressed syllable does not qualitatively differ from a stressed one but in unstressed syllables in English, /ə/ and /ɪ/ usually replace the strong forms of vowels.

As Eeyore.uh.cz (2005), Millin (2011), Marian (2013) and Pesce (2014) put it, Czech speakers do not follow the reduction of vowel quality in unstressed syllables. English has a neutral phoneme /ə/, unstressed /ɪ/, exceptionally /ʊ/. Czech does not have a mixed vowel as a functional element and it is very often replaced by e-sound, which is unacceptable in English.

Krčmová (1990) presents **functions** of the word stress, which are culmination (stress belongs to the individual nominative unit and determines full meaning words), rhythmical (it causes the regular changing of stressed and unstressed syllables), semantic (it can change the meaning of words) and finally, it signals the word boundaries.

Roach (1991) states that stress is divided into primary and secondary. Primary stress is the strongest type of stress. It is "the prominence that results from the pitch movement, or tone". Secondary stress is "a type of stress that is weaker than primary stress but stronger than that of the first syllable of *around*" (Roach, 1991, p. 87).

Skaličková (1982) argues that in Czech, there is a primary stress always on the first syllable of the word and Krčmová (1990) adds that the secondary stress occurs on every other odd syllable of long words in slow, accurate speech. For Skaličková (1982), both stresses can occur on any syllable in English. Millin (2011) emphasizes that the Czech intention of putting the stress on the first syllable is very often transferred to English, where the position of stress is various.

As Roach (1991) sees it, **the placement** of word stress in the word is influenced by grammatical category of the word, number of syllables, phonological structure of these syllables and the fact whether it is a morphologically simple word, compound or whether it contains affixes. Taking all these aspects into account, Roach (1991) explains the occurrence of stresses in two-syllable and three syllable words.

In case of two-syllable words, either the first or the second syllable is stressed, not both. In verbs, the second syllable is stressed if the second syllable contains a long vowel or diphthong, or ends with more than one consonant (*apply, assist, arrive*). The first syllable is stressed if the second syllable contains a short vowel and one or none final consonant or it contains the diphthong /əʊ/ (*enter, open, follow*).

Rules are same for adjectives, adverbs and prepositions (*lovely, divine, correct*). In nouns, the first syllable is stressed if the second syllable contains a short vowel (*money, product*).

Three-syllable words can have stress on any syllable. Verbs have the second syllable stressed if the third syllable contains a short vowel and ends with one or none consonant (*encounter, determine*). The third syllable is stressed if it contains a long vowel or diphthong or ends with more than one consonant (*entertain, resurrect*).

Nouns have the second syllable stressed if the third syllable contains a short vowel or /əʊ/, the second syllable contains the long vowels or diphthong or it ends with more than one consonant (*potato, disaster, synopsis*). The first syllable is stressed if the third syllable contains short vowel, the second syllable contains a short vowel and ends with one or none consonant (*quantity, cinema, custody*). The first syllable is also stressed if the third syllable contains a long vowel or diphthong or ends with more than one consonant (*intellect, stalactite, marigold*).

Regarding affixes, there are no regularities in the placement of stress in prefixes, but in suffixes there are. Roach (1991) divides suffixes into stress-carrying, stress-neutral and stress-imposing. Stress-carrying suffixes are *–ain* (*entertain*), *-ee* (*employee*), *-eer* (*volunteer*), *-ese* (*Portugese*), *-ette* (*cigarette*), *-esque/-isque* (*picturesque*). Stress-neutral suffixes are *-able* (*comfortable*), *-age* (*anchorage*), *-al* (*refusal*), *-en* (*widen*), *-ful* (*wonderful*), *-ing* (*amazing*), *-ish* (*selfish*), *-like* (*birdlike*), *-less* (*meaningless*), *-ly* (*mostly*), *-ment* (*punishment*), *-ness* (*weakness*), *-ous* (*poisonous*), *-fy* (*glorify*), *-wise* (*otherwise*) and *-y* (*funny*). The stress-imposing suffixes are

*-eous* (ad ˈvantage → advan ˈtageous), *-graphy* ( ˈphoto → pho ˈtography), *-ial* ( ˈproverb → pro ˈverbial), *-ic* ( ˈclimate → cli ˈmatic), *-ion* ( ˈperfect → per ˈfection), *-ious* ( ˈinjure → in ˈjurious), *-ity* (ˈtranquil → tran ˈquillity) and *-ive* (ˈreflex → re ˈflexive).

As it is written above, more syllable words have either one stress, or one primary and one secondary stress in English. Skaličková (1982) adds that so called level stress can appear. It is used in compound words containing prefixes such as *anti-, dis-, ex-, inter-, mis-, non-, over-, pre-, re-, sub-, un-,...*which are added to the commonly used base of the word (*bishop /ˈbɪʃəp/ - archbishop /ˈaːʧˈbɪʃəp/*), in compound adjectives (*home-made /ˈhəʊmˈmeɪd/*), numbers with – *teen* ending (*fourteen /ˈfɔːˈtiːn/*), some proper names and if one word qualifies the second word (*a nice girl /ə ˈnaɪs ˈgɜːl/*).

Additionally, Cruttenden and Gimson (2008) emphasise the question of **weak syllables** which are related to function words. These words have more quantitative and qualitative patterns so they occur in stressed or unstressed forms. As Roach (1991) sees it, unstressed or weak forms are typical for personal pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, articles and auxiliary verbs. These can be stressed only when they appear in isolation or in final position, when they are contrasted with another word, when they are emphasized or when they are being in their citation forms.

It is obvious from this unit that there are essential differences mainly between the position of both primary and secondary stress, and also between the realization of stressed and unstressed syllables in Czech and English. To summarize the facts specified above, rules for stress placement are not complicated in Czech at all, but they are quite demanding in English. As Roach (1991) remarks, it is better to learn the stress for every single word individually.

## 6.3   Sentence stress

Following sections reflect on stresses in longer utterances, which are connected to rhythm. The definitions are introduced, types of rhythm are stated and the units of rhythm are presented. Furthermore, the differences in rhythm boundaries between English and Czech are shown.

"The main function of stress is to provide a means of distinguishing degrees of emphasis or contrast in sentences, as in *The big man looks angry*; the term contrastive stress is often used for this function" (Crystal, 2008, p. 454 - 455). Krčmová (1990) defines sentence stress as "the sound elimination of the gist of utterance in the way that speaker points out the articulation – acoustic features, changes the height of tone, strength or pace of speech."

## 6.4   Rhythm

"The regular occurrence of stressed syllables" (Roach, 1991, p. 120) is called rhythm. Wong (1987) points out that "it is one of the most difficult features for non-native speakers to learn and for non-native speakers to unlearn when studying other languages" (Wong, 1987, p. 22).

Roach (1991) distinguishes two **types of rhythm** – stress-timed and syllable-timed. English has stressed-timed rhythm but Czech has syllable-timed one. Kelly (2000) claims that stressed-timed rhythm (also called isochronous) means that stressed syllables occur at almost regular intervals, so unstressed syllables need to be shortened and vowels need to lose their quality. Syllable-timed rhythm means that all syllables (both stressed and unstressed) occur at regular intervals, so syllables keep their length and vowels keep their quality.

For Roach (1991), the unit of rhythm is called foot. It starts with a stressed syllable and contains all following unstressed syllables up to the next stressed one. The speaker has relatively the same time to pronounce each foot.

An example of the Czech sentence divided into feet where the stressed syllables are underlined is suggested by Ondráčková (1954): *Před jeskyní / bylo / ticho.* Ladefoged and Johnstone (2011)

write that the time between stressed syllables is longer or shorter depending on the number of unstressed ones in Czech. An English example is presented by Roach (1991): *Walk / down the / path to the / end of the ca/nal.* Ladefoged and Johnstone (2011) claim that the time between stressed syllables is more or less the same in English.

As Skaličková (1982) sees it, there are different rhythm boundaries. In Czech, one foot usually fits one word, that is one meaningful unit, but in English, the foot is a rhythmical unit and does not correspond with the meaningful units.

It follows that the main distinction between the English and Czech rhythm lies in the diverse patterns of it. The difference in division of utterances into feet is closely related to that. According to Millin (2011), the problem for Czech speakers is caused by the disrespecting of weak forms and pronouncing them as strong ones although the syllables should be reduced.

## 6.5 Intonation

Another component of suprasegmental features is considered to be intonation. First, the term is defined here, then functions of intonation are suggested, particular types of tone and tone-unit are described. At the end of the chapter, distinctions between melody structures are stated.

In Krčmová's (1990) opinion, sentence intonation is the way of melodic and strength progress of utterance. It refers to "the distinctive use of patterns of pitch, or melody" (Crystal, 2008, p. 252). As Cruttenden and Gimson (2008) put it, everyone has his or her own pitch range; it means the area of levels with the highest and lowest pitch which is commonly used by him or her.

Intonation has, according to Roach (1991), several functions. As the first one, he mentions the **attitudinal function**, which helps us to express emotions and attitudes by using different loudness, speed, pauses and voice quality. Secondly, there is the **accentual function**. It deals with the placement of stress which is used for contrastive purposes or emphasis. Thirdly, he speaks about the **grammatical function**, which includes the placement of boundaries and the

difference between questions and statements. This function also helps us avoid ambiguity in written utterances when the position of a boundary is not indicated: *Those who sold quickly made a profit*. The meaning is different when we make a pause after *sold* or after *quickly*. The next function is the **discourse** one. It enables us to recognise which information we should pay attention to or what kind of response is being expected. The falling tone indicates new information while the rising tone signalizes given information. Wells (2006) adds the **psychological function**, which is related to organizing of speech into units in order to perceive them better. As an example he mentions string of numbers 462589123 which are easier to remember if they are divided into units of three or four numbers such as 462-589-123. The last function added by Wells (2006) is the **indexical** one. In this case, intonation functions as "a marker of personal or social identity" (Wells, 2006, p. 12), so mothers or newsreaders have their typical intonation.

Roach (1991) distinguishes two types of tones (overall behaviour of the pitch) – level tone and moving tone. **Level tones** are divided into high and low and usually some uninteresting, boring information or routine are expressed by using it.

Krčmová (1990) and Skaličková (1982) distinguish two kinds of **moving tones** – tune one and tune two. Tune one means that the melody rapidly falls on the last stressed syllable. If there are some unstressed syllables following it, they are on the same melody level. This type is used in declarative sentences, wh-questions, imperative, exclamatory sentences and Kelly (2000) adds question tags expecting confirmation. According to Krčmová (1990) and Skaličková (1982), tune two means that in the end of the sentence, the melody rises. If the last syllable is stressed, the melody rises on this syllable. If there are some unstressed syllables after it, the melody rises after these unstressed syllables. This kind is used in yes/no questions, optative sentences, unfinished sentences, and Kelly (2000) adds question tags showing less certainty.

Further, Cruttenden and Gimson (2008) distinguish the fall-rise and rise-fall tone. The fall-rise tone means that the pitch falls and then rises and it gives an impression of limited agreement, hesitation or response with reservation. The rise-fall tone means that the pitch rises and then falls and is used to express surprise, approval and disapproval.

Krčmová (1990) adds one more type of tone - imperfective cadence. It is seen in reproaching or listing and it is characterized by falling of the voice before the last stressed syllable.

In the area of intonation, Roach (1991) specifies the term **tone-unit**. "It refers to a distinctive sequence of pitches or tones" (Crystal, 2008, p. 487) and consists of at least one syllable. The tone-unit includes a pre-head (PH), head (H), tonic syllable (TS) and tail (T). The pre-head includes all unstressed syllables in the unit which precede the first stressed syllable. The head is the part that starts at the first stressed syllable and continues up to the tonic syllable, not including it. When there is no stressed syllable before the tonic one, a head does not occur. The tonic syllable is "a syllable which carries a tone, has a high degree of prominence and a type of stress that will be called tonic stress" (Roach, 1991, p. 145). (Kelly (2000) uses the term key for the tonic syllable). The tail involves "any syllables between the tonic syllable and the end of the tone-unit" (Roach, 1991, p. 147).

As an example Roach (1991) presents the sentence

   PH        H          TS    PH  TS  PH     H  TS  T        H
*and then / nearer to the / front / on the / left / theres a / bit of / fo/rest / coming down to*
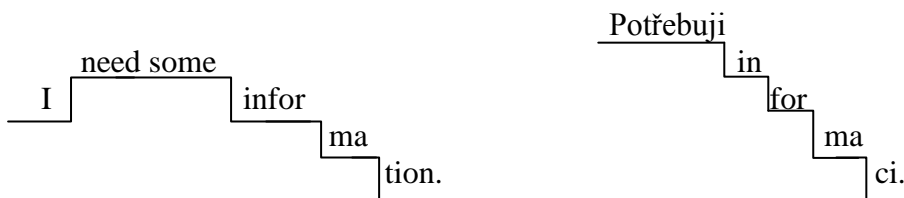
    TS     T       PH        H     TS
*the / wa/terside / and then a / bit of a / bay.*

In this part, intonation was introduced. All its functions were explained, and level and moving tones were discussed. Statements where these types of tone occur are presented. Finally, all sections of tone-unit displayed.
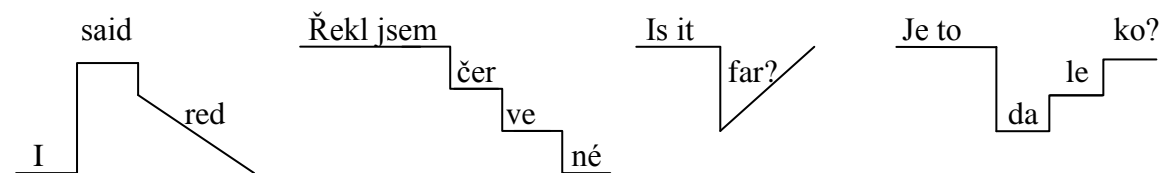
### 6.5.1 Differences between the Czech and English melody structures

Skaličková (1982) writes that both the Czech and English language follow the same melody principles. What is different is the melody structure. The differences introduced by Skaličková (1982) are stated below.

1. A Czech sentence almost always starts with a stressed syllable but an English sentence usually begins with an unstressed syllable. It means that in Czech, the speakers start on the top level of the pitch range but the English speakers start lower and then the level rises on the first stressed syllable.

```
        need some                      Potřebuji
  I              infor                          in
                      ma                          for
                         tion.                         ma
                                                          ci.
```

2. In Czech, melody falls or rises gradually after syllables but in English, the melody moves also within one syllable.

```
      said          Řekl jsem          Is it          Je to        ko?
                             čer                far?                    le
         red               ve                               da
  I                            né
```

3. There is also a difference in the question structure. In Czech, the initial top level is missing.

```
Did you          her?                 to ?
              to
         it
     give                      Dals jí
```
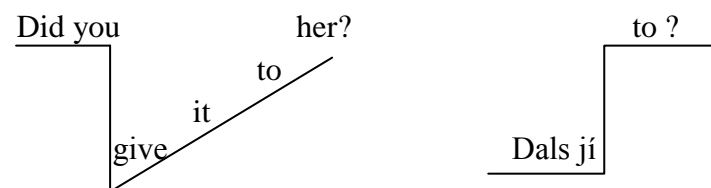
4. English tends to produce large beats. It means that several meaningful words create one beat.

When are you going
away?

Kdy
od
chá
zí
te?
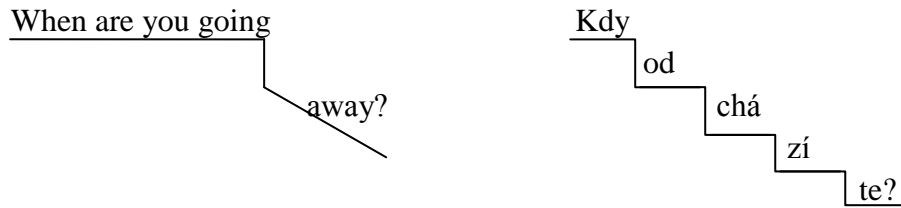
5. In Czech, a preposition always belongs to the following word whereas in English, there are typical prepositional phrases, where the preposition melodically and rhythmically belongs to the previous word.

Is your
handbreak in
der?
or

Máte
ruční
brzdu
v pořád
ku?
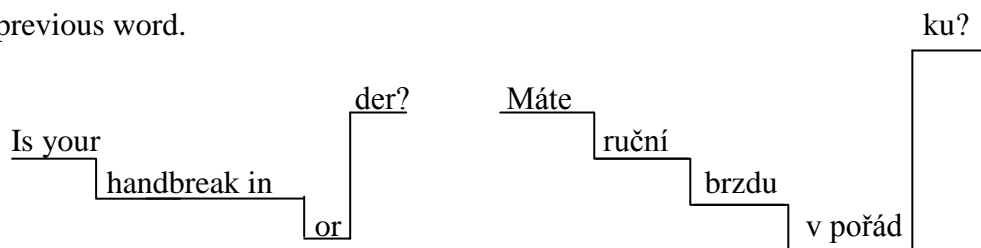
6. The Czech language has free word order but in English, there is a fixed one. It means that what can be expressed by word order in Czech, it needs to be expressed differently in English, usually phonetically.

Don't
bring
god
into it.

god
Don't bring
into it.

Nepleť sem
pána
bo
ha.

Pánaboha sem
ne
pleť.
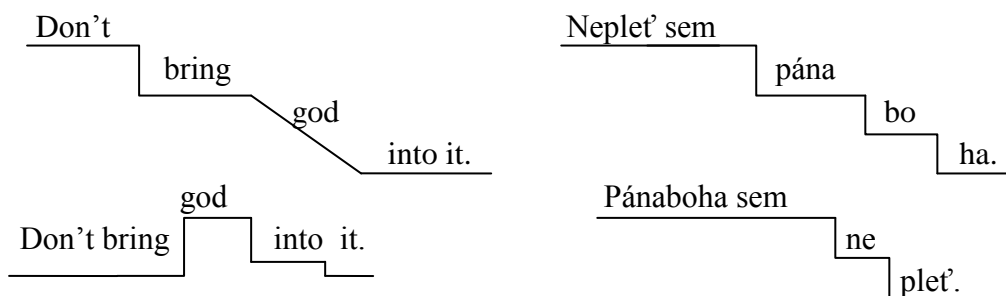
7. Question tags are actually two sentences which are connected together by the meaning. They are typical for English but they are not so common in other languages.

In the following examples, the first one is positive and the second one is negative. If both parts of a question tag have falling tone, the speaker only wants us to confirm his or her presumption.

know        Don't        Zná          Že

You | him.   | you?        te    a

ho.   no?
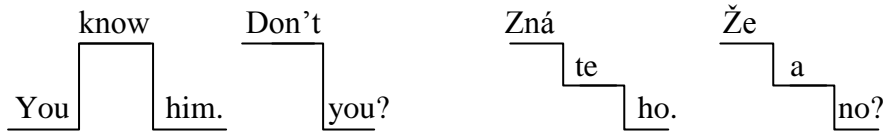
If the second part of a question tag has rising tone, the speaker is not sure and wants to know if he or she is right.

know        you?        Zná

You | him.   Don't |        te        Ne?

ho.
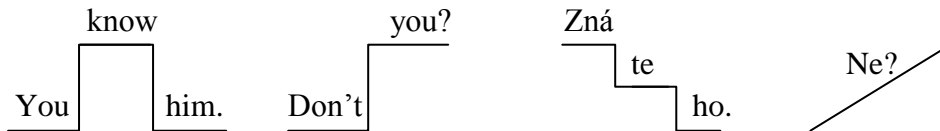
In these examples, both parts of a question tag are positive. If both parts have falling tone, the speaker expresses commentary to the clear fact.

know        Do

You | him.   | you?
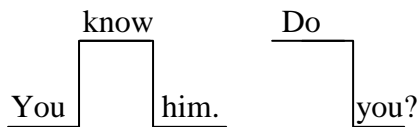
If both parts have rising tone, the speaker asks a question.

him.        you?

You

| know        Do
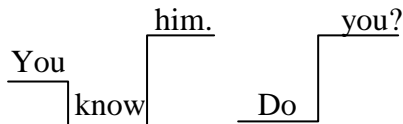
8. Also declarative questions are mentioned. They have the word order of declarative sentence and do not contain auxiliary *do.* The question character is signalized by melody.

made it her                                ma?

self?                Vyrobila to

She                                sa

9. Expressing of emphasis is the same in English and Czech. The stressed syllable is pronounced on a different tone than the unstressed one, the speed is slower, articulation is precise, we make a

pause before the emphasised unit, we enlarge the pitch range and reduce the stresses of neighbouring meaningful words. English uses circumflex melody for expressing emphasis. It is commonly used, takes place within one syllable and has large tone differences. In Czech, this type of melody is used for warnings and threats.

I | war ned you.

Va | ro val jsem tě.

Skaličková (1982) deals also with those melodic structures which are not used in Czech at all.

1. The rising tone in the end of apologies, applications, greetings or short answers in English is more polite than the falling tone.

I'm sor ry. Good mor ning.
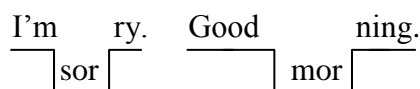
2. In long English sentences melody does not fall continuously from the beginning until the end. It rises on the certain stressed syllable and then again continues in falling. This syllable is the first stressed syllable of the following unit which can be potentially separated by a pause. The rising melody which is typical before each pause does not take place here.

I saw the tall man coming long the road.
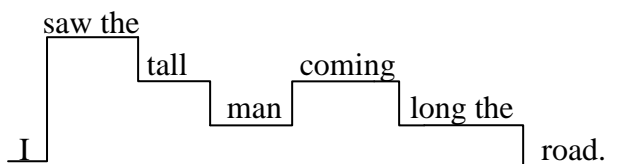
Smolka (1998) points out that Czech speakers make smaller spans between the lowest and highest syllable sounds in English than they should be and therefore the Czech English seems to be monotonous. As Millin (2011) puts it, it is also important to pay attention to unstressed

syllables at the beginning of the sentences. In English, these syllables remain neutral on rather low level of utterance until the first stressed syllable where the melody of the speech rises on the highest level.

To sum up this part, several differences in melody structures were mentioned. Many of them are influenced by the fix word order in English, by different rhythm boundaries, sentence and question structures or by the diversions in expressing of question tags. Furthermore, English language has some melody structures which are not applied in Czech.

## 6.6 Assimilation

Aspects of connected speech include assimilation, elision and linking. Subsequent part of this thesis deals with these phenomena. First of all, the terms are defined, their types are mentioned and both Czech and English examples are stated.

Assimilation is a situation when "a phoneme is realised differently as a result of being near some other phoneme belonging to a neighbouring word" (Roach, 1991, p.124). In Kelly's (2000) opinion, assimilation is called regressive when the final consonant modifies to become like the initial one, and it is named progressive when the initial consonant modifies to become like the final one. Kavka (1994) argues that regressive assimilation is typical for the Czech language and the progressive assimilation is used mainly in English.

Roach (1991) identifies three types of assimilation: assimilation of place, manner and voice. **Assimilation of place** is typical for final alveolar consonants followed by initial not alveolar consonants. As an example, Roach (1991) mentions *that person* which is pronounced /ðæp pɜːsn/. The final consonant *t* is alveolar and the initial consonant *p* is bilabial, so the final consonant *t* changes to *p*. Another example is *bright colour* pronounced as /braɪk kʌlə/. The final consonant *t* is alveolar and the initial consonant *k* is velar so *t* changes to *k*. Volín (2002) adds that this type of assimilation across word boundaries is not so common in Czech. Assimilation of

place within one words is much more common and Krčmová (1990) shows *špatně* which becomes *špaťně* as an example of that.

In Roach's (1991) opinion, **assimilation of manner** is seen rather in rapid speech towards a consonant "which makes less obstruction to the airflow" (Roach, 1991, p. 125). Usually, final plosives become fricatives or nasals. For example, *in the* is pronounced as /ɪn nə/ instead of /ɪn ðə/. Krčmová (1990) adds *menší* which changes to *menčí* as a Czech example.

According to Roach (1991), **assimilation of voice** deals with voiced and unvoiced consonants. If the final consonant is voiced and the initial consonant is unvoiced, the voiced one changes to the unvoiced as in *bad talk* /bæd tɔːk/which assimilates to /bæt tɔːk/. If the final consonant is unvoiced and the initial consonant is voiced, assimilation never takes place in English. For instance, *k* in *black dog* /blæk dɒg/ does not change to /g/. Kavka (1994) and Millin (2011) write that in Czech, neutralisation of voicing occurs when a word ends with voiced phoneme and it is pronounced as unvoiced as in *mrkev* /mrkef/.

Additionally, Kelly (2000) deals with **coalescent assimilation**. It happens when two sounds are combined and form a completely different sound. He points out several cases:

1. /t + j/ coalesce to form /tʃ/ - *last year*

2. /d + j/ blend to make /dʒ/ - *would you*.

3. /s + j/ come together to create /ʃ/– *this year*

4. /z + j/ join to make /ʒ/– *does your*

5. /ts + j/ unite to create /tʃ/ – *hates you*

6. /dz + j/ fuse to form /dʒ/– *needs you*

In Smolka's (1998) opinion, Czech speakers make incorrect assimilation of voiced consonants. For instance, they pronounce *backbone* /bækbəʊn/ as /bægbəʊn/. These mistakes are caused due to the different character of the English assimilation. In English, only unpaired consonants

are adapted, the character of paired consonants remains without any changes. In Czech, only paired consonants are adapted, unpaired ones are not changed.

## 6.7 Elision

For Roach (1991), elision is also known as zero realization or disappearing of some consonants under certain circumstances. He distinguishes several types of elision.

The first type of elision is **loss of weak vowel** after *p, t, k*. The initial plosives are aspirated and delete the middle portion of the syllable as in *potato* /pʰˈteɪtəʊ/ or *today* /tʰˈdeɪ/.

The second type is **avoidance of complex consonant cluster**. "In clusters of three plosives or two plosives plus a fricative, the middle plosive may disappear" (Roach, 1991, p. 127). For instance *acts* is not pronounced /ækts/ but /æks/ and *scripts* is not pronounced /skrɪpts/ but /scrɪps/. Kelly (2000) adds that /t/ and /d/ are usually omitted. Palková (1994) shows the Czech examples *zvláštní* which changes to *zvlášní* and Krčmová (1990) presents *švestka* which changes to *šveska*.

The third type of elision is **loss of final *v*** in *of* before consonants as in *lots of them* /lɒts ə ðəm/.

As the last type of elision, Roach (1991) mentions **contractions**. *Had, would* which are spelled ´d are pronounced /d/ after vowels and /əd/ after consonants. *Is* and *has* spelled ´s are pronounced /s/ after unvoiced consonants, /z/ after voiced consonants. *Have* spelled ´ve is pronounced /v/ after vowels and /əv/ after consonants and *are* spelled ´re is pronounced /ə/ after vowels, /ə/ and /ər/ before a consonant. When it precedes a vowel, linking *r* is used as in *We are in* /wiː ə(r)ɪn/.

Cruttenden and Gimson (2008) show more types of elision such as syncope and aphesis. **Syncope** occurs when unstressed /ə/ and /ɪ/ follow a stressed syllable and on the ground of that, unstressed syllable tends to be left out as in *interesting* /ɪntrəstɪŋ/ or *medicine* /medsɪn/.

**Aphesis** means that initial vowel or syllable may be omitted if it is unstressed. They show and example in *because* /kɒz/ or in *about* /baʊt/ and Krčmová (1990) adds *jsem* /sem/ or *tkanička* /kanitʃka/.

As Smolka (1998) puts it, Czech speakers usually connect neighbouring consonants in incorrect way. If there are the same consonants inside one word or on the boundary of two words in English, they are realized as one long common sound. As examples, *stop playing* /stɒpleɪŋ/ or *this song* /ðɪsɒŋ/.

## 6.8  Linking

Linking or liaison "refers to a sound which is introduced between linguistic units, usually for ease of pronunciation" (Crystal, 2008, p. 285). According to Roach (1991), the most commonly used is **linking /r/**. The phoneme /r/ cannot be pronounced in the final position but when it is suggested by spelling and the following word begins with vowel, then /r/ is pronounced. It means that we pronounce *here* /hɪə/ but *here are* /hɪər ə/.

The phoneme /r/ is also used to link words ending with a vowel without any suggestion of /r/ from spelling. /R/ is called **intrusive /r/** and is seen in phrases *media event* /mi:dɪər ɪvent/ or *formula A* /fɔ:mjələr eɪ/.

Cruttenden and Gimson (2008) and Kelly (2000) deal with **linking /j/ and /w/** (sometimes called transient /j/ and /w/, for example by Volín, 2002) which occur when a word finishes in *i-* or *u-* sound. /J/ and /w/ are introduced to simplify the transition between these sounds and the following vowel sounds. As examples he shows *I agree* /aɪjəgri:/ and *go on* /gəʊwɒn/.

Volín (2002) summarized the whole linking phenomenon in following chart.

| Phenomenon | Final segment | Initial segment |
|---|---|---|
| Linking /r/ | Silent /r/ | Any vowel |
| Intrusive /r/ | /ɔː, ɑː, ə/ | Any vowel |
| Transient (intrusive, linking) /j/ | /iː, ɪ, eɪ, aɪ, ɔɪ/ | Any vowel |
| Transient (intrusive, linking) /w/ | /uː, ʊ, aʊ, əʊ/ | Any vowel |

Volín (2002) mentions that because of the lack of linking in the Czech language, also English sounds discontinuous pronounced by the Czech speakers.

Palková (1994) presents the Czech phenomena of linking, not across the word boundaries as in English but within one word, and calls them epenthesis and hiatus. **Epenthesis** signifies putting a vowel between two consonants *(osm→osum)* and **hiatus** means inserting a consonant between two vowels which do not create a diphthong (*Marie → Marije*).

To summarize this part, assimilation processes in English and Czech occur in different ways. In English, progressive assimilation is typically used whereas in Czech, regressive one usually occurs. As for the place and manner, assimilation principles are very similar in both languages. In terms of assimilation of voice and coalescent assimilation, English has its own rules. Common features are seen in the elision phenomenon. Both the Czech and English languages omit some phonemes in consonant clusters and also aphesis is similarly performed. In terms of linking, the Czech speakers tend not to produce as continuous speech as it is supposed. Linking and intrusive elements which are typical for English are not used in Czech.

# 7 Research

Research was implemented to find out mistakes which are commonly made by Czech learners of English in pronunciation in reading tasks, and their causes. The whole research was carried out using three methods. It was the performance analysis, interview and observation.

First, the performance analysis is introduced. Pupils aged 11 − 15 were submitted several words which had been chosen to find out how certain phonemes in these words would be pronounced. Then a short text was introduced to them. In this text, rhythm, intonation and some aspects of connected speech were observed and compared with both British and American native speakers' pronunciation.

Secondly, standardized interview was carried out to explore teachers' opinions of pronunciation teaching. Questions had been prepared in advance and the teachers commented on them without any time or content limitations. At the end of each interview, the teachers were encouraged to add any other relevant comments to the topic of pronunciation teaching.

The last method applied was classroom observation. It was accomplished in two lower secondary schools where eight classes were visited and certain issues according to prepared questions were monitored.

## 7.1 Segmental area of pronunciation

52 lower secondary pupils were shown 74 words to pronounce. Each word was focused on pronunciation of certain elements, such as vowels and consonants, and they were chosen according to Studijní materiály k fonetice angličtiny by Skaličková (1977). The results are evaluated together for all words and then, vowel and consonant phonemes separately.

On an average, 57 % of words were pronounced right by each pupil. The best results were achieved by a pupil who pronounced 66 words correctly, which means 89 %. Two pupils were

able to produce 59 words without mistakes, which means 79 %. The worst results were accomplished by pupils who pronounced 21 and 24 words correctly, which means 28 % and 32 %.

On an average, each word was accurately produced by 56 % of pupils. The most often correctly pronounced words were *go, name, time, pen, possible, horse,* which were pronounced without mistakes, and *where, two, sixty*, each of them being once mispronounced. The most problematic words to pronounce seem to be *of, dog, village,* not once accurately produced, and *luxury, psychology,* each being correctly pronounced only once.

### 7.1.1   Pronunciation of vowels

Pronunciation of the phoneme /i:/ was tested on two words. In *evening* and *machine*, this phoneme is represented by the different graphemes. 73 % of pupils correctly realized this phoneme. 88,5 % pronounced it correctly in *evening* but 11,5 % substituted it for /e/. 57,5 % pronounced it right in *machine*, however, 36,5 % mispronounced it as /ɪ/, 4 % as /aɪ/ and 2 % as /ə/.

Realization of /ɪ/ was studied on following words: *image, England, ship, possible, women, busy.* 52,5 % of pupils produced the phoneme without mistakes. 73 % pronounced the letter *a* in *image* correctly, nevertheless, 21 % pronounced it as /eɪ/, 2 % as /ɑ:/, another 2 % as /e/, and the rest 2% as /ʌ/. 90,5 % correctly realized the letter *e* in *England*; only 9,5 % mispronounced it as /e/. 92,5 % correctly pronounced the letter *i* in *ship*; just 7,5 % replaced it by /i:/. 33 % pronounced the grapheme *i* as /ɪ/ also in *possible*, which is acceptable in British English. The rest 67 % realized it as /ə/, which is more common for American English. 7,5 % pronounced it rightly in *women* but 92,5 % replaced it by /ʊ/. This mispronunciation was probably caused by exchanging *women* for *woman*. The phoneme /ɪ/ represented by the letter *u* was correctly pronounced by 19 % of pupils. 61 % mispronounced it as /ʌ/, 15,5 % as /ʊ/ and 4 % as /ju:/.

Pronunciation of the phoneme /ʊ/ was examined on two words. 62,5 % of pupils pronounced it correctly. 29 % rightly realized the grapheme *o* in *wolf*, 71 % substituted it for /ɒ/. The grapheme *u* in *full* was correctly produced by 96 %, 2 % mispronounced it as /juː/ and 2 % with /ʌ/.

Realization of /uː/ was tested on *two*, represented by the grapheme *o*, and on *rule*, represented by *u*. This sound is correctly produced by 96 % of pupils. The phoneme in *two* was produced without mistakes whereas in *rule*, it was correctly pronounced by 92,5 % of pupils. The rest 7,5 % mispronounced it as /ʊ/.

Realization of the phoneme /e/ was studied on two graphemes, on *a* in *many* and on *e* in *pen*. 92 % of pupils pronounced it right. The phoneme was absolutely correctly realized in *pen*. 85 % pronounced it right in *many* but 15 % replaced it by /ʌ/.

Pronunciation of /ə/ was examined on the following words, in each represented by the different grapheme: *about, silence, possible, memory, figure*. 87 % of pupils realized this phoneme correctly in all words. In *about*, the phoneme represented by the grapheme *a* was correctly pronounced by 86,5 % of pupils; 11,5 % mispronounced it as /ʌ/ and 2 % as /ɒ/. In *silence*, it was correctly pronounced by 98 %; 2 % replaced it by /ɑː/. In *possible*, /ə/ was pronounced by 67 % of pupil, but as it is mentioned above, 33 % pronounced it as /ɪ/, which is more regular in British English. In *memory*, pupils have no problems with pronunciation of /ə/, and in *figure*, 82,5 % pronounce the phoneme correctly, the rest 17,5 % mispronounced it as /ʊ/.

The phoneme /ɜː/ is represented by the digraph *ir* (tested on *bird*), by the grapheme *o* (tested on *word*) and *u* (tested on *turn*). 69 % of pupils rightly pronounced the phoneme. In *bird*, 82,5 % pronounced it correctly, but 17,5 % pronounced it as /ɪ/. In *word*, the phoneme was correctly realized by 42,5 % of pupils, 57,5 % replaced it by /ɔː/. In *turn*, it was correctly pronounced by 82,5 % of pupils but 15,5 % pronounced it as /ʊ/ and 2 % as /ɑː/.

Realization of the phoneme /ɔ:/ was examined on two graphemes. In *all*, it is represented by *a*, and in *horse* by *o*. 87,5 % of pupils pronounced this phoneme correctly. In *horse*, pupils had no problems with the realization of the phoneme. In *all*, 75 % of pupils pronounced it correctly but 25 % mispronounced it as /ʌ/.

Pronunciation of the phoneme /æ/ was studied on the grapheme *a* in *bad*. Only 4 % of pupils were able to pronounce it correctly. 94 % of pupils substituted it for /e/ and 2 % for /ʌ/.

The phoneme /ʌ/ is represented by the grapheme *o* in *love* and by *u* in *much*. 76 % of pupils rightly realized the phoneme. In *love*, it was correctly pronounced by 55,5 % of pupils. 40,5 % produced it as /ɑ:/ and 2 % as /ɒ/. In *much*, 96 % of pupils pronounced the phoneme correctly while 4 % mispronounced it with /ʊ/.

Realization of the phoneme /ɑ:/ was studied on the grapheme *a* in *father*. 96 % of pupils pronounced it correctly whereas 2 % replaced it by /e/ and 2 % by /ɒ/.

Pronunciation of /ɒ/ was examined on the grapheme *a* in *what* and *o* in *dog*. 99 % of pupils realized this phoneme without mistakes. In *dog*, the pronunciation was absolutely correct and in *what*, 98 % of pupils pronounced it correctly and just 2 % mispronounced it as /ɔ:/.

Pronunciation of the phoneme /ɪə/ is studied on the digraph *er* in *here*. 88,5 % of pupils realized the phoneme correctly, 9,5 % mispronounced it as /eə/ and 2 % as /i:/.

Realization of the phoneme /ʊə/ was tested on the grapheme *u* in *sure*. The phoneme was correctly realized only by 50 % of pupils. It was mispronounced as /u:/ by 19 % of pupils; as /ɜ:/ by 17 %; as /ju:/ by 7,5 %; and as /ʌ/, /ɑ:/, /aɪ/, each by 2 %.

Pronunciation of /eə/ was studied on the digraph *ar* in *care* and on *er* in *where*. 91 % of pupils pronounced this phoneme right. Pupils had no problems with pronouncing the phoneme in

*where*. 82,5 % of them realized it correctly in *care*, nevertheless, 11,5 % replaced it by /ɑ:/, 4% replaced it by /eɪ/ and 2 % by /ʌ/.

The phoneme /eɪ/ represented by the grapheme *a* in *name*, /əʊ/ represented by *o* in *go* and /aɪ/ represented by *i* in *time* were pronounced without any mistakes.

From the research findings it follows that the most demanding phoneme to pronounce is /æ/. On the contrary, the easiest phonemes to produce seem to be the diphthong phonemes stated in the paragraph above.

### 7.1.2   Pronunciation of consonants

In the following section dealing with the consonant's pronunciation, only the consonants in non-final positions or in final position where the assimilation of voice does not occur were examined.

The phoneme /tʃ/ was studied on pronunciation of the combination of the graphemes *t* and *u* in *cultur*e and on the digraph *ch* in *child*. 87,5 % of pupils realized this phoneme right. 75 % correctly pronounced it in *culture*, 25 % mispronounced it as /t/. Nobody had problems with pronouncing this phoneme in *child*.

The phoneme /dʒ/ was tested on the grapheme *g* in *sugges*t and on *j* in *object*. Only 36,5 % of pupil were able to realized this phoneme exactly. 21 % pronounced it right in *suggest* whereas 79 % replaced it by /g/. 52 % produced it correctly in *object* while 48 % mispronounced it as /j/.

The phoneme /k/ was examined on the grapheme *c* in *castle, care, cupboard*, on the grapheme *k* in *keep* and on the digraph *ch* in *character*. Whereas pupils had no problems with realization of the graphemes *c* and *k*, only 17,5 % of them were able to produce the phoneme correctly in the digraph *ch*. 71 % pronounced it as /x/ and 11,5 % as /tʃ/.

Pronunciation of the phoneme /f/ was tested on the grapheme *f* in *full* and *few*. 98 % of pupils realized it correctly but 2 % substituted it for /v/.

The phoneme /v/ was studied on the word *village* where it is represented by the grapheme *v*. 61,5 % of pupils pronounced this phoneme right but 38,5 % mispronounced it as /w/. This result was unexpected because the phoneme-grapheme correspondence is the same as in the Czech language. Despite this they mispronounced it.

Realization of the phoneme /θ/ was tested on the digraph *th* in *thank*. Only 6 % of pupils correctly realized this phoneme. 88,5 % replaced it by /f/ and 5,5 % by /d/.

The phoneme /ð/ was also studied on the digraph *th*. In the word *that*, 23 % of pupils pronounced it right. 77 % of them mispronounced it as /d/.

Pronunciation of the phoneme /s/ was examined on the grapheme *c* in *city,* and *s* in *silence* and *sixty*. While there were no problems with realization of the phoneme represented by the grapheme *s*, one pupil mispronounced *s* as /ts/ in city.

Realization of the phoneme /z/ was tested on the grapheme *s* in *busy* and *reason*, and on *z* in *zero*. 74 % were able to pronounce this phoneme right. All pupils pronounced /z/ correctly in *zero* but some of them had problems with realization of this phoneme in *reason* and *busy*. 48 % pronounced it correctly, 48 % mispronounced is as /s/ and 4 % as /ʃ/.

Pronunciation of the phoneme /ʃ/ was examined on the grapheme *c* in *ocean*, *s* in *sure*, *t* in *nation* and on the digraph *sh* in *should*. 75 % of pupils correctly pronounced this phoneme. No one had problems with pronunciation of the phoneme in *should*, 77 % pronounced it correctly in *nation* but 23 % mispronounced it with /t/. 73 % realized it correctly in *ocean* whereas 19 % replaced it by /ts/ and 7,5 % by /s/. In *sure*, 50 % of pupils pronounced it correctly but 50 % of them replaced it by /s/.

The phoneme /ʒ/ was studied on the word *occasion* where it is represented by the grapheme *s*. Only 7,5 % of pupil realized this phoneme correctly. 55,5 % mispronounced it as /ʃ/, 32,5 % as /s/ and 4 % as /z/.

Realization of the phoneme /w/ was tested on the grapheme *w* in *women, what* and *wolf*. 88,5 % of pupils realized this phoneme right, but 11,5 % replaced it by /v/.

Pronunciation of /j/ was examined on *i* in *onion*. 98 % of pupils were able to pronounce it correctly whereas 2 % mispronounced it as /ʃ/.

Pronunciation of certain consonant phonemes was examined on several words. In case of /p, b, t, d, g, m, n, ŋ, h, l, r/, the phonemes were produced absolutely correctly, which was expected because these phonemes are represented by the same graphemes also in the Czech language. Pupils pronounced them in *pen, possible*; *bad, table, about, bar, bird, cupboard, busy, object, possible; table, time; dog; go; many, machine, memory, much, music; name, nation; England; heaven; love, full; rule* without any mistake.

### 7.1.2.1 Silent letters

An interesting criterion to examine are the silent letters, which were studied on *guest, hour, knife, should, psychology, cupboard, island, castle, who* and *write*. In all these words, the silent letter was correctly identified by 40 % pupils. The rest of them (60 %) pronounced the letter which is written in the word. The most problematic word, taking all chosen silent letters into consideration, seems to be /p/ in *psychology,* which was properly performed only by 4 % of pupils. The best result was achieved in the word *who,* which was correctly read by 84,5 % of pupils.

### 7.1.3 British and American pronunciation

What needs to be added is the fact that when there are two possibilities to realize a word, with either British or American pronunciation, the pupils tend to pronounce it with the American one. This effect was found in 26 words out of 74. 59,5 % of all words were accurately pronounced; 61,5 % in American and 38,5 % in British English. The other 40,5 % of words were

mispronounced, so it is not possible to determine if they were realized rather with the British or American pronunciation.

15 words (*father, care, sure, character, here, where, culture, bar, bird, cupboard, horse, word, hour, turn* and *figure)* were realized without the r-sound in British English. For instance, *bar* is pronounced as /bɑː/ in British and as /bɑːr/ in American English, *where* is pronounced /weə/ in British and /wer/ in American English. 66 % of these words were pronounced with the American pronunciation, 34 % of them with the British one.

Words such as *what, psychology, object* and *possible* are realized with the /ɒ/ phoneme in British English but in American English they are realized with /ɑː/. For example *what* is pronounced /wɒt/ in British and /wɑːt/ in American English. 31,5 % of these words were pronounced with American and 68,5 % with the British pronunciation.

In words like *go, zero, ocean*, the diphthong /əʊ/ in British English is replaced by /oʊ/ in American English. 77,5 % of the word were pronounced with American and 22,5 % with British pronunciation.

In *castle*, the British pronunciation is /ˈkɑːsəl/, the American one is /ˈkæsəl/. This word was pronounced in British pronunciation by 75 % of pupils. The British pronunciation of *suggest* /səˈdʒest/ was also preferred to the American one /səgˈdʒest/ by 100 % of all pupils.

To sum up the consonant research, the consonants which are pronounced in the same way as in the Czech language were mostly correctly realized. The most problematic seem to be the phonemes which are not known in Czech, including the silent letters.

## 7.2 Suprasegmental area of pronunciation

Suprasegmental level of English pronunciation was explored both on the groups of words presented above and on a short text which was randomly chosen on the Internet. This text was

adjusted for the level of knowledge of lower secondary pupils and for the purposes of research. It was shortened and certain words which were considered to be difficult were replaced by those which are known by pupils or by more common ones.

### 7.2.1 Word stress

Word stress placement was studied on words such as *occasion, about, machine, suggest, psychology* and *exact*. In these words, the main stress is not placed on the first syllable but on the second one. As it is mentioned in the theoretical part, words with different stress placement than on the first syllable usually cause problems to Czech speakers. On an average, 49,5 % of words were produced with the correct stress placement. The most problematic word in this examined area seems to be *psychology* /saɪˈkɒlədʒɪ/. The stress on the second syllable was correctly realized by 11,5 % of pupils. In *suggest* /səˈdʒest/ it was accurately placed by 23 % of pupils; in *exact* /ɪgˈzækt/ by 27 %; in *machine* /məˈʃiːn/ by 55,5 %; in *about* /əˈbaʊt/ by 86,5 %; and in *occasion* /əˈkeɪʒən/ by 94 %.

### 7.2.2 Rhythm

The ability to pronounce stressed and unstressed syllables in an utterance was examined on the fluent text. There are altogether 277 syllables in the text. On an average, 41 % of them were stressed when read by native speakers. It means that native speakers created 113 feet in the text. In comparison with that, 61 % syllables were stressed by Czech pupils, which means that they produced 169 feet. The performance of a Czech pupil which was the most similar to the native one, taking an occurrence of stressed syllables into account, contained 50,5 % of stressed syllables. On the other hand, there was a pupil who stressed 78 % of syllables and it was the performance which differed the most in this considered area.

The most problematic sentences or phrases concerning the rhythm seem to be *not to look at him* and *come into my spa*. While native speakers pronounced one phrase as *not to <u>look</u> at him*

(stressed syllable underlined), 82,5 % of Czech pupils created it as _not to look at him_. Only 17,5 % pronounced it in the same way as the native speakers. Similarly, the native speakers' _come into my spa_ was read as _come into my spa_ by 86,5 % of Czech pupils. Only 13,5 % realized it equally as the native speakers.

However, questions such as _What do you want?_ and _What is your name?_ were performed in the same way by the both native speakers and by 94 % of pupils. The sentence _Well, of course I can_ was read by the native speakers just as by 88,5 % of pupils.

### 7.2.3 Intonation

In the survey, the intonation of a British speaker, American speaker and Czech pupils were assessed. Rising and falling melody was examined on several sections of the presented text. The melody movements are marked with right-angled linking and curved lines using shape unit in Microsoft Office Word 2007.

Various types of sentences (the declarative sentences, wh-questions, yes/no questions) were chosen to show the differences in melody patterns. The sections were _Lisa lives with her dog, Fluffy. Fluffy never eats anything that costs less than 50 dollars. He has a really expensive taste. Lisa looks for him everywhere, but she can't find him. What do you want? What is your name? Fluffy thinks. The dog smiles. And you? A bath?_

The melody of speech in _Lisa lives with her dog, Fluffy_ was falling when pronounced both by the British and American speaker.

Lisa
   lives with her
           dog,
               Fluf
                  fy.

94 % of Czech pupils read it also with the falling melody but it raised and fell several times in the sentence.

```
      sa            her        Fluf
Li _|‾|_ lives with _|‾|_ dog, _|‾|_ fy.
```

6 % of pupils read it with the rise of melody in the end.

```
      sa            her
Li _|‾|_ lives with _|‾|_ dog,        fy.
                              |‾Fluf‾|
```

The sentence *Fluffy never eats anything that costs less than 50 dollars* was chosen because of its uniqueness in melody movements when read by the British speaker. In this sentence, melody did not fall continuously but it sometimes fluctuated.

```
                    a                          dol
        never eats _|‾|_ ny             fifty _|‾|_
Fluffy _|           |_ thing that costs less than _|   |_ lars.
```

In American English, it sounded more monotonous but the melody fell too. 83 % of Czech pupil read it in the same way.

```
        never eats any              fifty dol
Fluffy _|           |_ thing that costs less than _|   |_ lars.
```

17 % of Czech respondents read it with the raise of melody in the end.

```
        never eats any              fifty        lars.
Fluffy _|           |_ thing that costs less than _| |_ dol |‾
```

The sentence *He has a really expensive taste* was chosen because it is expected to be problematic. The melody falls here but the highest point of the pitch range comes later on. Both British and American read it equally and 19 % of Czech pupils too.

```
                 really
                      |expensive
He has a |            |       |taste.
```
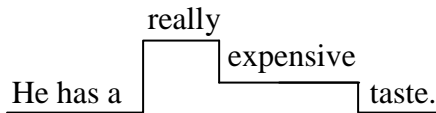
38,5 % of pupils read it with the highest point at the beginning of the sentence and then the melody fell.

```
He has a
        |really
             |expensive
                      |taste.
```
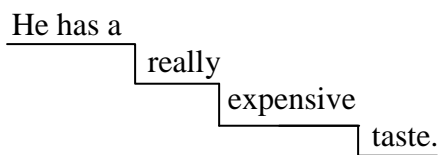
33 % of pupils started with the highest point at the beginning and then they raised their voice once again.

```
He          really
   |            |expensive
   |has a |            |taste.
```
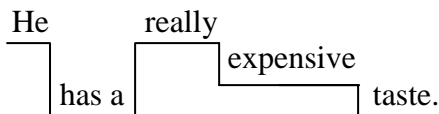
9,5 % raised their voice more times, also at the very end of the sentence.

```
He          really
   |            |expensive
   |has a |            |taste⤴
```
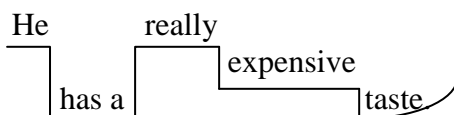
Intonation in *Lisa looks for him everywhere, but she can't find him* was differently realized by the British and by the American speaker. While the British speaker's position of tone started low and raised twice in the sentence (the first following diagram), the American speech started from the highest tone position in both clauses (the second following diagram). 88,5 % of Czech pupils read this sentence with a similar melody structure as the American speaker.

```
                    eve                    find
      looks for him |  |ry                |    |
Lisa |                 |where, but she can't|  |him.
```
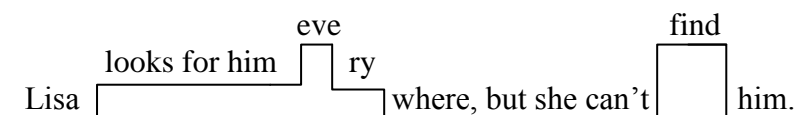
Lisa looks for him everywhere, but she can't find him.

11,5 % of them raised their voice at the end of each clause.

Lisa looks for him eve ry where, but she can't find him.

The questions *What do you want?* and *What is your name?* can by pronounced differently by the different speakers. They were realized with a falling melody by the British speaker and by 11,5 % of the pupils.

What do you want?        What is your name?

The questions were performed with a rising-falling melody by the American speaker and by 23% of the Czech pupils.

What do you want?        What is your name?

42 % of Czech pupils read these questions with a rising melody.

What do you want?        What is your name?

23 % of pupils realized the sentence with a falling-rising melody.

What do you want?        What is your name?

The introductory sentences such as *Fluffy thinks* and *The dog smiles* were expressed with the level tone by the British speaker (the first following diagram), whereas by the American one, they were realized with a falling tone (the second following diagram). 17 % of Czech pupils pronounced them as the British and 69 % of them as the American speaker.

Fluffy thinks.                                        The dog smiles.

Fluffy                                                The dog
       thinks.                                                smiles.

13,5 % of Czech pupils read these sentences with a rising melody.

        thinks.                                                smiles.
Fluffy                                                The dog

The last examined issues in the intonation section are questions such as *And you?* and *A bath?* which were realized with a rising melody by the British speaker, American speaker and 94 % of the Czech pupils.

     bath?                                               you?

A                                                    And

6 % of them read the question in a different was, they chose a falling tone in the end.

     bath?                                               you?

A                                                    And

To sum up the intonation section, tone movements are various not only comparing English and Czech pronunciation, but they differ also among individual speakers, no matter if native or foreign language ones. According to the findings, 52 % of the Czech pupils copied rather the American melody structures and 19 % of them realized the melody rather as the British speaker. 29 % of the respondents pronounced the sentences with another structure, which was not still wrong.

### 7.2.4 Assimilation

Another phenomenon which is explored in this part of the research is the assimilation of voice. In the words *bad, village, dog, love* and *of*, there are consonants which stand in the final position and are the subject of assimilation. Only 3 % of pupils were able to pronounce them as voiced, the other 97 % devoiced them. It means that /d/ was replaced by /t/, /dʒ/ with /tʃ/, /g/ with /k/ and /v/ with /f/.

This question of assimilation was studied also on the text. There are connections of words such as *with her dog, could you, and you* and *what is your* which were realized differently in a fast flow of speech by the British and American speaker. These phrases were compared with the performance of the Czech pupils.

The connection of words *with her dog* wass assimilated as /ˈwɪðə ˈdɒg/ in English and it was presented in this way by 13,5 % of Czech pupils. 79 % of them pronounced it as /ˈwɪf ˈhɜːr ˈdɒk/ and 7,5 % as /ˈwɪtʃ ˈhɜːr ˈdɒk/.

In phrases such as *could you* and *and you,* coalescent assimilation occurs. In English fast speech, they were pronounced like /ˈkʊdʒjə/ and /əndʒˈjʊ/. They were pronounced like this only by 4 % of the Czech pupils. The rest 96 % pronounced them /ˈkʊd ˈjuː/ and /ent ˈjuː/.

The last examined connection of words is *what is your.* In English it was realized as /ˈwɒtɪʃjə/ by the British and as /ˈwɒtʃjə/ by the American speaker. 79 % of pupils read this phrase rather as /ˈwɒt ɪs ˈjɔː/ and 21 % of them as /ˈwɒtsjɔː/.

The discovered facts confirm the theory from the previous part of this thesis. In the area of assimilation, Czechs mainly have problems with devoicing and realization of assimilation across word boundaries. They tend to pronounce each word separately to avoid assimilation.

### 7.2.5   Elision

The disappearing of consonants was examined on the phrases *his snack* and *eats something.* They were realized as /hɪˈsnæk/ and /ˈiːtsʌmθɪŋ/ in English. 43 % of pupils produced them equally, whereas 57 % of pupils read them as /hɪs ˈsnek/ and /ˈiːts ˈsʌmfɪŋk/.

### 7.2.6   Linking

The linking phenomenon was researched on the set phrases such as *never eats* including linking /r/; *really expensive, he is* including linking /j/; and *you a bath* including linking /w/.

*Never eats* was realized as /nevəˈriːts/ by the British and American speakers and also by 11,5 % of Czech pupils. 84,5 % of the pupils pronounced it as /ˈnevər ˈiːts/ and 4 % as /ˈnevər ˈets/.

*Really expensive* was read as /ˈrɪlɪjɪksˈpensɪv/ in English and 7,5 % of the Czech pupils read it in the same way. 50 % of pupils produced it as /ˈrɪlɪ ɪkspˈensɪf/ and 42 % of them as /ˈrɪlɪ eksˈpensɪf/. *He is* was realized as /hɪˈjɪz/ by the English speakers and by 13,5 % of the Czech pupils. 86,5 % of pupils pronounced it rather /hiː ˈɪs/.

Finally, the set phrase *you a bath* was realized as /jʊwəˈbɑːθ/ in English but only 6 % of the Czech pupils pronounced it in the same way. Otherwise, it sounded rather as /ˈjuː ə ˈbɑːf/ performed by 94 % of the Czech pupils.

Similarly as in case of avoiding assimilation, the Czech pupils avoid linking by pronouncing words separately. Only 9 % of the respondents were able to use linking phenomenon in general. There is a tendency of the Czech pupils to use the glottal stop to emphasize the boundaries between two words.

## 7.3  Interviews

Interviews with eight lower-secondary teachers were taken to find out how they teach and practice pronunciation, how they correct mistakes and what are, according to them, the difficulties pupils have with pronunciation.

The first question concerned the way how pronunciation of new words is taught. Teachers claimed that pupils' attention is turned to the production of certain sounds when they are asked to learn new vocabulary. Pupils first listen to the words with the proper realization of phonemes and word stress included there by teachers, and then they repeat them together and individually. Pupils also read the words according to the IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet) signs which symbolize their pronunciation. Sometimes they are asked to find words with the same phonemes, for instance *cat – hat*. In certain lessons, teachers deal with pronunciation corners (special pronunciation exercises in coursebooks focused on various pronunciation topics), so pupils are taught intonation, rhythm, differences between short and long vowels and so on.

The second question dealt with the issue if teachers teach pronunciation systematically or just when some problems occur. All teachers declared systematic teaching. They follow the books' pronunciation exercises and one of the teachers pointed out that she places great emphasize on pronunciation teaching so at the beginning of each lesson she starts with short rhymes to present the rhythm and intonation and the pupils are asked to pronounce them properly. Furthermore, each lesson includes at least one pronunciation exercise. If the teachers notice any mistakes which are made regularly, they usually put the corrected form down on the board and pupils are encourage to pronounce and repeat it properly.

The third question was related to pronunciation tasks which are mainly focused on in the lessons. The teachers concurred that they usually prefer teaching individual segments to suprasegmental issues. As they put it, they always have to adapt to pupils capabilities. If they are not able to learn the pronunciation of certain phonemes correctly, they cannot be primarily taught rhythm or

intonation. However, teachers have to follow pupils' coursebooks and there are pronunciation corners, so they have to pay attention also to suprasegemental issues.

The fourth question referred to supplementary materials used for teaching pronunciation. As the teachers agreed, coursebooks are usually sufficient for its teaching. Except them, teacher use Internet sources for rhymes or tongue twisters, digital learning materials and certain exercises from the book English Pronunciation in Use by Mark Hancock.

The fifth question related to what proportion of lessons is dedicated to pronunciation. In general, it is always taught when new vocabulary is introduced. Mainly, the beginning of a lesson is engaged in pronunciation within warm-up activities. According to the teachers, it is not usually the main point of a lesson, it is taught when problems occur in the lesson during other activities or when there is an exercise in the books.

The sixth question tried to find out the teachers' opinions of the most problematic pronunciation areas and how they solve these problems. Teachers claimed that pupils usually have problems with the realization of unique English phonemes. Furthermore, most difficulties are caused by bad pronunciation habits starting at elementary schools. The pupils are often taught by unqualified teachers who have wrong pronunciation as such.

The seventh question found out teachers' attitudes to correction of pronunciation mistakes. Apart from one teacher, all of them agreed that they do correct the mistakes made by pupils. Sometimes they encourage pupils to correct each other's mistakes. One teacher said that she does not correct pronunciation mistakes during pupils' longer narrations or dialogues because she is convinced that they would lose their motivation to speak.

The eighth question was focused on dealing with pupils who have problems with pronunciation. A half of asked teachers pay special attention to these pupils in the lesson (teachers encourage

them to speak as much as possible), whereas another half of teachers teach them individually out of the lesson.

The ninth question found out if pupils have pronunciation of unknown words at their disposal in both written and spoken form and if the spoken form is recorded by a Czech or native speaker. The teachers agreed that the phonological transcription is added to each new word but there is usually no spoken form. If a new word is included in an article or exercise which is recorded on a CD, pupils have an opportunity to hear the native speaker pronouncing this word.

The last question concerned the use of IPA signs in pronunciation teaching. All teachers claimed that they use IPA signs in their teaching. The pupils are acquainted with them, they get a chart of the symbols with examples. These signs are also used in their coursebooks and in magazines which are normally used in lessons. The pupils are sometimes tested on IPA signs in a way that they have to write down the proper word according to its transcription.

In my opinion, each lesson is long enough to include at least one pronunciation focused activity. Pronunciation is an area of English language teaching which should be taught systematically so that pupils do not have difficulties with it. Teachers usually prefer teaching vocabulary and grammar to follow the syllabi, and pronunciation is a secondary aim. Teachers are often aware of pronunciation difficulties their pupils have to face, but they try to put the blame on the elementary English teachers who taught them bad pronunciation and now it is too late to eliminate the mistakes and to improve the pronunciation. I really appreciate using IPA signs in pronunciation teaching and learning, but it was realized that if pupils are supposed to transcribe the pronunciation to their vocabulary books, they use the Czech letter with diacritics instead of the IPA ones, so *age* is transcribed as /ejč/ and then also pronounced rather like that.

## 7.4  Observations

To gain better knowledge of pronunciation difficulties, eight English lessons in different lower-secondary classes were observed. Each lesson was taught by a different teacher to different learners. The observation was focused mainly on teachers' dealing with pronunciation mistakes, types and correction of mistakes and teaching pronunciation.

Teachers corrected pupils' mistakes in 75 % of situations. Pupils were almost always interrupted immediately. Mainly when they answered teachers' questions, talked to them or to the pupils, and read instructions in the coursebooks. Hardly ever were they interrupted at the end of their speaking; only when they communicated with a partner, read longer texts in books or performed dialogues.

When pupils made pronunciation mistakes, they were almost never asked to pronounce the mistaken part accurately. On many occasions, only the teacher pronounced it correctly but neither the pupil who made the mistake nor the whole class are encouraged to repeat it.

The largest number of mistakes was made in pronunciation of certain phonemes and in stress placements. Pupils had mainly problems with pronouncing *the* before a vowel and with realization of /ð/ in *the*. Moreover, they did not respect weak forms at all. They pronounced auxiliary verbs strongly. As for stresses, in one class, pupils stressed wrong syllables in *adjective, translation, December*.

Pupils were very often notified about an exception in pronunciation. For example, mostly the pronunciation of *the* before a vowel was emphasized, and the silent letter in *honest* was pointed out in one class.

Pupils were usually taught pronunciation of unknown words by listening to and repeating certain word or longer utterances. 50 % of pupils were listening to native speakers pronunciation,

37,5 % of pupils were listening to their teacher's pronunciation and 12,5 % of pupils learned the pronunciation of a word from its spelling or from its phonological transcription in the books.

Pronunciation was practiced by reading short articles in books, by speaking activities or by translating vocabulary from the Czech to English language. The most problematic words to pronounce seem to be the ones including unique English phonemes.

Pupils' reading was quite monotonous, they did not follow the English intonation patterns. Rhythm was again adjusted to the Czech one. Stresses were wrongly placed, linking did not often occur.

From the observation it follows that teachers sometimes do not pay attention to pupils' mistakes, they ignore them and do not always correct them. Furthermore, pupils are not encouraged to correct the mistakes themselves and to repeat the right pronunciation after the teacher or another pupil. Then the mistakes stay uncorrected and can be considered as right by pupils.

Taking results from all methods of research into account, Czech pupils definitely have essential problems in English pronunciation. These problems occur both on the segmental and suprasegmental level. However, according to the research, the mistakes on the suprasegmental level are more obvious. It is probably caused by the style of teaching pronunciation. The pupils are not encouraged to produce longer speeches in the lessons. If they speak English at least, they produce just words or short phrases. Longer sentences or utterances are rare to notice. It corresponds to the fact that primarily segments of pronunciation are pointed out in lessons and suprasegmentals are only introduced but not practised much or improved.

# Conclusion

The main idea of the diploma thesis was to demonstrate the areas of pronunciation in reading tasks which are demanding for Czech speakers, to find out why they are problematic and to what extent.

The distinctions in phonological inventories between the Czech and English language were presented and the differences between individual segments (vowels and consonants) and suprasegmental features were stated in the theoretical part. The practical part of this project was supposed to find out the extent of difficulties faced by Czech learners of English.

Research showed that suprasegmental features are usually more difficult to adopt by Czech speakers. From the interviews and observations it follows that suprasegmental features are not considered to be as important as the segments in pronunciation teaching. So the problems reside not only in the different phonological system of both languages but also in teachers' approaches to teaching pronunciation and its means. The difficulties could be surmounted if teachers considered pronunciation a more important part of English language teaching. On the grounds of overlooking pupils' mistakes, they can fix the pronunciation mistakes they heard and regard them as correct. Already improved mistakes are then hard to remove.

According to the thesis, it is obvious why certain phonemes are difficult to pronounce by the Czech speakers. It can be said that English pronunciation of Czech lower secondary pupils is usually understandable, although it often differs a lot from the pronunciation of a native speaker in many areas.

# Bibliography

CRUTTENDEN, Alan a A GIMSON. *Gimson's pronunciation of English*. 7th ed. London: Hodder Education, 2008, xviii, 362 p. ISBN 978-034-0958-773.

CRYSTAL, David a David CRYSTAL. *A dictionary of linguistics and phonetics*. 6th ed. Oxford: Blackwell Pub., 2008, 529 p. ISBN 14-051-5297-4.

EULENBERG. Consonant Chart. *Michigan state university* [online]. 2011 [cit. 2015-01-07]. Dostupné z: https://www.msu.edu/course/asc/232/Charts/ConsonantChartFilledIn.html

GREEN, Chris. COMMON PRONUNCIATION ERRORS. *The IELTS Speaking Test* [online]. 2014 [cit. 2015-02-01]. Dostupné z: http://ielts-yasi.englishlab.net/COMMON_ PRONUNCIATION_ERRORS.htm

KAVKA, Stanislav. *Fonetika a fonologie*. 2., přeprac. vyd. Ostrava: Ostravská univerzita, 1994. ISBN 80-704-2403-6.

KELLY, Gerald. *How to teach pronunciation*. Editor Jeremy Harmer. Harlow: Longman, 2000, vi, 154 s. ISBN 05-824-2975-7.

*Krátký úvod k výslovnosti angličtiny /l/: všeobecně & kde nás tlačí bota* [online]. 2005 [cit. 2015-01-27]. Dostupné z: http://www.eeyore.uh.cz/?p=156

KRČMOVÁ, Marie. *Fonetika a fonologie: zvuková stavba současné češtiny*. 2. přeprac. vyd. Brno: Masarykova univerzita, 1990, 148 s. ISBN 80-210-0137-2.

LADEFOGED, Peter a Keith JOHNSTONE. *A course in phonetics*. 6th ed. Boston, MA: Wadsworth/Cengage Learning, 2011, xiii, 322 p. ISBN 14-282-3127-7.

*Longman exams dictionary: [your key to exam success; Longman exams coach with interactive exam practice]*. 1st ed. Edinburgh: Pearson Education Limited, 2006, 1833 s. ISBN 978-140-5851-374.

MARIAN, Jakub. *Improve your English pronunciation and learn over 500 commonly mispronounced words*. 1st ed. Berlin: J. Marian, 2013. ISBN 978-149-2192-855.

MILLIN, Sandy. Pronunciation problems for Czech speakers of English. *Sandy Millin* [online]. 2011 [cit. 2015-01-28]. Dostupné z: https://sandymillin.wordpress.com/2011/06/180/pronunciation-problems-for-czech-speakers-of-english/

ONDRÁČKOVÁ, J. O mluvním rytmu v češtině. *Slovo a slovesnost*. 1954, roč. 15, č. 1, s. 24-29. Dostupné z: http://sas.ujc.cas.cz/archiv.php?art=743

PALKOVÁ, Zdena. *Fonetika a fonologie češtiny s obecným úvodem do problematiky oboru*. 1. vyd. Praha: Univerzita Karlova, vyd. Karolinum, 1994, 366 p. ISBN 80-706-6843-1.

PESCE, Claudia. 7 Worst Pronunciation Mistakes ESL Students Make Around the World. *Busy Teacher* [online]. 2014 [cit. 2015-01-28]. Dostupné z: http://busyteacher.org/14846-7-worst-pronunciation-mistakes-esl-students-make.html

ROACH, Peter. *English phonetics and phonology: a practical course*. 2nd ed. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991, 262 p. ISBN 05214071922.

SKALIČKOVÁ, Alena. *Fonetika současné angličtiny*. 1. vyd. Praha: Státní pedagogické nakladatelství, 1982. ISBN 14-559-82.

SKALIČKOVÁ, Alena. *Srovnávací fonetika češtiny a angličtiny*. 1. vyd. Praha: Státní pedagogické nakladatelství, 1979. ISBN 17-306-79.

SKALIČKOVÁ, Alena. *Studijní materiály k fonetice angličtiny*. Praha: Státní pedagogické nakladatelství, 1977. ISBN 17-087-77.

SKANDERA, Paul. *A manual of English phonetics and phonology twelve lessons with an integrated course in phonetic transcription*. [Online-Ausg.]. Tübingen: Narr., 2005, ISBN 38-233-6125-2.

SMOLKA, Vladislav. Most common pronunciation problems of Czech speakers of English. In: *Jihočeská univerzita v Českých Budějovicích* [online]. 1997/1998 [cit. 2015-03-02]. Dostupné z: http://eamos.pf.jcu.cz/amos/kat_ang/externi/kat_ang_2834/Nejbeznejsi_vyslovnostni_problemy_ceskych_mluvcich.pdf

VOLÍN, Jan. *IPA-based transcription for Czech students of English*. 2., přeprac. vyd. Praha: Univerzita Karlova v Praze, nakladatelství Karolinum, 2002, 108 s. ISBN 80-246-0423-X.

WELLS, J. *English intonation: an introduction*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006, ix, 276 p. ISBN 05-216-8380-7.

WONG, Rita. *Teaching pronunciation: focus on English rhythm and intonation*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J: Prentice-Hall, 1987. ISBN 01-389-5095-4.
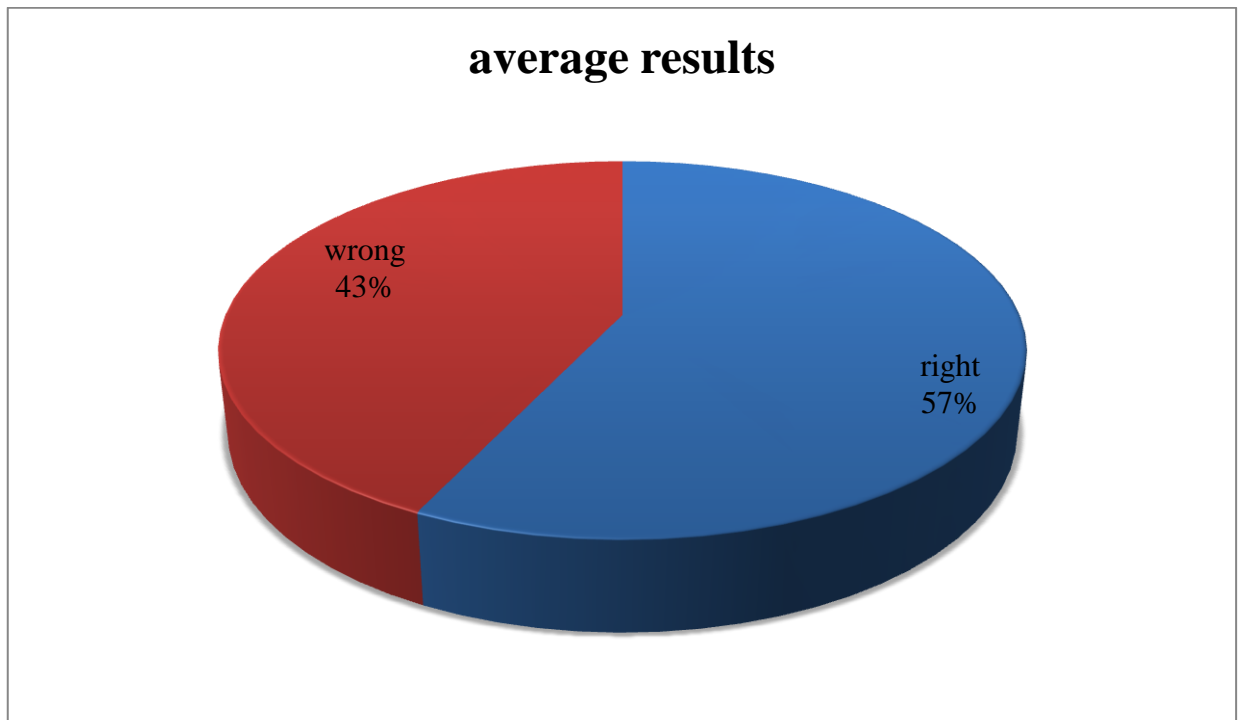
# Appendices

Appendix 1: Figures

Appendix 2: Reading task

Appendix 3: Interview questions

Appendix 4: Observation questions

Appendix 1: Figure 4 (The results which were achieved by all pupils pronouncing all words.)



**average results**

wrong
43%

right
57%

Appendix 1: Figure 5 (The result achieved by the pupil who correctly pronounced the largest number of words.)



**the best result**

wrong
11%

right
89%
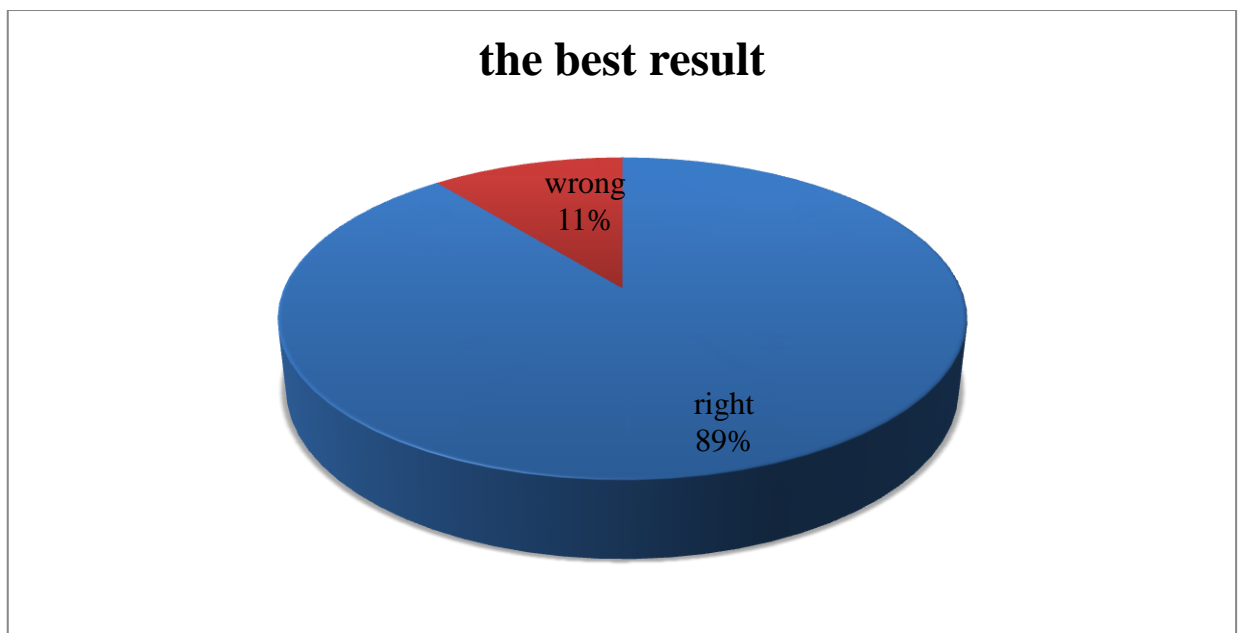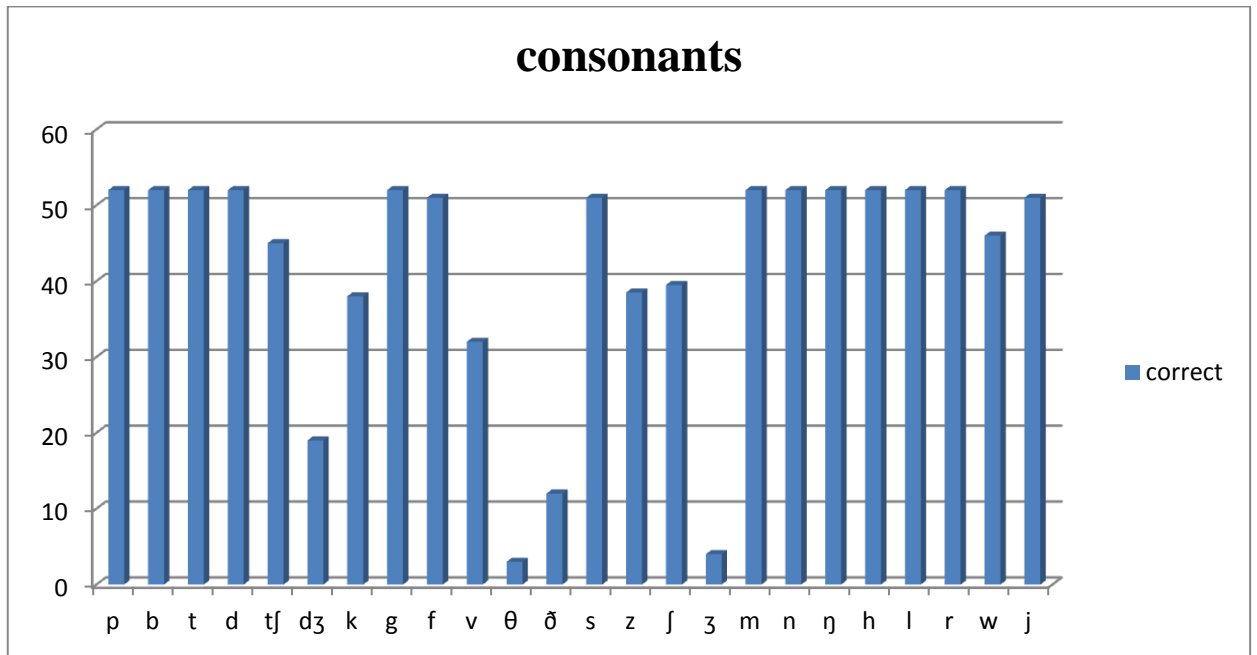
Appendix 1: Figure 6 (The result achieved by the pupil who correctly pronounced the smallest number of words.)



**the worst result**

right
28%

wrong
72%
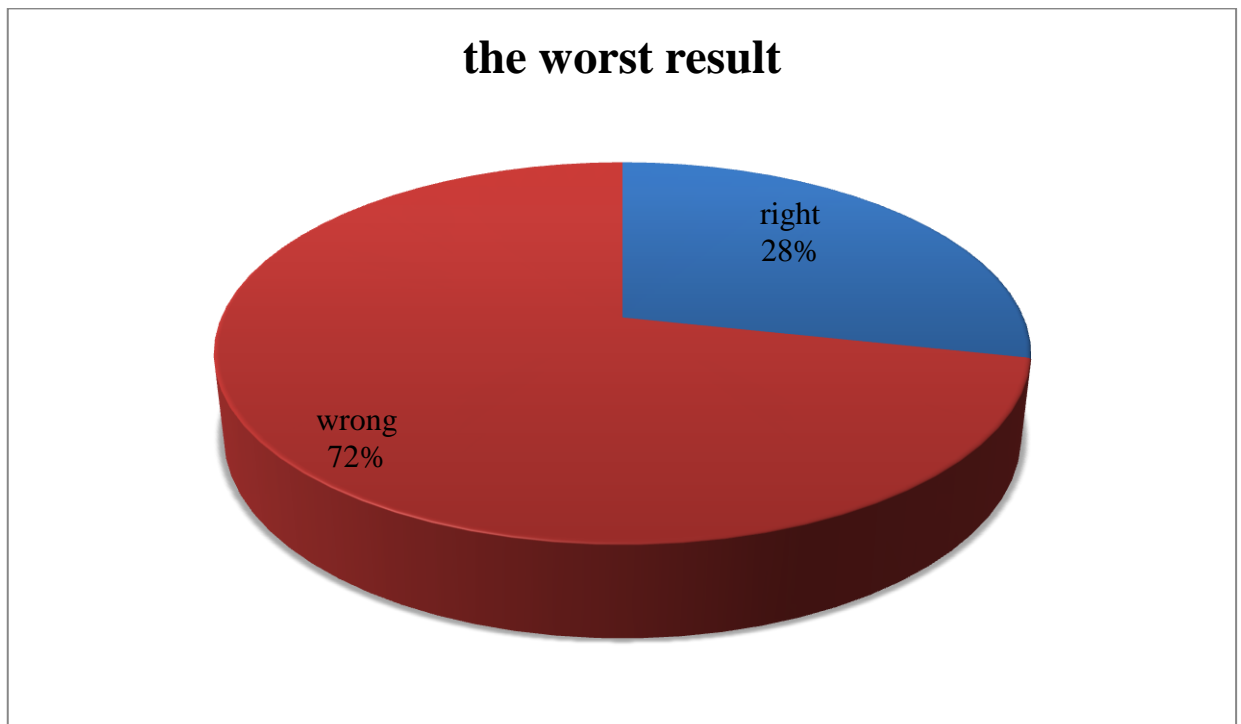
Appendix 1: Figure 7 (The results showing the correct pronunciation of the vowel phonemes.)
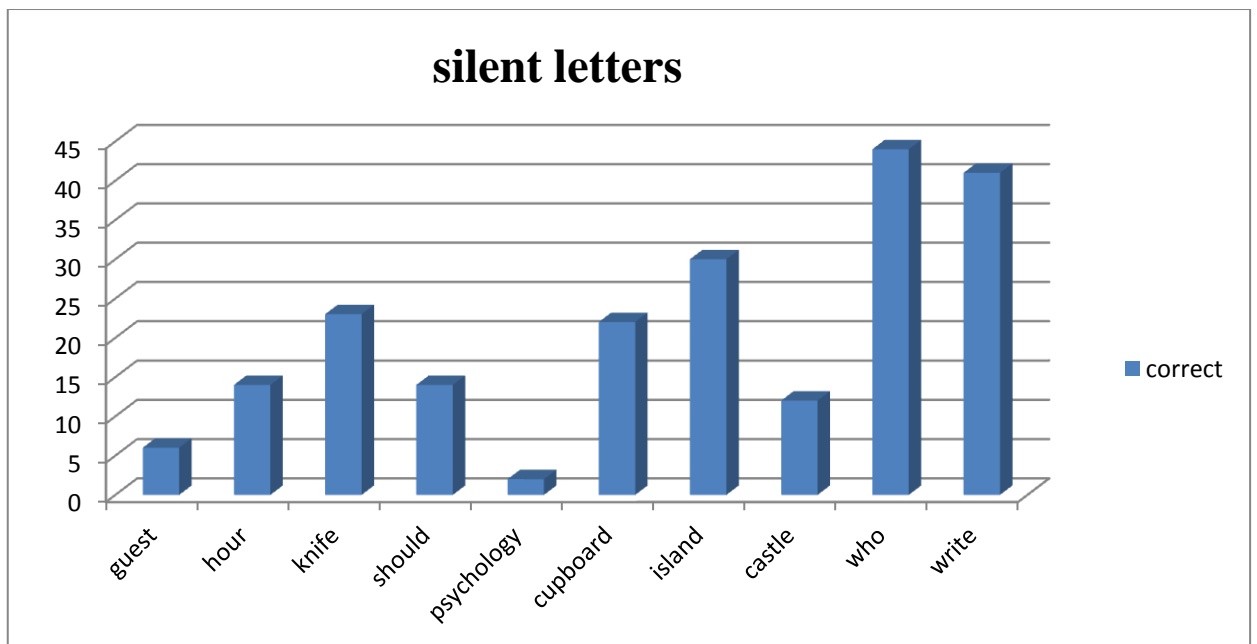


**vowels**
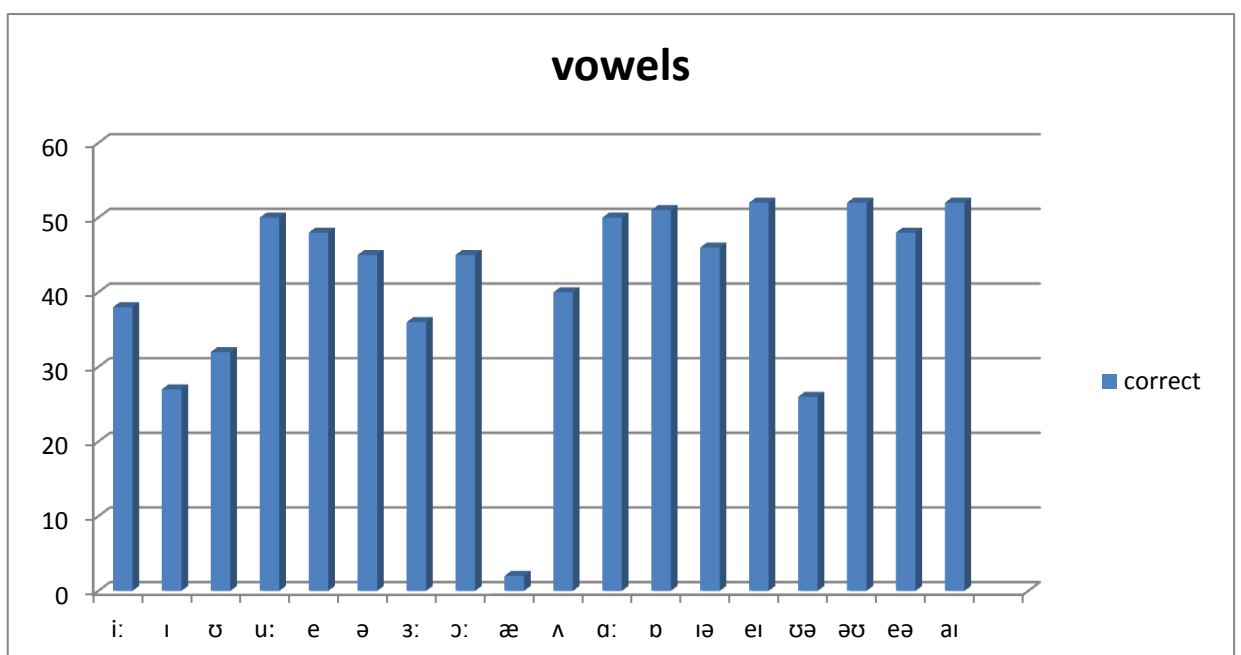
correct

Appendix 1: Figure 8 (The results showing the correct pronunciation of the consonant phonemes.)
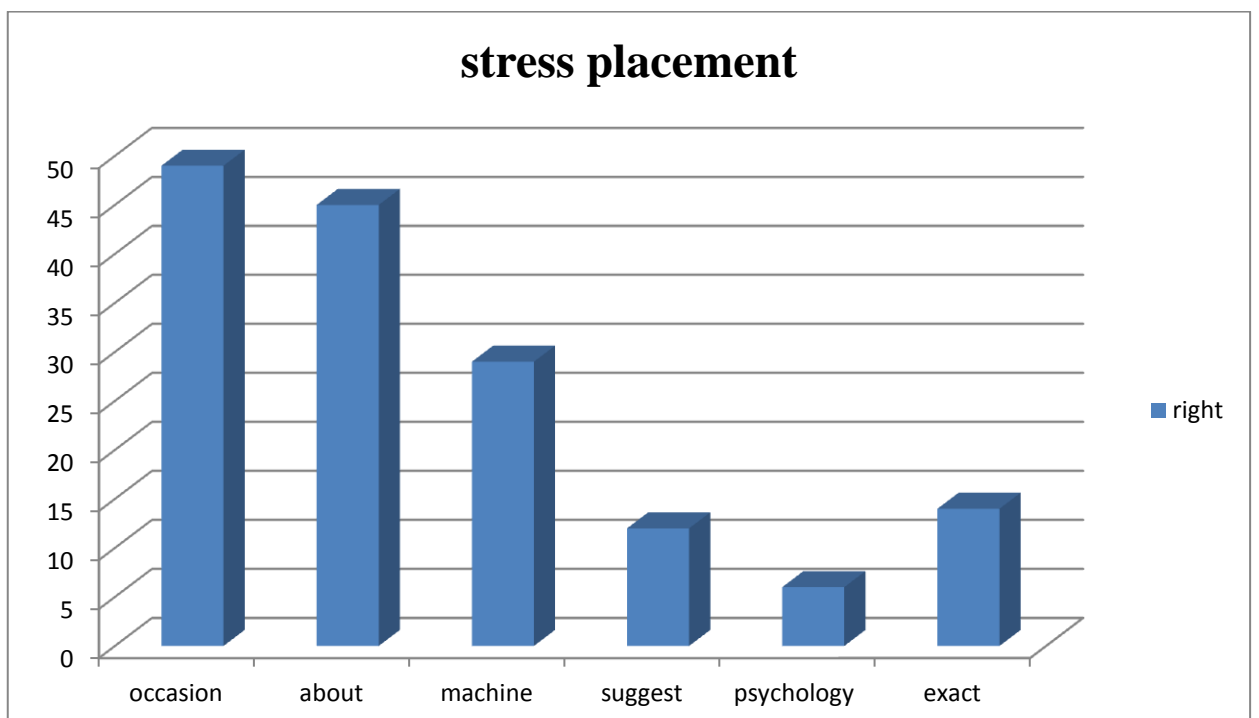


Appendix 1: Figure 9 (The results showing the correct pronunciation of the silent letters.)

Appendix 1: Figure 10 (The results presenting the preference of British or American pronunciation.)

**British x American pronunciation**

British 23%

American 37%

wrong 40%
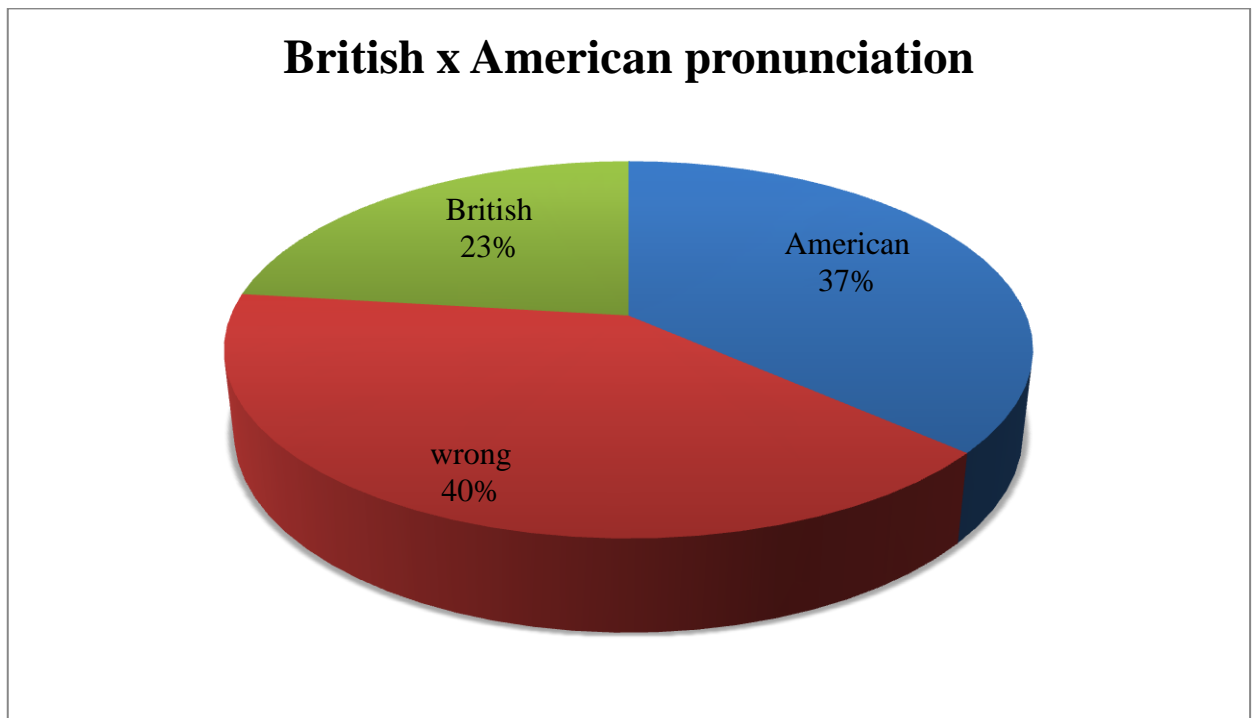
Appendix 1: Figure 11 (The results presenting the correct stress placement.)

**stress placement**

occasion, about, machine, suggest, psychology, exact

right

Appendix 2: Reading task

castle, father, who, bad, village, knife, go, name, should, care, wolf, sure, occasion, rule, character, what, all, time, many, table, about, image, pen, evening, thank, child, here, England, where, silence, few, reason, zero, culture, luxury, ship, machine, bar, equal, bird, suggest, psychology, onion, cupboard, object, heaven, ocean, possible, dog, island, horse, two, city, love, sixty, word, nation, women, hour, memory, full, one, much, exact, busy, keep, turn, that, music, figure, guest, looked, of, write

## Lisa's Fluffy

Lisa lives with her dog, Fluffy. Fluffy never eats anything that costs less than 50 dollars. He has a really expensive taste. One day Fluffy gets lost. Lisa looks for him everywhere, but she can't find him. Poor Fluffy walks and walks. He is not sure where to turn, and it is already time for his 4 o'clock snack.

"What should I do?" Fluffy thinks. Now it is 8 o'clock, and Fluffy is really hungry. He wants his snack, his dinner, his bath and his soft bed. Suddenly he sees a big gray dog, with a big gray nose.

The big gray dog eats something. Fluffy tries not to look at him, but he is really hungry. "What do you want?" The big gray dog asks. "Hmm, well… Could you give me some food and snacks, and a bath too?" The dog smiles, "A bath?" "Yes, a bath. I am tired, and hungry, and dirty," Fluffy answers. "Well, of course I can. Come into my spa."

The big dog laughs and walks away. "Wait!" Fluffy barks, "please don't go. I am all alone and I need my snack!" Fluffy seems very sad. The big gray dog looks at him and turns back. "What is your name?" he asks. "I am Fluffy. And you?" "I am Bam. Come, I can't offer you a bath, but a shower is a different story."

Appendix 3: Interview questions

1. Jakým způsobem obvykle učíte výslovnost nových slov?

2. Učíte výslovnost pravidelně/systematicky, nebo spíše jen když je třeba napravit nějaký problém, který už vznikl?

3. Na které výslovnostní úlohy se při výuce zaměřujete nejvíce? Hlásky, které se obtížně vyslovují, intonace, rytmus, jiné?

4. Učíte výslovnost pouze podle učebnice nebo používáte nějaké doplňující materiály? Jaké?

5. Jakou velkou část hodiny přibližně strávíte výukou a/nebo procvičováním výslovnosti?

6. Co podle Vás dělá žákům v oblasti výslovnosti největší problém? Jak tyto problémy řešíte?

7. Opravujete žákům chyby ve výslovnosti?

8. Jakým způsobem pracujete s žáky, kteří mají s výslovností problémy?

9. Mají žáci při osvojování nových slovíček k dispozici i jeho výslovnost v psané a v mluvené podobě? Od rodilého mluvčího nebo od Čecha?

10. Používáte při učení výslovnosti znaky IPA? Proč / proč ne?

Appendix 4: Observation questions

1. Opravuje učitel žákům chyby ve výslovnosti?
   a. Ne, chyby zůstávají neopraveny
   b. Ne, nabádá žáky, aby si je opravili sami
   c. Ano
   d. Někdy ano, někdy ne
2. Při jaké činnosti opravuje chyby?
   a. Čtení textu
   b. Rozhovor s učitelem
   c. Rozhovor mezi žáky
3. Kdy chyby opravuje?
   a. Přeruší žáka
   b. Na konci věty
   c. Na konci výpovědi
4. Požaduje, aby žák slovo, které špatně vyslovil, po učitelově opravě správně zopakoval?
   a. ANO opakuje pouze žák
      i. Jednou
      ii. Několikrát
   b. ANO opakuje celá třída
      i. Jednou
      ii. několikrát
   c. NE
5. Jakého typu jsou chyby?
   a. Výslovnost jednotlivých fonémů
      i. Kterých?
   b. Přízvuk
   c. Intonace
      i. Oznamovacích vět
      ii. Otázek
      iii. Rozkazovacích vět
6. Upozorňuje na výjimky ve výslovnosti?
   a. ANO
      i. U jakých slov?
   b. NE
7. Jakým způsobem vyučuje výslovnost nových nebo obtížných slov?
      Intonaci
      přízvuky
      rytmus
8. Jakým způsobem procvičují výslovnost nových nebo obtížných slov?
      Intonaci
      přízvuky
      rytmus

9. Slovíčka/fonémy, které způsobují největší potíže

# Anotace

| | |
|---|---|
| **Jméno a příjmení:** | Bc. Klára Mičunková |
| **Katedra:** | Katedra anglického jazyka |
| **Vedoucí práce:** | Mgr. Jana Kořínková, Ph.D. |
| **Rok obhajoby:** | 2015 |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Název práce:** | Běžné výslovnostní problémy, se kterými se setkávají čeští žáci při výuce angličtiny |
| **Název v angličtině:** | Common pronunciation difficulties faced by Czech learners of English |
| **Anotace práce:** | Cílem diplomové práce je poukázat na výslovnostní problémy českých žáků druhého stupně základních škol při čtení v angličtině. Pojednává o potížích s výslovností jednotlivých prvků a probírá problémy v suprasegmentální oblasti. Jsou zde zmíněny rozdíly mezi českými a anglickými fonologickými systémy a je zde vyhodnocen výzkum, který určuje typ chyb, které žáci dělají a jejich příčiny. |
| **Klíčová slova:** | Výslovnostní problémy, žáci 2. stupně základních škol, segmenty, suprasegmentální oblast, rozdíly mezi českým a anglickým fonologickým systémem |
| **Anotace v angličtině:** | The aim of the diploma thesis is to point to the pronunciation problems of Czech lower-secondary learners of English in reading tasks. The difficulties in pronouncing individual segments are covered and the problems in suprasegmental area are discussed. The distinctions between the Czech and English phonological systems are mentioned and the research in determining the character of pupils' pronunciation mistakes and their causes is evaluated. |
| **Klíčová slova v angličtině:** | Pronunciation difficulties, lower-secondary pupils, segments, suprasegmental area, differences between the Czech and English phonological system |
| **Přílohy vázané v práci:** | Příloha č. 1 – Grafy<br>Příloha č. 2 – Úloha na čtení<br>Příloha č. 3 – Otázky k rozhovoru<br>Příloha č. 4 – Otázky k pozorování |
| **Rozsah práce:** | 71 s. |
| **Jazyk práce:** | anglický |