

Bakalářská práce

Czech Foreign-Accentedness: Perceptions of the Quality of Pronunciation of Czech Undergraduates of English

Studijní program: B0114A300068 Anglický jazyk se zaměřením na vzdělávání

Studijní obory: Anglický jazyk se zaměřením na vzdělávání
Tělesná výchova se zaměřením na vzdělávání

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Liberec 2024



Zadání bakalářské práce

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| <i>Specializace:</i> | Anglický jazyk se zaměřením na vzdělávání Tělesná výchova se zaměřením na vzdělávání |
| <i>Zadávací katedra:</i> | Katedra anglického jazyka |
| <i>Akademický rok:</i> | 2022/2023 |

Zásady pro vypracování:

Tato bakalářská práce se bude zabývat percepcí cizineckého přízvuku ve výslovnosti českých univerzitních studentů anglického jazyka. Cílem práce bude analyzovat a posoudit kvalitu výslovnosti studentů rodilými a nerodilými hodnotiteli. První výzkumnou otázkou bude, jak současní univerzitní studenti vnímají kvalitu výslovnosti svých spolužáků, a do jaké míry jsou tito studenti, jako budoucí učitelé, schopni tuto kvalitu ohodnotit. Druhou výzkumnou otázkou práce bude, do jaké míry se kvalitativní hodnocení rodilých a nerodilých hodnotitelů shoduje z hlediska toho, co skutečně přispívá k cizineckému přízvuku ve výslovnosti studentů. Pro potřeby výzkumu budou pořízeny hlasové záznamy zkoumaného vzorku, které budou následně analyzovány a hodnoceny na základě zvolených kritérií jak ze segmentálního, tak suprasegmentálního hlediska. Skupina hodnotitelů bude sestávat z českých studentů anglického jazyka a rodilých mluvčích.

Rozsah grafických prací:

Rozsah pracovní zprávy:

Forma zpracování práce:

tištěná/elektronická

Jazyk práce:

angličtina

Seznam odborné literatury:

Alameen, Ghinwa, and John M. Levis. 2015. "Connected Speech." In *The Handbook of English Pronunciation*, edited by Marnie Reed, and John M. Levis, 1-27. New York: Vintage.

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<https://doi.org/10.2478/rela-2014-0007>

Vedoucí práce:

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Datum zadání práce:

29. června 2023

Předpokládaný termín odevzdání: 12. července 2024

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V Liberci dne 29. června 2023

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Jsem si vědom následků, které podle zákona o vysokých školách mohou vyplývat z porušení tohoto prohlášení.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost I would like to thank my supervisor, Mgr. Pavel Čanecký, for his help, advice, support and his never-ending positive attitude, which all contributed greatly to the production of this thesis. I would also like to thank my family and those who supported me along the way.

Anotace

Tato bakalářská práce zabývá produkcí a percepcí cizineckého přízvuku ve výslovnosti českých univerzitních studentů anglického jazyka. Cílem práce je analyzovat a posoudit kvalitu výslovnosti studentů rodilými a nerodilými hodnotiteli a provést komparativní analýzu hodnocení těchto hodnotitelů. Práce se skládá z teoretické a praktické části. Teoretická část se zabývá představením klíčových pojmů souvisejících s hlavním tématem, a poskytuje potřebný kontext k tématu. Praktická část popisuje metody a materiály, které byly použity ve výzkumu, a poskytuje jeho výsledky. Pro získání dat byly vytvořeny audionahrávky vzorkem studentů angličtiny na Technické univerzitě v Liberci. Ty byly následně vyhodnoceny jinými studenty a rodilým mluvčím pomocí dotazníkového šetření. Z těchto dat byla zodpovězena první výzkumná otázka, která se zabývá tím, jak současní univerzitní studenti angličtiny na TUL vnímají výslovnost svých vrstevníků. Následně byla pomocí porovnání hodnocení rodilého hodnotitele a studentských hodnotitelů zodpovězena i druhá otázka, zabývající se tím, do jaké míry se shoduje jejich hodnocení z hlediska toho, co přispívá k cizineckému přízvuku.

Klíčová slova

Anglický jazyk, cizinecký přízvuk, rodilý přízvuk, srozumitelnost, výslovnost, učení

Abstract

This bachelor thesis deals with the production and perception of foreign accent in the pronunciation of Czech university students of English. The aim of the thesis is to analyse and assess the quality of students' pronunciation by native and non-native assessors and to conduct a comparative analysis of their evaluations. The thesis consists of theoretical and practical parts. The theoretical part deals with the introduction of key concepts related to the main topic and provides the necessary context to the topic. The practical part describes the methods and materials that were used in the research and provides the results. To obtain the data, audio recordings were made by a sample of English language students at the Technical University of Liberec. These were then evaluated by other students and a native speaker using a questionnaire survey. From these data, the first research question was answered, which deals with how current university students of English perceive the pronunciation of their peers. Subsequently, the second question, dealing with the extent to which their assessment corresponds in terms of what contributes to foreign accent, was answered by comparing the ratings of native and student assessors.

Keywords

English language, foreign accent, native accent, comprehensibility, intelligibility, pronunciation, teaching

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List of Abbreviations

CAPT – Computer Assisted Pronunciation Training

EFL – English as a Foreign Language

ELF – English as a Lingua Franca

L1 – First language

LSA – Likert scale assessment

NA – Native assessor

NNA – Non-native assessor

NNS – Non-native speaker

NS – Native speaker

RP – Received Pronunciation

RQ1 – Research question 1

RQ2 – Research question 2

SPF – Specific problematic features

TUL – Technical University of Liberec

Introduction

This thesis deals with the topic of English spoken speech and its perception among Czech students of English at the Technical University of Liberec. Recently, there has been a trend suggesting that the general ability to exchange information is of higher importance than the ability to express oneself accurately. However, in the pursuit of becoming an English teacher, it is important to aim for greater proficiency by placing emphasis not only on the content of communication but also on the manner in which it is conveyed. Therefore, the research problem of this thesis is speech articulation together with the ability to comprehend a spoken language with regard to foreign accent. To establish a solid linguistic base for young learners and prevent the development of unfavourable accents, it is essential to provide them with clear, non-foreign-accented speech. Thus, the teacher's influence is pivotal in shaping their linguistic identity.

The primary objective of this thesis is to explore the TUL students' level of speech perception in the English language with regard to the Czech foreign accent. This will be accomplished by answering the following research questions.

The first research question is how current university students perceive the quality of their classmates' pronunciation, and to what extent these students, as future teachers, are able to evaluate this quality. The second research question of the thesis is to what extent the qualitative ratings of a native assessor (NA) and non-native assessors (NNAs) coincide in terms of what actually contributes to the foreign accent in students' pronunciation.

The findings of the research will then serve to identify the area for improvement as it is important for future English teachers to possess this particular skill set. The thesis begins by establishing a theoretical framework through a review of relevant literature. It advances to introduce the chosen methodology and material. With these foundations in place, the thesis proceeds to unveil the findings. Ultimately, it concludes with a summary of its key insights.

1 Theoretical Background

Pronunciation and foreign accents in English as a foreign language (EFL) have been a subject of interest and study in recent years (Valentinov and Sojisirikul 2017; Van Engen and Peelle 2014; Fuertes et al. 2011; Hendriks and van Meurs 2017; Hanzlíková and Skarnitzl 2017; Skarnitzl et al. 2005; Munro and Derwing 2020; Alameen and Levis 2015). With globalisation facilitating increased multicultural interactions, the significance of understanding foreign-accented speech has become apparent. In this modern world, English has become an interlanguage for communication when speakers lack a common first language (L1) (Jenkins 2009, 200). Due to the varied sociolinguistic backgrounds of speakers, certain communication issues, such as foreign accents, can arise. These accents are likely to pose challenges for several reasons, and this chapter aims to establish a foundation for understanding the complexities of this issue in the context of learning English pronunciation.

1.1 Comprehensibility and Accuracy

In a global world where English is often used as a lingua franca (ELF), the issue of pronunciation becomes a critical point of discussion. Two main perspectives dominate this debate: one emphasises comprehensibility and effective communication, and the other also stresses the importance of accuracy and the abatement of one's foreign accent along with the effort to mimic native-like pronunciation. This chapter examines these two contrasting approaches, analysing their implications and the arguments that support each side.

1.1.1 Foreign-Accentedness, Intelligibility, Comprehensibility and Accuracy

Munro and Derwing (1995a, 289) defined foreign-accented speech as “non-pathological speech that differs in some noticeable respects from native speaker pronunciation norms”. *Foreign-accentedness* is, therefore, a term denoting a speaker's unique style of speaking in a foreign language which is caused by the influence of their L1 or a different linguistic background. This style usually consists of suprasegmental and segmental deviations from the norm of the standard accent (Van Engen and Peelle 2014, 2; Gallardo del Puerto et al. 2007, 1). Speaker’s mispronunciation of specific phonemes and/or maintaining intonation or stress patterns from their native language is what poses an auditory challenge for the listener. “Acoustically degraded speech” then deviates from what listeners are used to (i.e., stored phonological and lexical representations), resulting in a mismatch between expectation and perception which, consequently, forces the speaker to utilise additional cognitive resources to understand the degraded speech (Van Engen and Peelle 2014, 1). However, continual exposure to an accent can over time increase the auditor’s ability to understand it (Gass and Varonis 1984, 85).

Other two terms that should be introduced for a better understanding of the topic are *intelligibility* and *comprehensibility*. Although there is no consensus on a unified definition of these terms, using them interchangeably might be problematic. Intelligibility refers to the recognition of words or utterances, whereas comprehensibility means understanding the meaning of the speech (Kaur 2018, 2). In other words, intelligibility refers to the phonetic aspect of the discourse, whereas comprehensibility refers to the semantic meaning. Although one might argue that these terms overlap, intelligibility and comprehensibility are not the same. For the purpose of this thesis, comprehensibility will constitute such an approach which advocates mainly effective communication over achieving native-like pronunciation. On the other hand,

intelligibility, which refers to phonetic production, is closely related to accuracy. Accuracy is the contrastive approach to comprehensibility. It is concerned with increasing speaker's proficiency beyond effective exchange of meaning by reducing one's foreign accent and trying to approach that of a native speaker.

1.1.1.1 Effects and Causes of Foreign-Accentedness

Foreign-accentedness has a number of negative effects on communication. These effects vary depending on the speakers, their familiarity with the accent (Gass and Varonis 1984, 85), or the fact whether they are non-native speakers (NNSs) or not. For instance, native speakers (NSs) tend to evaluate non-native accents more negatively in terms of personality traits compared to native ones (Hendriks and van Meurs 2017, 107). Foreign-accented speakers are often evaluated lower on the intelligibility regardless of the auditor (Hendriks and van Meurs 2017, 107) which, as has been mentioned, requires more effort to understand. Other negative effects may include affected personality judgements, behavioural reactions and lower estimation of competence levels (Fuertes et al. 2011, 120-122; Hendriks and van Meurs 2017, 107). Additionally, based on the experiments by Hanzlíková and Skarnitzl (2017, 297), it is observable that foreign-accented speech is perceived as less truthful by not only native but non-native listeners as well. Furthermore, (Wesolek et al. 2023) found out in their experiment that foreign-accentedness can evoke a false conviction of ungrammaticality in grammatically correct non-native accented speech. On the contrary, standard accents “grant people access to political, economic and educational forums and opportunities, whereas non-standard accents impart stigma upon speakers of them.” (Fuertes et al. 2011, 121). Surprisingly, foreign-accented speakers can also be a target of insults and rudeness, they can be ignored and even discriminated by native listeners (Derwing 2003, 557).

Foreign-accentedness is caused by the influence of the L1 set of phonemes and suprasegmental aspects. As regards phonemes, the problem stems from the fact that the phonetic alphabet of English contains a different set of phonemes than L1. Consequently, the learner is forced to find a solution to this problem. One of the most frequent adjustments is replacing the problematic phonemes with similar-sounding ones. In turn, these speakers will then not be intelligible causing them to sound foreign-accented. This replacement stems from pronunciation not being given enough attention in classes (Karásková 2016, 4). This is further supported by the thesis research of Zuzana Haikerová (2021, 45) who asked a NS teacher about his view on pronunciation teaching. He answered that “he feels like there is not enough time for its teaching and that he is also not encouraged by the curriculum because there are simply so many other things that need to be covered”. From these statements, it can be assumed that focusing more on pronunciation and phonetics could help reduce learners' foreign accents.

Based on the abovementioned arguments, the author of this thesis is inclined to suggest that the students consider paying attention to reducing their foreign accent. Prospective English teachers should be mindful of their pronunciation as it will play a crucial role in forming the language identity of their pupils.

1.1.2 Attitudes Towards Pronunciation Accuracy

As has been established in Chapter 1.1.1, the two major trends in the English pronunciation field are comprehensibility and accuracy. Levis (2005, 370) refers to these as the “intelligibility principle” and the “nativeness principle”. According to Levis, the nativeness principle “holds that it is both possible and desirable to achieve native-like pronunciation in a foreign language,” aligning with the goal of accuracy. In contrast, the intelligibility principle “holds that learners simply need to be understandable,” which aligns with the goal of comprehensibility. Thus, a

speaker may focus on conveying their message clearly to ensure comprehensibility, or they can enhance their already clear speech with native-like pronunciation to emphasize accuracy.

One of the main arguments in favour of comprehensibility in learning English as a foreign language is that the main goal of communication is the exchange of information. If a speaker is able to convey a message effectively, achieving native-like pronunciation could be found unnecessary by some. Furthermore, even foreign-accented speech can be found intelligible, as proven by Derwing and Munro (1995b) and Šimáčková and Podlipský (2011). Additionally, striving for native-like pronunciation is a highly time-consuming endeavour. Moreover, some might argue that for certain individuals, attaining a native level of pronunciation may be impossible. However, the effort to attain such a level can be a source of communication difficulties (Derwing and Rossiter 2002, 162). All of the mentioned arguments support the relevance of the comprehensibility approach. It is in line with the statement of Jenkins, as mentioned in Seidlhofer (2004, 231), that in the international use of English, mutual understanding among ELF users is more important than adherence to native norms. As ELF prioritises conveying a message over achieving a native-like accent, it is important to note that every speaker is a unique individual with their own identity as each speaker expresses themselves differently. Perhaps if students were not under pressure to adopt a native accent, they would feel more comfortable expressing their own identity (Jenkins 2009, 205). Embracing accent diversity can foster a more inclusive and effective communication environment in our increasingly interconnected world.

On the other hand, accuracy undoubtedly brings certain benefits. It can be argued, that the less foreign-accented a speaker sounds, the less likely they are to be a victim of negative stereotypes such as affected personality judgements, lower truthfulness, and lower estimation of competence levels. They are also less likely to experience potential rudeness, insults or discrimination against foreigners based on their accent. It is evident that many EFL learners

would like to achieve this level of pronunciation as found in the research of Derwing (2003), Duryagin and Dal Maso (2022), and Brabcová and Skarnitzl (2018). This might be because native-like pronunciation is viewed as a valuable skill, an asset that would instil learners with “pride and excitement” (McCrocklin and Link, 2016, 136). As Sauer (2002) states, it is important that the pronunciation model teachers of English present to their pupils in schools be close to native-like pronunciation. This argument is relevant for this thesis given the subject and the presumable future of the participants as teachers of English. And although the teaching process in schools lays the fundamentals, young learners would benefit from utilising the technologies of this century. The use of current technologies, such as Computer Assisted Pronunciation Training (CAPT) could then serve a complementary role in the process of improving learners' pronunciation (Thomson 2011, 747). Despite the challenges posed by the accuracy approach, its benefits are undeniable and should be considered. Moreover, it is particularly important for teachers not to overlook it.

In practice, many speakers choose to compromise between these two poles. Several factors will influence ELF conversation. It is very likely that communication between two non-native speakers (NNS-NNS) and between a native speaker and a non-native speaker (NS-NNS) will differ significantly. A NNS is unlikely to prioritise sounding native-like if there is no pressure from their non-native communication partner. Conversely, when conversing with a native speaker, the NNS might feel pressured (Galloway 2013, 796), potentially leading to adverse effects on their speech. However, Jenkins (2021) states that speakers tend to accommodate their speech to suit the needs of their communication partner, making the conversation more intelligible. This corresponds to what she describes as convergence which is “making one’s speech more like that of an addressee” (2). While this might be effective for international communication, it is important to keep in mind, that teachers play a crucial role in shaping

young learners' linguistic identity. Therefore, alongside prioritizing comprehensibility, it is essential to also emphasize accuracy.

1.2 Perceptions of English Pronunciation

1.2.1 Perceptions of EFL Learners

Without proper pronunciation, miscommunication is almost inevitable. There is a consensus among students and teachers that pronunciation is difficult yet important to learn and to teach (Moedjito 2016, 39). Some students are reluctant to focus on pronunciation due to its perceived difficulty (Aslan and Altinkaya 2024, 9). On the other hand, they recognise the value of pronunciation, since they view native accents as superior to the foreign ones (Aslan and Altinkaya 2024, 9).

One reason learners may feel discouraged or insecure about pronunciation is because natives not only perceive non-native speech as hindering comprehension, but they also tend to be more critical of non-native speakers in terms of perceived personality traits and more (see Chapter 1.1.1.1). The discouragement is supported by the results of Çağatay (2015) who found that Turkish students seemed to “be more anxious when speaking with a native speaker compared to speaking in front of their peers.” (653). This aligns with findings that non-native speakers feel less pressured when communicating with other non-natives, compared to feeling nervous when interacting with native speakers (Galloway 2013, 796).

In the study carried out by McCrocklin and Link (2016), the results show that “the students viewed native-like pronunciation as a skill, a valuable amenity, that would give them pride and feelings of excitement“. This is further supported by the vast majority of participants in Derwing’s research (2003), who stated that they would like to pronounce English like a native. Derwing also found that foreign-accented learners often might be unaware of their own

shortcomings. Regarding foreign-accentedness, some learners prioritise effective communication over sounding native-like (Duryagin and Dal Maso 2022, 42; Coppinger and Sheridan 2022). Others aim to achieve a native accent while maintaining their national identity (Jenkins 2009, 205). This is supported by the results of Duryagin and Dal Maso's study (2022), which indicates that some learners want to retain some degree of their L1 accent in their speech (42). This might sound confusing considering that more than 350 (95%) of the respondents in the same study stated that they “want to get as close as possible to the pronunciation of a native speaker”. Additionally, almost 90% of the respondents also stated that they would “be pleased to be mistaken for a mother tongue when they speak”. This serves to indicate that EFL learners recognise native accents as having a certain prestige, highlighting its significance.

In terms of specific preferred accent, it is hard to generalise as every EFL learner has their own reasons for learning and their own preferences. From Horčíčková's (2022) research on English accents among TUL students, it can be observed that nearly 70% of third-year students of the English for Education bachelor's degree program aim to achieve native-like pronunciation in English. The majority of the participants prefer Received Pronunciation (RP) over the General American accent, both in perception and production, likely due to the prevalence of RP in Czech classrooms and universities. This preference for RP was also shown in the research of Brabcová and Skarnitzl (2018) who collected data from 145 Czech young learners of English. Over 70% of respondents wanted to acquire a native accent, with half of them specifying which one. Of these, the majority mentioned Received Pronunciation. More than half of the respondents agreed that it is important for learners to acquire a native-like accent in English. Additionally, 90% agreed that pronunciation is not a “waste of time and energy”, which serves to support the importance of pronunciation. However, this preference for RP is by no means universal, as respondents in Galloway's (2013) research stated to prefer American English over any other. They do, nevertheless, share the desire to sound native-like.

In summary, pronunciation remains a key aspect of English language teaching, although it presents significant challenges for both students and teachers. Although students often face insecurities and fears of criticism, the desire to achieve native pronunciation is prevalent among EFL learners, as shown by their awareness of its importance and prestige. Therefore, it is important for educators to provide support and resources to help students overcome these challenges and achieve their pronunciation goals.

1.2.2 Perceptions of Auditors

While accents can enrich linguistic diversity, they can pose challenges in communication for the auditors. This is especially the case with foreign accents that often hinder intelligibility. Decreased intelligibility is viewed as troublesome not only by NSs but by NNSs alike.

Foreign-accentedness is a communication difficulty as it is negatively perceived by auditors, which has been proven by various research (Hendriks et al. 2016, 3; Hendriks et al. 2015, 47; Fuertes et al. 2011, 120-122). As has been mentioned in Chapter 1.1.1.1, foreign-accented speakers can be viewed as less truthful or less competent. Furthermore, it may even cause some individuals to behave in a hostile manner towards accented speakers. From the literature overview by Meurs and Hendriks (2017), it is observable that both the NSs and the NNSs view strong accents as problematic in terms of intelligibility. Where they differ in the assessment, however, is that the NNSs do not distinguish between native and non-native accents when evaluating the personality traits of the speaker. NSs, on the other hand, tend to evaluate speakers with non-native accents more negatively in terms of personality traits. Based on the mentioned overview, it can be concluded that the stronger a non-native accent is, the more negatively it will likely be perceived by both, native and non-native auditors.

However, it is also important to mention that perceptions of foreign accents are not uniform and can vary widely based on the listener's background, experiences, and attitudes towards

linguistic diversity. As was proven by Šimáčková and Podlipský (2011) in their research, Czech students of English were more sensitive to Czech foreign accent compared to respondents from other countries. This indicates that while familiarity with an accent can improve its intelligibility (Bent and Bradlow 2003), it does not necessarily lead to greater tolerance of it. Furthermore, Dewaele and McCloskey (2014) found that multilingualism, sex, age, and personality traits such as extraversion and neuroticism, affect the way individuals perceive foreign accents of others and their own. For instance, extroverts showed more tolerance towards the foreign accents of others. On the other hand, multilinguals were more critical of foreign accents of others, and even their own. It should also be noted that not all natives find foreign accents a problem, on the contrary, some might find it pleasing, charming or admirable. Perhaps some natives are pleased by the fact that foreigners put effort into learning the language of natives, contributing to the positive impression. This variability underscores the complexity of accent perception and its impact on communication.

1.3 Problematic Features in the Pronunciation of Czech Learners of English

Czech learners of English tend to manifest certain problematic features in their pronunciation. Phonetically speaking, these features could be divided into two categories: *segmentals* and *suprasegmentals*. Segmentals include smaller units, so-called phonemes that form a word when combined. Suprasegmental elements, on the other hand, extend beyond individual speech sounds. (Roach 2009, 36). Suprasegmentals include *liaison*, *assimilation*, *intonation patterns*, *stress placement*, and *weak or strong forms*. An imprecise understanding of these features can lead to the speaker producing phonemes incorrectly. Consequently, the speaker's accent is perceived as foreign which might even lead to

miscommunication. Therefore, this chapter will introduce the features that are problematic for Czech learners of English and are accounted for in the questionnaire created for the research.

1.3.1 Segmentals

In phonetics, *segmentals* refer to the individual, discrete units of speech sounds that are combined to form spoken words. These units can be further categorised into consonants and vowels (Ladefoged and Johnson 2010, 23). The difference between consonants and vowels lies in the manner of pronunciation. The vowel phonemes arise from when the air can flow relatively freely from the lungs out of the mouth, where they are given the final form by the position of the tongue and the shape of lips (Ladefoged and Johnson 2010, 19). Whereas when producing consonants, one has to block the stream of air partially or completely for the consonant to be made. For instance, to articulate the plosive sounds /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/ or /g/, the speaker initiates the phonetic process by blocking the airflow using the lips, the tip of the tongue, or the back of the tongue. Subsequently, the accumulated air is abruptly released resulting in the consonant being pronounced (Ladefoged and Johnson 2010, 14).

Understanding the pronunciation of specific phonemes is crucial, as it plays a pivotal role in forming words. Pronouncing phonemes differently can lead to manifestations of a foreign accent. Not only can it lead to foreign-accentedness, but more importantly it leads to variations in meaning, highlighting the significance of accurate pronunciation.

1.3.1.1 Problematic Consonants

Among consonants, arguably the greatest challenge for Czech speakers is to pronounce the phonemes /θ/ and /ð/ (Karásková 2016, 27), as these dental fricatives along with the labiovelar approximant /w/ are not present in the Czech phonetic alphabet. In order to deal with this problem, Czech speakers tend to substitute the problematic phonemes with ones that sound

similar. Skarnitzl and Rumlová (2019, 112) say that in the case of the labiovelar approximant /w/, “Czech speakers are known to realise this sound as a fricative [v] (e.g., *which* as [vitʃ]), but they may also pronounce the English /v/ as an approximant [w] (e.g., *very* as [werɪ])”. The latter example points towards the hypercorrection that might occur when an individual is warned about their incorrect pronunciation. That causes them to produce the problematic phoneme correctly but in inappropriate places.

Another problematic consonant for Czech speakers would be the post-alveolar approximant /r/ (Karásková 2016). The complication is that the Czechs tend to replace it with an alveolar trill, which is the manner of pronunciation of the Czech /r/. This will then contribute to a noticeable foreign accent significantly (Karásková 29, 2016). Additionally, in the RP, /r/ is not pronounced when it comes at the end of a syllable or before a consonant as it is a non-rhotic accent, such as in the words *car* (/kɑː/) or *cord* (/kɔːd/).

The next aspect that makes Czech speakers of English struggle with pronunciation are the voiceless plosives /p/, /t/, and /k/. The difficulty lies in the requirement to pronounce these sounds with a burst of air (to aspirate) when they appear at the beginning of stressed syllables (Karásková 2016, 30). As for instance, with the word *paper* (/p^heɪpə/), the first voiceless plosive is aspirated, whereas the latter is not. Not aspirating might cause native speakers to confuse the voiceless plosives for the voiced plosives /b/, /d/, and /g/. So not only does not aspirating contribute to a foreign accent, but it might, in some cases, also cause misunderstandings between speakers.

Another aspect related to the voicelessness is the *final voiced consonants*. This term denotes the consonants on the very end of a word that should be pronounced as voiced but tend to be pronounced as voiceless by Czech learners of English (Karásková 2016, 30). Such fault can cause confusion as *bed* (pronounced as /bed/, with a voiced plosive) has a different meaning than *bet* (pronounced as /bet/, with a voiceless plosive). Thus, not only does the voiceless

pronunciation of final voiced consonants sound foreign-accented, but it can also impede understanding in communication.

The last example of problematic consonants that is expected to occur in the research audio samples is the velar nasal /ŋ/. Czech speakers know how to pronounce this phoneme, however, they do so in the context of place assimilation in Czech (e.g., *banka* [baŋka]); see Skarnitzl and Rumlová (2019, 112). In English, they then pronounce the velar nasal, but for words that end in *-ing*, they add /k/ (e.g., *sing* /siŋk/) to the end, resulting in a strong manifestation of the Czech accent.

1.3.1.2 Problematic Vowels

As well as consonants, vowels can be troublesome for Czech speakers of English too. Namely, as Karásková (2016, 19-20) claims, the most critical ones would be /æ/, /ʌ/, /u:/, /əʊ/, /ɜ:/ and /ə/, also known as a schwa.

The problem with the phoneme /æ/ is that it does not exist in the Czech phonetic alphabet, therefore, many Czechs do not know how to pronounce it. Karásková (2016, 20) argues that Czechs sometimes replace /æ/ with a more close front vowel resembling the RP /e/. This replacement of one phoneme then results in pronouncing the other *minimal pair* (pair of words that differ in one phoneme), similarly as with the final voiced consonant examples. A *bat* /bæt/ will in turn get confused with *bet* /bet/.

As opposed to /æ/, Czechs know how to pronounce /ə/, however, the problem with schwa is rooted in many orthographic representations, for instance o (*oblige*), ar (*particular*), our (*colour*), and more. This point is somewhat shared with the long vowel /ɜ:/, as Czechs do not have a problem pronouncing it, but rather are unaware of where it is meant to be pronounced. Instead of using it correctly in words like *fur*, *world*, *birth*, and *word*, they use the L1 set of

phonemes to pronounce these, resulting in for instance *World of Warcraft* being pronounced as [vor(l)t of varkraft].

Problematic segmentals that are expected to occur in the research can be found in Table 1.

Table 1: Problematic segmentals

| Problematic segmentals | | | | | | |
|------------------------|-----|--------------------------------|-----|------|-----|-----|
| Problematic vowels | /æ/ | | | /ɜ:/ | | |
| Problematic consonants | /ŋ/ | Aspiration of /p/, /t/, /k/ | /r/ | /w/ | /θ/ | /ð/ |

1.3.2 Suprasegmentals

The suprasegmental features are those effects “or sound contrasts that extend over several segments (phonemes)” (Roach 2009, 36). That means that suprasegmental features occur not in words themselves but rather in between them. Therefore, it is concerned with liaison, assimilation, intonation patterns, stress placement, and weak or strong forms. These aspects are grouped into a term called *connected speech* which directly influences the smoothness of speech flow. This area proves to be problematic for EFL learners as it contributes to a foreign accent significantly if one struggles to handle the following features correctly (Hamouda 2017, 9).

The first of these aspects would be *liaison*. Liaison is a style of linking words that occurs when the first phoneme of the following word is a vowel. This can happen either in the case of linking a consonant to a vowel or when linking a vowel to a vowel. The former could be illustrated by the pronunciation of *an egg*, which would sound as such: /ə'neg/, without a break between the two words. The latter consists of specific linking patterns, which would be linking two vowels together by inserting either subtle phoneme /w/, /r/, or /j/ between the two vowels.

“Let’s go /w/ into the next room.”

“Very /j/ interesting.”

“There isn’t a doctor /r/ available.”

Another essential aspect of connected speech is *stress placement*. The importance lies in how stress placement influences the meaning of the word. For instance, /prəˈdʒekt/ is used when the speaker talks about projecting a presentation on the whiteboard, whereas /ˈprɒdʒ.ekt/ is used when talking about a group activity. This indicates that the former is used as a verb and the latter as a noun (Ladefoged and Johnson 2010, 23). Hence it is important to know where to put stress, not only because doing it incorrectly contributes to the foreign accent (Volín and Weingartová 2014, 176), but also because it can cause errors in communication.

The next aspect to consider is *assimilation*, which is the altering of an original sound by the influence of an adjacent one. In the Czech language, it is common to use regressive assimilation of voice (Skarnitzl and Šturm 2014, 201). Regressive assimilation means that there is a change that takes place before the influencing sound. By doing so, Czechs often say /ˈfeɪzbʊk/ instead of /ˈfeɪsbʊk/, because the voiced consonant, a phoneme /b/, assimilates the preceding unvoiced consonant /s/ by making it voiced as well, thus transforming it into /z/. In these cases, regressive assimilation of voice is one of the aspects contributing to a foreign accent, which is troublesome for Czech speakers of English (Skarnitzl and Šturm 2014, 201).

Another aspect to mention would be *weak* and *strong forms* as some Czech speakers mispronounce these (Skarnitzl and Rumlová 2019, 113). These are variations of pronunciation of certain words in different situations. For example, in the sentence *I like that*, it is appropriate

to use the strong form of *that*, /ðæt/. Whereas in the sentence *I hope that she will* it would be more natural to use a weak form of *that*, /ðət/. Although using exclusively strong forms will probably not cause misperception, it will often sound foreign-accented (Roach 2009, 89).

Intonation should not be neglected as it is also an important suprasegmental feature that can be the cause of miscommunication for Czech speakers (Skarnitzl and Rumlová 2019, 114). While no definition can fully capture its essence, it's essential to understand that voice pitch is the key factor (Roach 2009, 119). High pitch can indicate an important segment of a speaker's utterance, or it can demonstrate a question. Intonation also has a certain social function since it is used to express politeness, emotions, or sarcasm. Flat intonation of NNSs might cause them to appear rude, which is another disadvantage in foreign-accented speech.

2 Method

This chapter will first define the research questions and then introduce the participants along with the method and materials used in the research.

The research questions are as follows:

RQ1: How do students of English at the Faculty of Education perceive and evaluate the quality of their peers' pronunciation?

RQ2: To what extent does the qualitative evaluation of the students and a native speaker align regarding the features that significantly contribute to foreign-accentedness in their peers' pronunciation?

2.1 Participants

There are 21 participants in total divided into two groups. The first group consists of 15 readers. All of the readers are non-native speaking TUL students in their third year of the English teaching bachelor's programme. The other group consists of five Czech students who are non-native assessors (NNAs) and one NS teacher, who is a native assessor (NA). The English proficiency of all of these students from both groups should now be near the level B2/C1 of the Common European Framework of Reference as they will soon be taking their state examination in English. Every participant except the NA speaks Czech as their mother tongue. All of them were told that their participation would serve to gather the data needed for the research focused on pronunciation and accents.

2.1.1 Readers

The participants from the reader group were selected from the English students of the Technical University of Liberec. This sample of participants consists of eight female and seven male readers all of whom are in the third grade of an English teaching bachelor's programme. During the time of the research, all of them were between 21 and 23 years of age. The participants were chosen randomly which ensures relative diversity of their individual pronunciation proficiency. However, all of these students should have completed a course in phonetics and phonology by the time of the research and should, therefore, have sufficient knowledge about the research topic. It should be noted that these students are prospective English teachers and are expected to achieve a certain proficiency in English.

2.1.2 Assessors

The group of assessors consists of six members in total. One of them is a native-speaking male university teacher who has been teaching in the Czech Republic for six years. The remaining are non-native-speaking student assessors. There are two male and three female assessors. All of the NNA group are students of English at TUL with their ages ranging from 20 to 25. During the time of the research, one NNA is in her second year and four others are in their third year of English studies. This ensures a relative variety of assessors' evaluation abilities while maintaining the standard of proficiency obtained by completing courses in phonetics and phonology.

The NA has been teaching English in the Czech Republic but has no experience with assessing pronunciation in particular. There are two students who stated to have previous experience with assessing pronunciation, while the rest stated to have none.

2.2 Material and Procedure

2.2.1 Method

The method of this research required two groups of participants and each group has a specific role. The role of the readers was to provide data for analysis. The role of the assessors was to analyse the data. Based on the review of their assessment data, the thesis research questions will be answered.

2.2.2 Procedure

The participants were approached by the author of this thesis via online communication and asked whether they were willing to participate in the research on pronunciation and accents in English. After the participants were gathered, the author created a model text with the help of artificial intelligence (ChatGPT 3.5) which was then modified to suit the purpose of the research best. The text was titled “A Stroll through the Enchanted Forest” (see Appendix 1) and was expected to take more than two minutes to read. Upon completion, it was forwarded to the readers via email. They were instructed to provide an audio recording of them reading the text aloud with the opportunity to read the text in advance. They were also assured that the recordings would not be accessed by anyone other than the author and the assessors and that their names would be anonymised. Upon receiving, the recordings were added to the evaluation form (see Chapter 2.2.4) which was then sent to the assessors.

2.2.3 Recordings

The readers were asked to record themselves reading aloud a text that they were able to read in advance. It incorporates several segments containing phonetic features, segmental as well as suprasegmental that are typically problematic for Czech learners of English (see Chapter 1.3).

The time of their reading ranged from one minute and 40 seconds to two minutes and 50 seconds with average time being about two minutes and 15 seconds. The readers were told the reading was expected to take them about two minutes but were not instructed to focus on not exceeding the time.

2.2.4 Evaluation Form

The evaluation form is a Google questionnaire containing all the recordings along with three segments for assessment per recording. The first segment is an overall assessment of the speaker's pronunciation quality determined by five grades on a Likert scale. The lower limit (bad score) of the scale was indicated by number one with the following description: "The speaker is unintelligible, frequent errors in pronunciation, they fail to deliver the message clearly, their flow and pace sound artificial, strong foreign Czech is present," while the upper limit (good score) was indicated by number five and characterised as such: "The speaker's pronunciation is close to a native speaker. Their intonation and pace are natural. There is no problem with understanding the message. The Czech accent is barely present or not present at all". This Likert Scale Assessment (LSA) segment serves as a means for answering RQ1 which deals with perception and evaluation of pronunciation.

The second segment involves marking the specific problematic features (SPF) that contribute to the speaker's foreign accent. The assessors were able to identify up to 12 selected segmental as well as suprasegmental features. These naturally do not include every possible pronunciation mistake, but rather the most frequent or prominent ones among Czech speakers (see Chapter 1.3). There was also the option of "no major problematic features in the speaker's English pronunciation". Interestingly, in some cases, this was used simultaneously in combination with another problematic feature, causing a conflict between the two. When this confusing assessment occurred, the option identifying no specific problem was disregarded. In other

words, more priority was given to the identification of a problem. It is also worth mentioning that although the readers seldom added or skipped certain words during their reading, this was not considered in the assessment as it has no effect on the foreign-accentedness or the pronunciation. In order to prevent the assessors from being too lenient in their evaluations, they were reminded that they were evaluating a prospective English teacher.

The third segment serves as an overall summary with the space to mention any crucial factors about the speaker's foreign-accentedness. The assessors were asked to use their own words to state the most problematic aspect of the speaker's speech. The last two segments are vital for answering RQ2, which deals with the concordance rate between the assessors on what contributes to a foreign accent.

2.2.5 Assessment Criteria

The main purpose of the LSA data was to discover how students view the pronunciation quality of their peers. Thus, this data was used to answer the RQ1. Additionally, the LSA data from the NNAs were compared to those of the NA to seek a correspondence between the two, as a secondary observation. The higher the recorded concordance with the NA, the more successful the student was considered.

The data of the second and the third segments served to determine whether the students were able to detect the same SPF as the NA and could, thus, be considered proficient assessors. Based on this, the RQ2 was answered.

3 Results

3.1 The Assessment of the Native Assessor

The native assessor is a teacher at TUL who has been teaching English in the Czech Republic for six years but has not confirmed any previous experience with assessing pronunciation as such.

The native speaker's LSA data reveal a mean of 3,73 (average) and mode 4 (most frequent value), which is the most prominent mode of the whole research, being marked eight times. This makes him the most benevolent assessor of the first segment. Despite that, he used the best rating (5) only two times, which is the least of all assessors (see Figure 1).

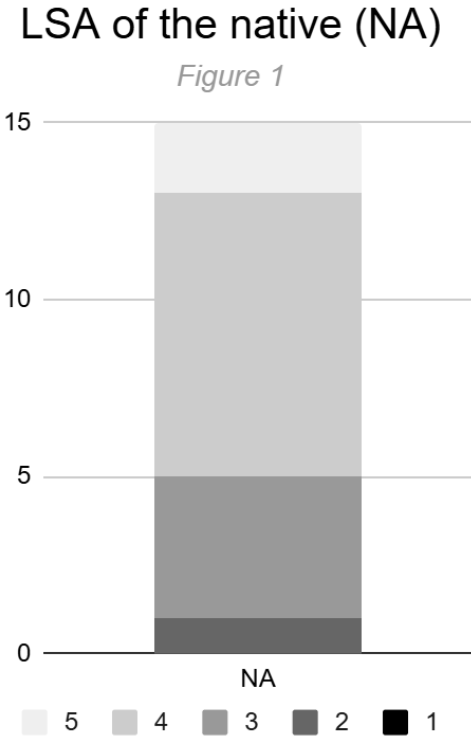


Figure 1: LSA of the NA

Regarding the second segment, he found 24 SPF in total, which is the smallest amount in the entire research. Proceeding from the amount to the specific items, from Figure 2 it can be concluded that the segmental phonological features sounded the most troublesome to the NA, whereas the suprasegmentals were not as frequently marked.

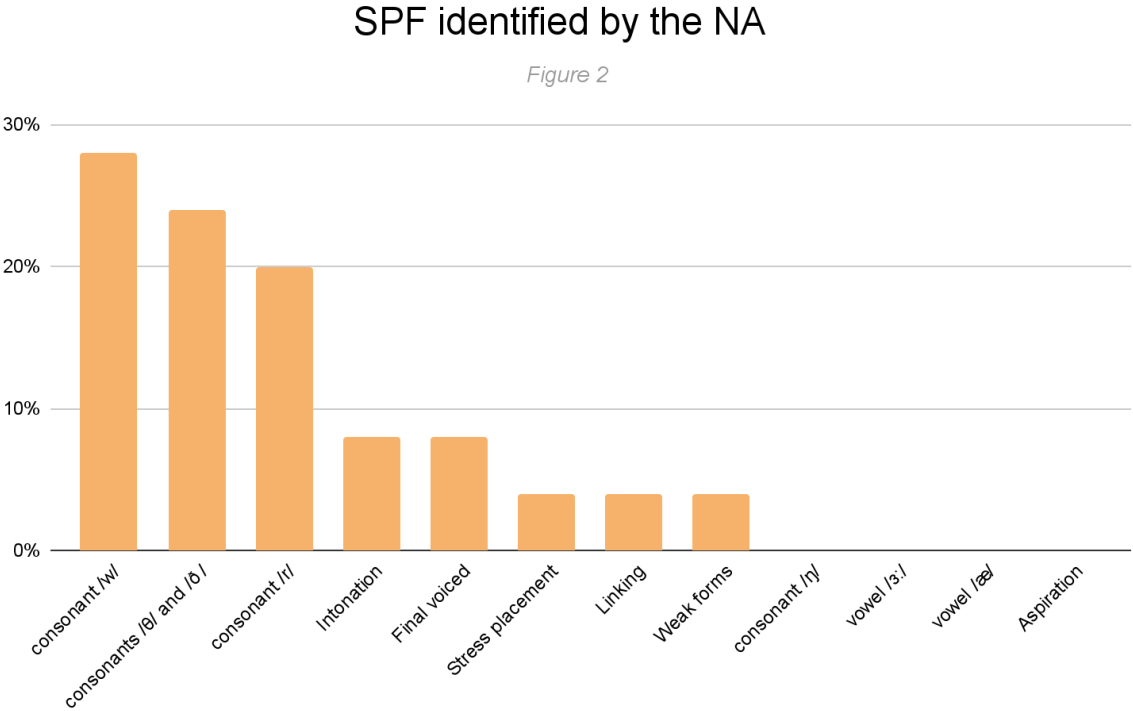


Figure 2: SPF identified by the NA

Strikingly, the NA did not identify a single case where aspiration would be a problem. The same holds true for the vowels /æ/, /ɜ:/, and the velar nasal /ŋ/.

When commenting and determining the most problematic feature, the NA often mentioned that the reader is close to native pronunciation, has demonstrated a good reading or made only a few minor mistakes.

3.2 The Assessment of the Non-Native Assessors (Peer Assessment)

Before the student assessment data are presented, an overview of the individuals is available in Table 2.

Table 2: NNA information overview

| Assessor | NNA1 | NNA2 | NNA3 | NNA4 | NNA5 |
|-------------------------------|------|--------|--------|--------|------|
| Sex | Male | Female | Female | Female | Male |
| Year of studies | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| Age | 22 | 23 | 20 | 22 | 25 |
| Previous assessing experience | Some | Some | None | None | None |

The assessment of the students in the first segment seems to be relatively consistent given their similar means in LSA, as visible in Figure 3.

Means of the NNAs in LSA

Figure 3

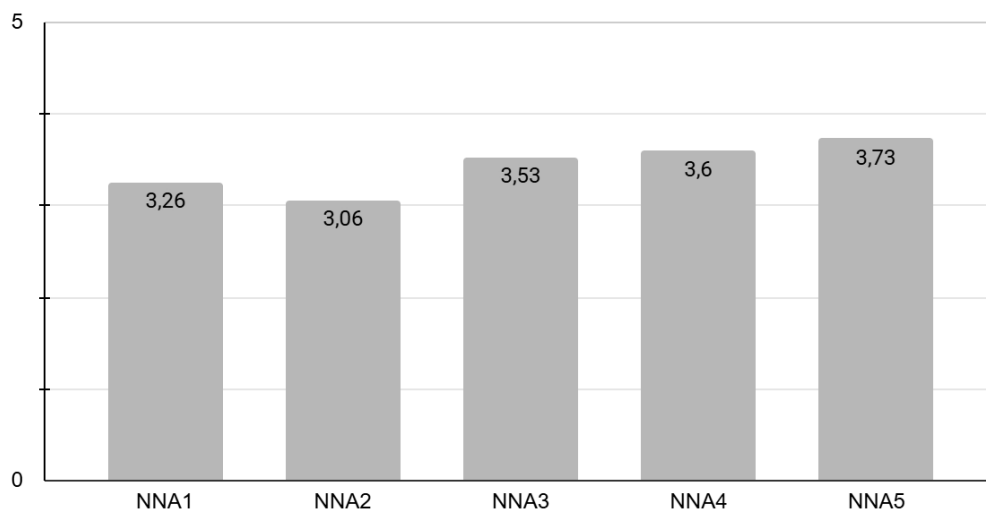


Figure 3: Means of the NNAs in the LSA

However, in detail, it is observable that some students used the whole range of grades (one to five), whereas others were more tolerant and did not use the lowest grade even once (see Figure 4). There are no visible correlations between their sex or age and their ratings. Nevertheless, it is observable that the two NNAs who stated to have previous experience with pronunciation assessment are the most critical of the research sample.

LSA of the students (NNAs)

Figure 4

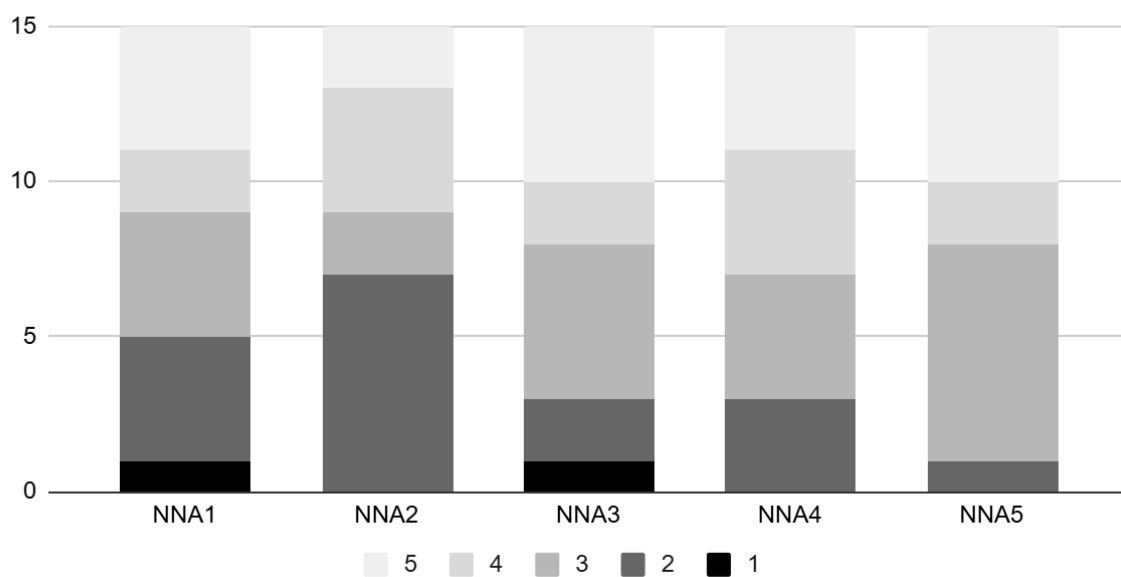


Figure 4: Overview of the LSA of the NNAs

Regarding the second segment, the NNAs on average identified 2,693 SPF per recording as they identified a significant number of mistakes in total (see Figure 5).

Total number of identified SPF by the NNAs

Figure 5

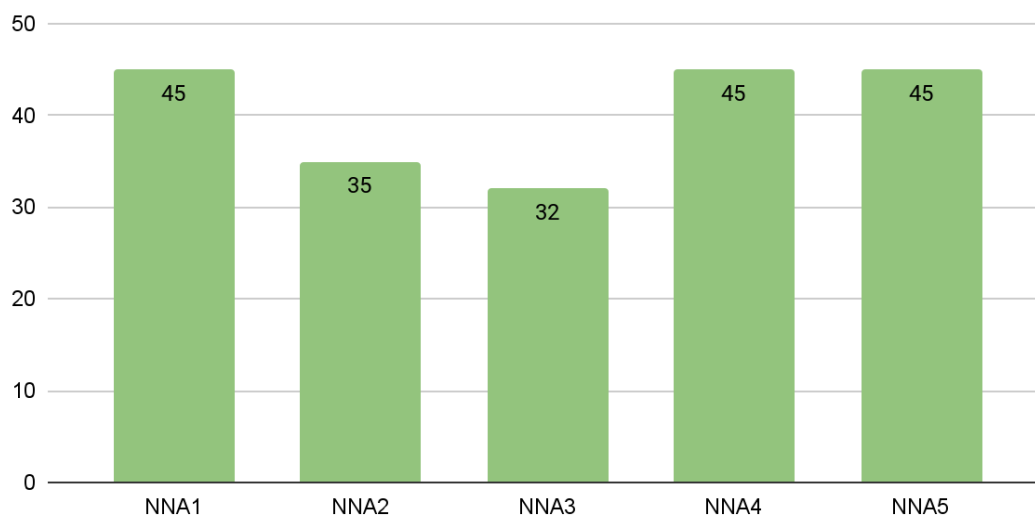


Figure 5: Total number of identified SPF by the NNAs

From Figure 6 it is observable that suprasegmental features are among the most frequently marked SPF by the students, with aspiration being the most problematic.

SPF identified by the NNAs

Figure 6

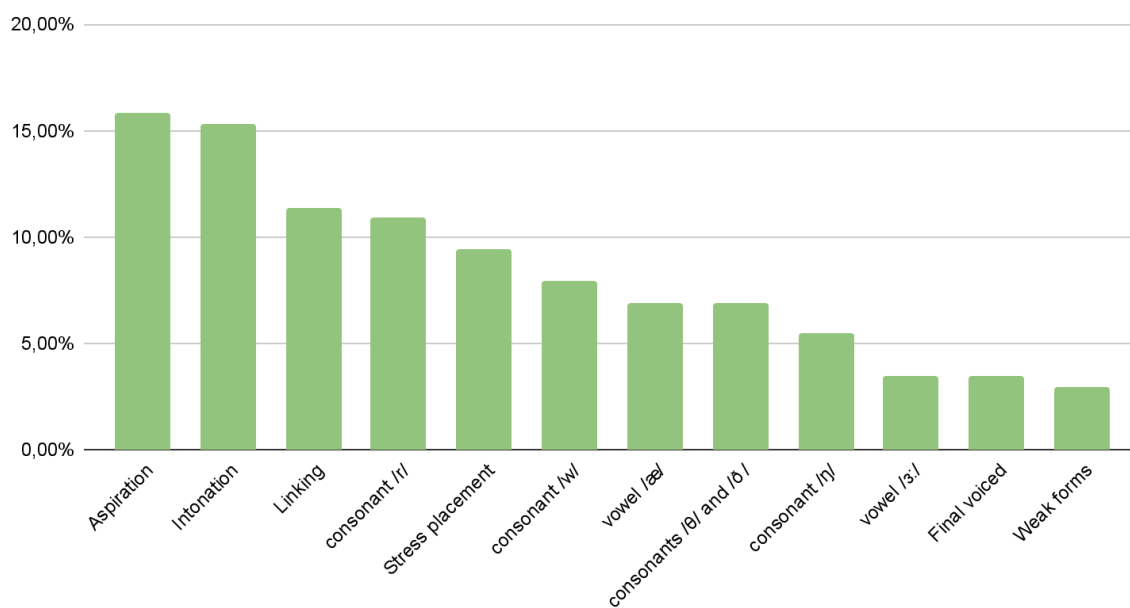


Figure 6: SPF identified by the NNAs

It is important to note that the results of the second segment are rather diverse. The SPF identified by one assessor differ greatly from those identified by another as some SPF were not identified at all by one assessor but were the most frequently identified problem by another assessor.

3.3 Summary of Results

Regarding the specific data, the mean of all LSA data excluding the NA is 3,436, suggesting that the sample of TUL students that participated in this research as readers is viewed as slightly above average in terms of their overall pronunciation quality. What is most apparent from the Likert scale data is that NNAs tend to be more critical in the overall pronunciation assessment than the NA as the means of the students are lower (or the same in one case) than the one of NA (see Figure 7).

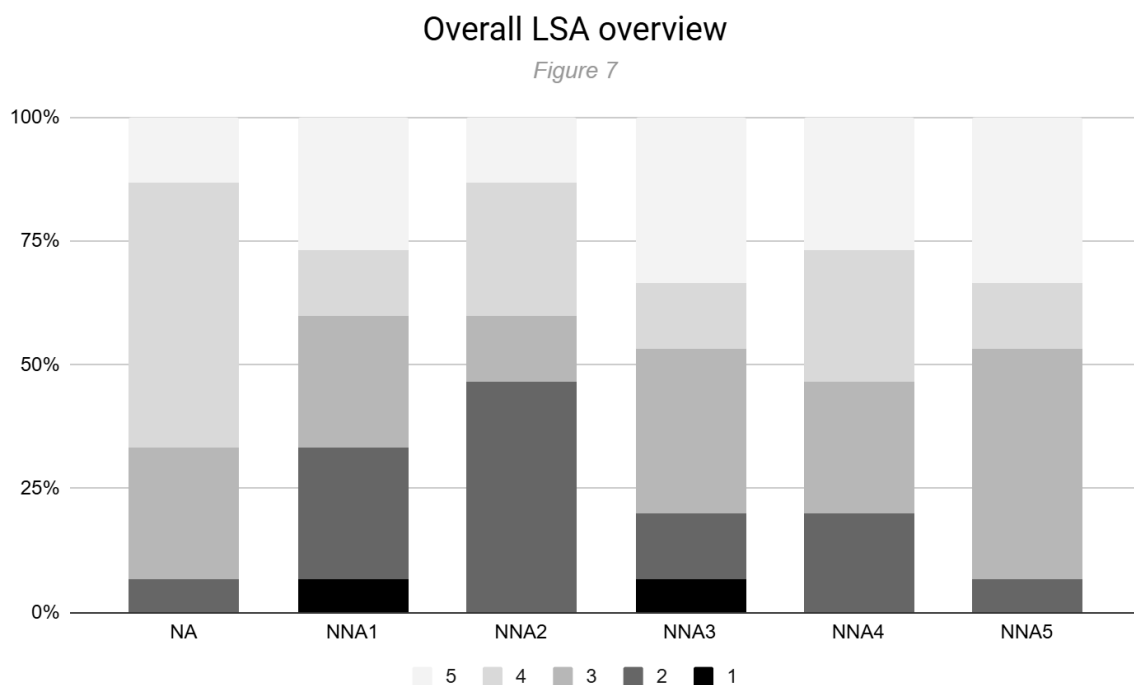


Figure 7: Overview of the LSA of the NNAs and the NA

There are barely any matches between the SPF identified by the NA and the NNAs. The final comments are also diverse. However, it is evident in Figures 8 and 9 that the most prevalent problematic features for Czech students are the suprasegmentals, whereas the most frequently identified features by the native were segmentals, namely /w/, /θ/ and /ð/ and /r/.

Most frequent SPF according to the NA

Figure 8

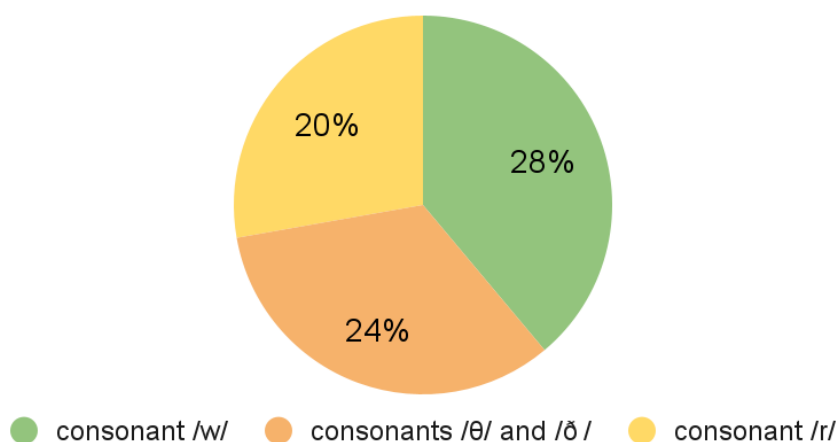


Figure 8: Most frequent SPF according to the NA

Most frequent SPF according to the NNAs

Figure 9

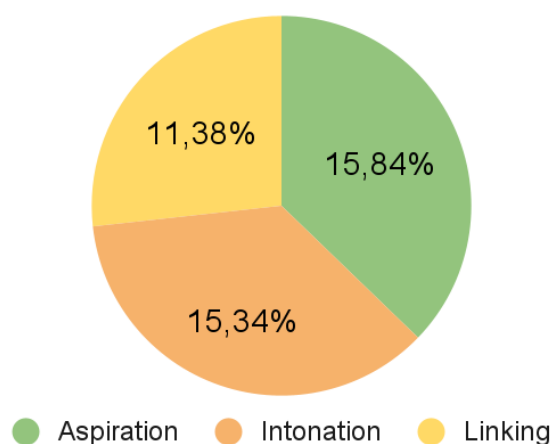


Figure 9: Most frequent SPF according to the NNAs

Interestingly, comparing Figure 2 and Figure 6, it is clear that aspiration was the most frequently marked problematic feature by the NNAs, while not being selected once by the native.

Regarding the correspondence between the NA and the NNAs, it should be first noted that the students identified significantly more SPF than the NA (see Figure 10). The average number of identified SPF by the students is 68% higher than the number of identified features by the native.

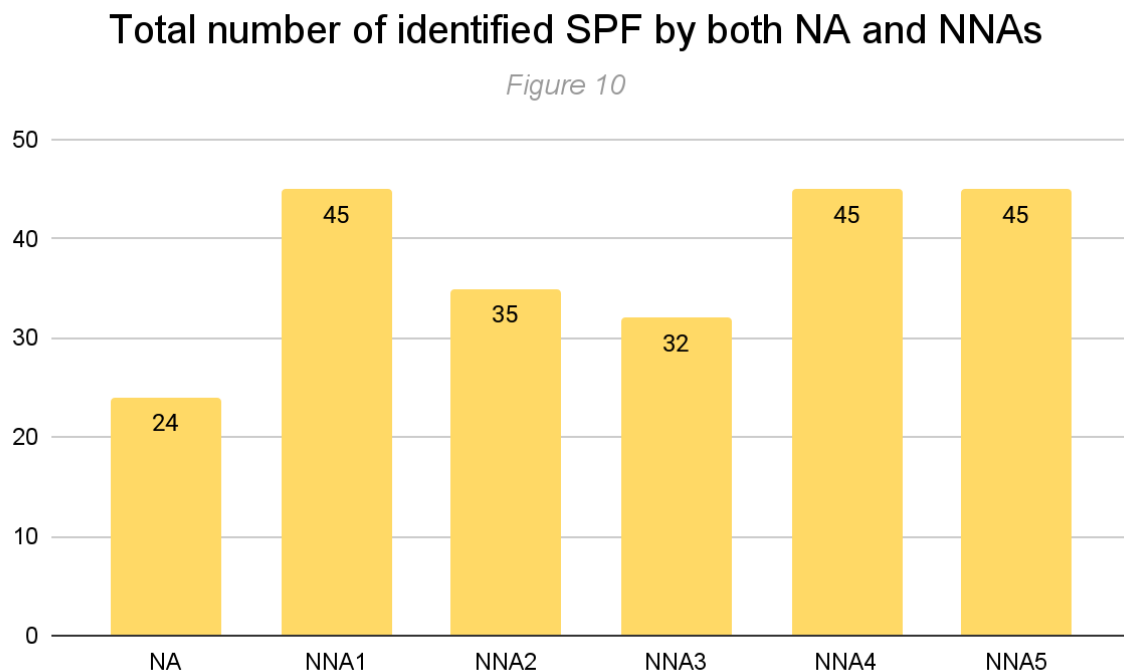


Figure 10: Total number of identified SPF by the NNAs and the NA

From the higher number of identified SPF, only about 40% on average (29,17% lowest, 50% highest) corresponded with the SPF identified by the NA in respective recordings (see Figure 11). There was also some match in marking the absence of SPF.

Correspondence in identifying SPF

Figure 11

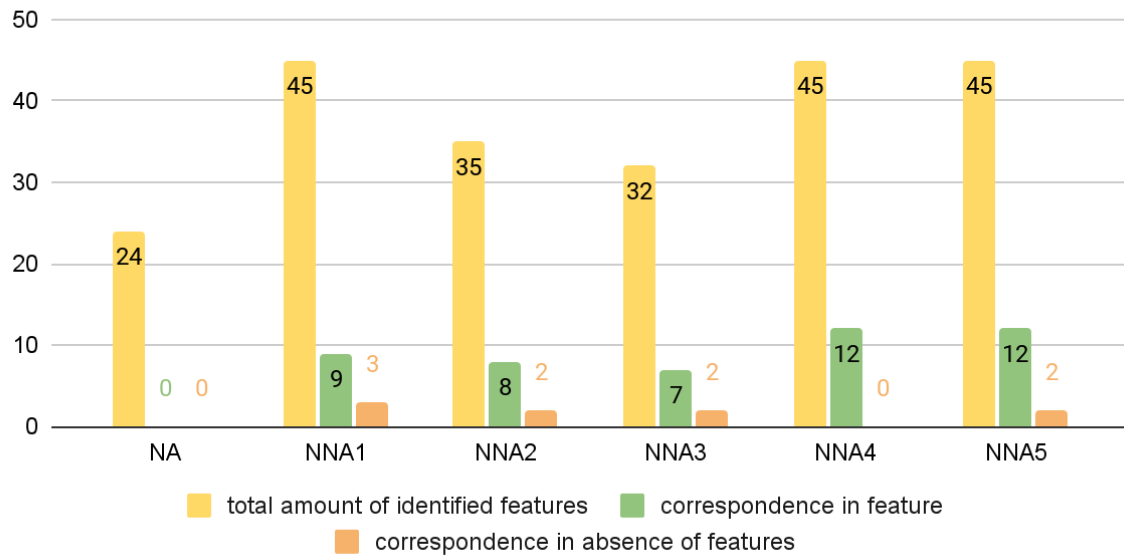


Figure 11: Correspondence between the NNAs and the NA in identifying SPF

In addition to the primary SPF comparison, a secondary observation was made in the LSA segment. When a student assigned the same number on the Likert scale as the NA, this was taken as a total correspondence. On the other hand, if the student assigned a different number than the NA, this was taken as a deviation. This was further divided into one-point deviations and two-point deviations. The key aspect here is the concordance rate between the students and the NA. However, this observation was not considered when answering the RQs. In Figure 12,

it is evident that the students who stated to have previous experience with assessing pronunciation (NNA1 and NNA2) reached the lowest correspondence with the NA.

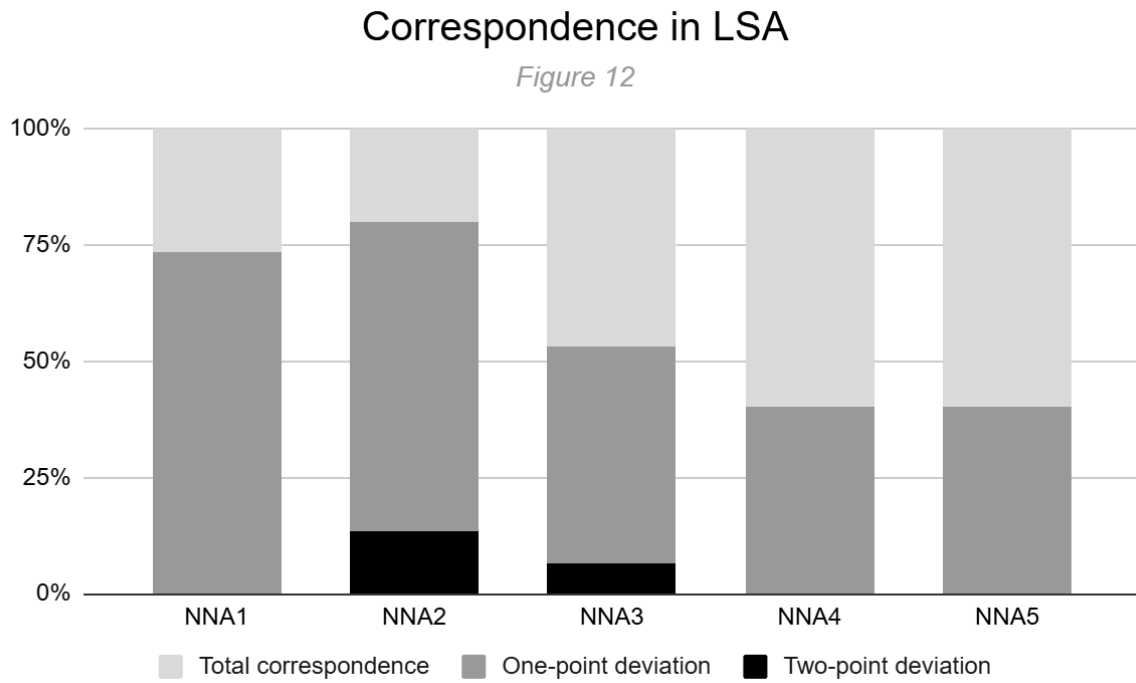


Figure 12: Correspondence between the NNAs and the NA in LSA

Conclusion

This thesis focused on the perception of Czech foreign accent in the English pronunciation of Czech students at the Technical University of Liberec. The study aimed to investigate two main questions. Firstly, it examined how students perceive the quality of their peers' pronunciation. Secondly, it focused more on the aspect of foreign accent in said speech. Specifically, it examined students' ability to determine what contributes to the foreign accent of a speaker.

To answer the first research question, from the data gathered (LSA), it can be concluded that students view their peers' pronunciation as slightly above average in terms of their overall pronunciation quality, as their combined mean is 3,436. In this segment, all assessors used the highest rating (5) at least twice, but only two assessors used the lowest rating (1). It was also observed that the Czech students (as non-native assessors) were considerably more critical in terms of evaluating pronunciation compared to the NA. Their average LSA mean was 8% lower than that of the native, with all of them (except one) being lower (more critical) than the NA. These findings are in line with those of Šimáčková and Podlipský (2011) in the sense that Czech auditors are more critical towards Czech foreign accent, than foreign auditors. This might be caused by the fact that EFL learners have a deeper awareness of errors as they occur in their own learning process, unlike native speakers.

Regarding the second research question, the results are rather diverse. From the SPF data, it is evident that no student showed an absolute correspondence with the native assessor, moreover, no student has even identified the same amount of SPF as the native. There are occasional matches in identified SPF between the native and the students, however, their occurrence is irregular. Thus, the correspondence rate between the students and the native in terms of what actually contributes to the foreign accent is very low. Nevertheless, the tendency to be more critical observable in the LSA persists here as well, as all of the students identified

significantly more SPF than the native (see Figure 10). The correspondence rate between the NA and the NNAs is rather small, reaching 40% on average (29,17% lowest, 50% highest). Additionally, it is observable that aspiration sounded the most problematic to the students, whereas the native did not find it problematic once. What he did find problematic, however, were the segmentals, mainly /w/, /θ/ and /ð/ and /r/.

The research has shown that Czech students of English at TUL view the pronunciation of their peers as slightly above average. It has also shown that the opinions on what contributes to the Czech foreign accent vary, not only among non-natives themselves but between them and the native as well. Additionally, the fact that the student assessors were more critical than the native suggests that the students are sensitive to foreign accent and are more likely to give priority to the accuracy approach, which is desirable for future teachers.

The low correspondence rate between the SPF identified by the students and the native does not mean that the students' evaluation skills are insufficient in any way. It is rather related to the main limitation of the research, which is the reliance on a single native assessor, who is the sole judge of the accuracy of the students' evaluations. Furthermore, this assessor has stated to have no previous experience with assessing pronunciation. Therefore, it is advisable for researchers working on a similar case to increase the number of native assessors as it will help to increase the credibility of the results. Another implication would be to consider assessing spontaneous speech of the participants rather than a prepared text as was done in the present research. This thesis does not aim to explore the pronunciation quality of all English students, but rather a small sample of TUL students to provide insight. It would be enriching to follow up on this research by adopting a more holistic approach with a greater sample of participants.

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Appendices

Appendix A

A Stroll through the Enchanted Forest

Deep within the ancient woods, where tall trees whisper stories of days long gone, a hidden path winds its way through the thick forest. This magical trail is a secret known to only a few, and those who venture onto its twisting course find themselves in a world filled with amazement.

As you embark on this journey, pay attention to the rustling leaves and the gentle breeze. Feel the presence of the old and wise oak trees and notice their branches reaching out like ancient fingers. Pay attention to the mysterious quality of the air, carrying with it the soft sounds of unseen creatures.

Sometimes, the path gets narrow, testing your determination as you move through thorny bushes and twisted vines. The wind's voice may guide you, a faint whisper encouraging you to keep going. Hear the elusive call of the night birds as they sing their mysterious tunes.

Pause for a moment by a babbling brook, where the water dances over smooth stones. Here, the rhythmic flow of nature's song surrounds you, and the forest's symphony comes alive. Take a deep breath, inhaling the earthy scent of moss and damp soil.

As you continue your journey, the air seems to shimmer with a touch of magic. If you are observant enough, you might catch a glimpse of elusive woodland creatures darting between the trees.

On your way you will face challenges that test your courage. The forest, with its myriad sounds and secrets, invites you to embrace the unfamiliar. Do you have what it takes to unveil the mysteries of the enchanted forest?

Remember, each twist and turn offers an opportunity to strengthen your connection with the language of nature. In the heart of the enchanted forest, where reality and imagination mingle, your journey becomes a story woven into the very fabric of the woods.

- generated by ChatGPT 3.5, edited by Martin Málek

Appendix B1

Sekce 1 z 16

Assessment of the Pronunciation Proficiency Level of Czech TUL Students of English

B *I* U  

In this research, we will be dealing with the assessment of the quality of pronunciation of randomly selected Czech students of English at TUL. These students are prospective English teachers, which is important to keep in mind while assessing them. There are 15 recordings of 15 different speakers reading an adapted text. The readers were allowed to look through the text and prepare for the reading before they started to record themselves.

Firstly, you will be asked to assess the quality of the speakers' pronunciation in general on a scale of 1 to 5. Then, you will be asked to assess the quality of their pronunciation in more detail by marking specific problematic features which, in your view, contribute to a foreign accent of the speaker when speaking in English. For instance, it can be incorrect pronunciation of certain sounds or words, intonation, the absence of linking or even a degree of exaggeration in the speaker's pronunciation which would sound unnatural in English. Focus on any aspect in the speaker's English pronunciation that you find incorrect or at least problematic.

In the evaluation, you will focus on both segmentals (e.g. the individual sounds, aspiration) and suprasegmentals (e.g. intonation, stress placement, linking etc.). Then, you will be asked to add some of your own observations and write any other unlisted factor(s) that you think contribute to a foreign accent of the speaker.

The questionnaire is estimated to take one to two hours to complete. The results will be anonymised, your name will not appear anywhere.

What is your FULL name? *

Text stručné odpovědi

Are you male or female? *

Male

Female

Appendix B2

How old are you? *



Text stručné odpovědi

At the university, you are currently in your *

- 1st year
- 2nd year
- 3rd year

Do you have any prior experience with assessing the pronunciation of Czech learners of English? *

- Yes, I have some prior experience.
- No, I have no prior experience.

Appendix B3

Sekce 2 z 16

Recording 1



First look at the components you will be assessing below.

Then listen to the recording in the link and answer the questions below.

[Recording 1 - click here](#)

It is advised to follow the text while listening:

A Stroll Through the Enchanted Forest

Deep within the ancient woods, where tall trees whisper stories of days long gone, a hidden path winds its way through the thick forest. This magical trail is a secret known to only a few, and those who venture onto its twisting course find themselves in a world filled with amazement.

As you embark on this journey, pay attention to the rustling leaves and the gentle breeze. Feel the presence of the old and wise oak trees and notice their branches reaching out like ancient fingers. Pay attention to the mysterious quality of the air, carrying with it the soft sounds of unseen creatures.

Sometimes, the path gets narrow, testing your determination as you move through thorny bushes and twisted vines. The wind's voice may guide you, a faint whisper encouraging you to keep going. Hear the elusive call of the night birds as they sing their mysterious tunes.

Pause for a moment by a babbling brook, where the water dances over smooth stones. Here, the rhythmic flow of nature's song surrounds you, and the forest's symphony comes alive. Take a deep breath, inhaling the earthy scent of moss and damp soil.

As you continue your journey, the air seems to shimmer with a touch of magic. If you are observant enough, you might catch a glimpse of elusive woodland creatures darting between the trees.

On your way you will face challenges that test your courage. The forest, with its myriad sounds and secrets, invites you to embrace the unfamiliar. Do you have what it takes to unveil the mysteries of the enchanted forest?

Remember, each twist and turn offers an opportunity to strengthen your connection with the language of nature. In the heart of the enchanted forest, where reality and imagination mingle, your journey becomes a story woven into the very fabric of the woods.

Appendix B4

Listen to the recording and assess the quality of the speaker's pronunciation using the following criteria. *

1 - The speaker is unintelligible, frequent errors in pronunciation, they fail to deliver the message clearly, their flow and pace sound artificial, strong foreign Czech is present.

2 - The speaker mispronounces phonemes, struggles with intonation, generally understandable but with noticeable errors.

3 - The speaker occasionally mispronounces but is able to convey the message without significant problems, overall clear. Signs of the Czech language influence might be present.

4 - The speaker rarely mispronounces, delivers the message clearly, the use of intonation and rhythm seems natural, their pace is easy to follow.

5 - The speaker's pronunciation is close to a native speaker. Their intonation and pace is natural. There is no problem with understanding the message. The Czech accent is barely present or not present at all.

| | | | | | | |
|------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Poor | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Very good |

Appendix B5

Which of these aspects were, in your view, problematic in the speaker's pronunciation? *

Focus on those phonetic features which you think contribute to the foreign accent of the speaker.

Keep in mind that the speaker is a future English teacher and should, thus, be assessed accordingly.

- Aspiration - puff of air that accompanies stressed /p/, /t/ and /k/ consonants (e.g. "pit" - /pʰɪt/, whereas "...
- Linking words - smooth transitioning between words, sometimes inserting /w/, /j/, or /r/ between vowels...
- Intonation - rise and fall of pitch in speech conveying meaning, emotion, or grammatical information. (e.g...
- Stress placement - putting emphasis on different syllables (e.g. project as a noun - /'prɒdʒ.ekt/, project a...
- Pronunciation of /θ/ and /ð/ - swapping for other phonemes (e.g. think /θɪŋk/ as /sɪŋk/)
- Pronunciation of /w/ - swapping for /v/ (e.g. which as /vɪtʃ/ or very as /werɪ/)
- Pronunciation of /ŋ/ - finishing with /k/ in -ing words (e.g. fishing as /fɪʃɪŋk/)
- Pronunciation of /r/ - pronouncing it in a Czech way, not the English way (both English and American pro...
- Pronunciation of /æ/ - swapping for /e/ (e.g. bat /bæt/ as /bet/)
- Pronunciation of /ɜ:/ - swapping for other phonemes (e.g. world /wɜ:ld/ as /vɔ:rt/)
- Strong forms instead of weak forms - (e.g. wait for the end - /weɪt fɔ: ði: end/ vs. /weɪt fəʊði: end)
- Final voiced consonants - pronouncing final consonant as voiceless (e.g. bag as /bæk/)
- I did not notice any major problematic features in the speaker's English pronunciation.

Appendix B6

Comment on what, in your view, is the most problematic aspect about the speaker's pronunciation as a future English teacher in terms of their accent. *
Include your own observations and address any additional issues that have not yet been discussed.

Text dlouhé odpovědi
.....

Appendix C1 – assessor overview

| Name | Sex | Age | Year | Previous experience |
|------|------|-----|------|---------------------|
| NNA1 | Male | 22 | 3rd | Some |

Appendix C2 – first recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 4 |
| SPF | None |
| Commentary | Overall the reading was delivered very well. Only few little details: - slow pace (it could be faster, although the focus on the correctness is influential) - words "pay" and "attention" were not linked (only a rarity though, therefore, I cannot marked it generally) - a word "carrying" was mispronounced (pronounced with /k/ at the end) - lack of energy (but that is rather a subjective point of view). A last detailed that occurred to me while re-listening the recording was the strange pronunciation of the indefinite article "a". The reader pronounces it as a diphthong /ei/ rather than as a schwa. |

Appendix C3 – second recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 1 |
| SPF | Aspiration, Linking, Intonation, /θ/ and /ð/, /æ/, Strong and weak forms, Final voiced consonants |
| Commentary | There was a considerable number of errors of the reader. A problematic one, in my point of view, was mispronouncing the /θ/ and pronouncing it as over-aspirated /t/ (mainly when pronouncing "through", "thorny" or "path"). Consequently, there was a mistake in aspiration. The reader aspirated /t/ in "stroll" and not aspirated /p/ in "pay". Another one which was evident was pronouncing /k/ at the end of the -ing rather than the nasal /ŋ/. However, the most notable was the stress on every initial syllable of a word when the reader missed the natural flow and linking the words. |

Appendix C4 - third recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 2 |
| SPF | Aspiration, Linking, Stress placement, /ŋ/, /r/, /æ/, Strong and weak forms, Final voiced consonants |
| Commentary | First of all, I would like to say that it was nearly as fast as Eminem delivering his rap text. Therefore, I had a difficulty to catch if a word was pronounced well or not. The rapid pace goes hand in hand with intonation which I find the most problematic aspect of all - probably due to the lack of stressing appropriate words and syllables. The last aspects which I found significant to mention were the mispronunciation of the /r/ (e.g. carrying), /ŋ/ (also carrying) or bad aspiration. |

Appendix C5 - fourth recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 5 |
| SPF | None |
| Commentary | Very well delivered and easy to listen. Beautiful intonation and stress |

Appendix C6 – fifth recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 2 |
| SPF | Aspiration, Stress placement, /r/, Final voiced consonants |
| Commentary | The most problematic aspect is pronouncing /r/ in a Czech way. It is evident since the beginning ("trees", "through", "forest"). Sometimes, on the contrary, it was correctly omitted (in words like "embark" or "journey"). It would sound more naturally if this aspect was corrected. The mispronunciation of the /r/ is considerably notable. Among other, the stress is another difficulty. Some words are mispronounced: "enchanted" or "opportunity". The reader lack energy when reading :) |

Appendix C7 – sixth recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 3 |
| SPF | Aspiration, /θ/ and /ð/, /ŋ/ |
| Commentary | The speaker delivered the message well only with some minor mistakes. The speaker did not aspirate some of the words ("tall", "tree", "path"). Subsequently, the speaker had a difficulty with pronouncing the /θ/ mainly in the word "through". In the end, the speaker mispronounced -ing ("rustling", "carrying"). |

Appendix C8 – seventh recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 4 |
| SPF | Intonation, none |
| Commentary | It was well delivered. The speaker only intoned badly when asking the question. |

Appendix C9 – eighth recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 2 |
| SPF | Aspiration, Stress placement, /θ/ and /ð/, /ŋ/, /r/, /æ/, /z:/, none |
| Commentary | The mispronuciation of /r/ and /θ/ is very notable, although the speaker tries to intone and link the words |

Appendix C10 – ninth recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 2 |
| SPF | Aspiration, /w/, /r/, /æ/, /ɜ:/, Final voiced consonants |
| Commentary | The Czech accent is very noticeable. Mainly the Czech /r/ which is heard in every sentence makes the speech very Czech. |

Appendix C11 – tenth recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 3 |
| SPF | Linking, Intonation, /ŋ/ |
| Commentary | The speaker struggles to intone and link words with each other. The speech is rather monotone without any variety of intonation. Concerning the most conspicuous aspect of all, it is probably the pronunciation of /k/ at the end of a word (e.g. in "going"). |

Appendix C12 – eleventh recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 5 |
| SPF | Aspiration, none |
| Commentary | It was very good, however, there are two minor aspects which I find problematic. The first one is the aspiration of /t/ in "stroll". The second one is the pronunciation of "winds" with the diphthong /ai/. Otherwise, it was an exemplary reading. |

Appendix C13 – twelfth recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 3 |
| SPF | Aspiration, /æ/ |
| Commentary | Although the reader's pace was slow a too much focused on the correct pronunciation, the final result was acceptable. The reading was comprehensible and easy to listen with a few mistakes though. First of them is a lack of aspiration in the word "tall", and the second one is a mispronunciation of some words containing /æ/ sound (e.g. "magical", "dances") |

Appendix C14 – thirteenth recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 5 |
| SPF | none |
| Commentary | Good work! The reader sounded like a native. |

Appendix C15 – fourteenth recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 5 |
| SPF | none |
| Commentary | The only one aspect I would highlight is the non-fluency. Otherwise, it was well delivered. |

Appendix C16 – fifteenth recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 3 |
| SPF | Aspiration, Linking, Strong and weak forms |
| Commentary | The speech is not coherent. It lacks fluency and connection between the words. The words are not linked, on the contrary, they are pronounced separately as in Czech (the first syllable is stressed in most cases). It follows that weak forms of words like "a", "the" or "to" are not present and are pronounced rather strongly. Concerning the aspiration, I noticed no aspiration in the word "attention" where the double "tt" (/t/) should be aspirated since the schwa precedes. |

Appendix D1 – assessor overview

| Name | Sex | Age | Year | Previous experience |
|------|--------|-----|------|---------------------|
| NNA2 | Female | 23 | 3rd | Some |

Appendix D2 – first recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 3 |
| SPF | Aspiration, Intonation, Stress placement |
| Commentary | Overall, I think her pronunciation is good, but her accent is really prominent Czech accent, and her stress on S is really strong. She also, probably, did not have the chance to read it beforehand and it is obvious she is struggling sometimes with the sentence structures or the words itself. These factors might contribute towards her Czech accent. I think she is able to teach children english in the future, I think she just has to probably go out there, like Erasmus, and train her pronunciation just a little bit more and she'll be fine. |

Appendix D3 – second recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 2 |
| SPF | Aspiration, Linking, Stress placement, /θ/ and /ð/, /w/ |
| Commentary | Overall, one is able to understand what she was reading, however, I came across many problems. She is unable to connect words together and sometimes it is very clear that she makes pauses (or breathing pauses) in between words, resulting in a very unpleasant to listen to. She also has some problems with certain letter, for example T with combination of R. She either almost doesn't pronounce it or pronounces it way too much. Her pronunciation of V is very much Czech V and not English V. Her intonation is not the best either, sometimes it sounds bland, as if she was only reading a text without really thinking what she is reading. These factors and some others contribute to her having much stronger Czech accent. Personally, I would not have her as a English teacher. (For now) |

Appendix D4 – third recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 2 |
| SPF | Aspiration, Intonation, Stress placement, /ŋ/, /r/ |
| Commentary | I have to admit that this man's pronunciation is conflicting. Firstly, he reads the text extremely quickly and without any intonation, almost not caring about commas or the overall context of the text. Not to say it's not understandable, it's more uncomfortable to listen to. Secondly, his accent is prominent Czech accent, but here is where it's interesting. Sometimes, his Rs are strongly Czech, but sometimes, inside of the word, he is able to pronounce it correctly. Oftentimes, he aspirates the first letter in the sentence, even though it does not need to be pronounced so prominently. The T is also very obvious. Overall, I had trouble assessing which number to assign him to, but I chose the one I chose for all these problems. As a potential English teacher, it's not bad, I would just recommend him to work on his reading/speaking more. |

Appendix D5 – fourth recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 4 |
| SPF | Stress placement, none |
| Commentary | This speaker's pronunciation and delivery of the reading is very pleasant to listen to. His pace is slow and makes correct stops where there are commas and overall, the whole reading is understandable. The only problem I personally have with his delivery is that sometimes he unnecessarily puts stress on certain syllables, mostly the first ones, eg. TESTing, SCent, SHimmer, STArting, CHALLENGES etc., which is uncomfortable. But overall, these are mistakes that are small and very quickly fixable. His pronunciation is not at all Czech and he will make a really good teacher. |

Appendix D6 – fifth recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 2 |
| SPF | /r/ |
| Commentary | I had a hard time selecting a number for this speaker. I was in between 1 (very strong Czech accent) and 3 (intonation). Her intonation is good, it is understandable what she is saying, but her R is very Czech and very strong it is very uncomfortable to listen to. If there were any other pronunciation mistakes, I was unable to notice them since the Rs were so strong. I would not recommend her teaching English in foreseeable future. |

Appendix D7 – sixth recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 2 |
| SPF | Aspiration, Linking, Stress placement, /ŋ/, /r/, Strong forms |
| Commentary | This mans Czech accent is prominent through the majority of the reading. He is pronouncing the Rs strongly. His intonation is not bad, one can understand what he is saying, his pace is nice. But sometimes he struggles with the words, it's obvious when he stops to look at the following word, leaving the reader in the silence for longer then suddenly continuing. Overall, I would say that if he worked on his pronunciation more, he could work it very well, since his intonation and overall voice is really comfortable to listen to, which is one of the aspects of being a good teacher. |

Appendix D8 – seventh recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 5 |
| SPF | none |
| Commentary | Her voice is comfortable to listen to. Her pace and intonation is great and very listenable. I did not come across any prominent mistakes in pronunciation. She did an excellent job. |

Appendix D9 – eighth recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 2 |
| SPF | Aspiration, Stress placement, /r/, Strong forms |
| Commentary | This speaker's intonation and pace is correc and understandable, but his Czech pronunciation is very prominent. His Rs are strong and that is disrupting, which makes it uncomfortable to listen to. Sometimes he even incorrectly stresses the R in middle of a word, which is strange. Overall I think his frasing is good, he just needs to work on his pronunciation more. He could make a good teacher in the future (his voice is quite nice to listen to) |

Appendix D10 – ninth recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 2 |
| SPF | Intonation, Stress placement, /w/, /r/, Strong forms |
| Commentary | Once again, this speaker's pronunciation is very prominent Czech accent. Her Rs are strong and it is uncomfortable to listen to. Her intonation is also wrong, sometimes she reads it correctly and then quickens up the pace, which is also uncomfortable, needless to say she herself then has problems actually reading the words, making pauses to read the next few words to continue or returning herself back a few words. Overall, I would recommend working on her reading out loud in the future before attempting to teach somebody else. |

Appendix D11 – tenth recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 5 |
| SPF | none |
| Commentary | Her voice is nice, her pace and intonation is correct. Her pronunciation is great, no prominent Czech accent in any aspects. There might have been a slight mishap here and there, but it's almost unnoticeable and nothing that would be problematic. She is very good and she would make a great teacher. |

Appendix D12 – eleventh recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 4 |
| SPF | none |
| Commentary | Her voice is nice to listen to, her pace is correct and overall her delivery is understandable. I did not notice any mishaps/mistakes. She did a very good job and she will be a good teacher. |

Appendix D13 – twelfth recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 3 |
| SPF | Aspiration, Stress placement, /r/ |
| Commentary | His pacing and intonation is good most of the time, but his pronunciation is killing the overall impression. He has strong Rs, showing his czech accent, but also he is sometimes stressing syllables he should not have. Sometimes, I think, it is to add the drama effect to it, but it is actually just disrupting. If he worked on his pronunciation more, he could one day be a good teacher, but that is still long way to go. |

Appendix D14 – thirteenth recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 4 |
| SPF | none |
| Commentary | His pronunciation is great and the pace is comfortable. Overall, the delivery was great and he's close to a native speaker. There were slight mishaps in the duration, but nothing major or gravely wrong. Sometimes, to add the drama, he stressed some syllables stronger, but nothing bad. He did a very good job and will make a great teacher to listen to. |

Appendix D15 – fourteenth recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 4 |
| SPF | none |
| Commentary | Her pace and pronunciation is good. There are some mistakes that she made in pronunciation, for example winds, but overall she did a good job without any major mistakes. She will make a good teacher in the future. |

Appendix D16 – fifteenth recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 2 |
| SPF | Linking, Intonation, /r/ |
| Commentary | His voice is not clear, sometimes he does not pronounce the ends of the words. His Rs are sometimes weirdly pronounced, almost mispronounced in some places. His intonation is good, the pace as well, but he is not connecting the words, making pauses. His voice is alright to listen to, but he needs to practice his reading out loud. With practice, he could be a good teacher one day. |

Appendix E1 – assessor overview

| Name | Sex | Age | Year | Previous experience |
|------|--------|-----|------|---------------------|
| NNA3 | Female | 20 | 2nd | None |

Appendix E2 – first recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 4 |
| SPF | Linking, Intonation |
| Commentary | The speaker's voice seems to be too neutral. The voice sounds a bit narrow and doesn't give off much intonation within the sentences. |

Appendix E3 – second recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 2 |
| SPF | Aspiration, Linking, Intonation, /w/ |
| Commentary | The speaker speaks too fast, therefore the speaker sometimes mispronounces the whole words. I find the speaker's linking the most problematic. The whole speech sounds unnatural and the speaker's accent would sound non-native to native speakers. |

Appendix E4 – third recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 3 |
| SPF | Aspiration, Linking, Intonation, /r/ |
| Commentary | Intonation and the speaker's pace are the most problematic aspects. Signs of the Czech language influence the whole speech with strong /r/ pronunciation. He also forgot to read the title of the text. |

Appendix E5 – fourth recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 5 |
| SPF | none |
| Commentary | I didn't notice any kind of problem within this speech. The only small "mistake" I found, was the pronunciation of the word "courage", where the /r/ was a bit overexaggerated (probably the (native) speaker's own accent?) |

Appendix E6 – fifth recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 1 |
| SPF | Aspiration, Intonation, /θ/ and /ð/, /w/, /ŋ/, /æ/ |
| Commentary | Pronouncing of /r/ in a Czech way was the biggest problem here. The speaker's accent was strong. There were also other mispronounced words such as "course", "smooth" and "quality". |

Appendix E7 – sixth recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 3 |
| SPF | Linking, Intonation |
| Commentary | It seems to me that the speaker read the text for the first time since there were many pauses within the speech. The intonation is the most problematic aspect once again. The voice didn't give off any kind of emotion nor highlighted important information. |

Appendix E8 – seventh recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 5 |
| SPF | none |
| Commentary | The only thing I came across listening to the speech, is the pronunciation of word "myriad". The speaker linked the words correctly, pronounced phonemes the right way and put stress on right syllables. |

Appendix E9 – eighth recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 3 |
| SPF | Aspiration, Linking, /r/, /z:/ |
| Commentary | I heard a bit of Czech pronunciation during words with /r/ sound. Wrong stress placement on word "opportunity". Words like "elusive", "embark", "presence" and "breath" were pronounced wrong way. |

Appendix E10 – ninth recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 2 |
| SPF | Linking, /w/, /r/, Final voiced consonants |
| Commentary | Another strong /r/ pronunciation in Czech way. Words like "babbling", "woodland" and "woven" were pronounced wrong way. |

Appendix E11 – tenth recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 4 |
| SPF | Linking, Intonation |
| Commentary | I think that the speaker could use more linking. I noticed only small mispronunciation such as /v/ in voice was pronounced as /w/. |

Appendix E12 – eleventh recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 5 |
| SPF | none |
| Commentary | The accent was excellent. Word stress was placed on right syllables, the phonemes (as far as I know from the phonetics lessons) were pronounced correct. I felt that sometimes the speaker could express the linking more than they actually did. |

Appendix E13 – twelfth recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 3 |
| SPF | Linking, Intonation |
| Commentary | The speaker delivered the text quite well. He made pauses, which were a bit unnecessary in my opinion. Words like "damp" and "myriad" were mispronounced. |

Appendix E14 – thirteenth recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 5 |
| SPF | none |
| Commentary | I couldn't find any major problematic features. I heard the speaker mispronounce the word "whisper". He also misread at least two words, which is acceptable during this reading, however, it shouldn't happen to a teacher during a lesson. |

Appendix E15 – fourteenth recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 5 |
| SPF | none |
| Commentary | Linking, intonation and stress placement were on point. I didn't find anything disturbing. The speaker's pace was alright too. |

Appendix E16 – fifteenth recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 3 |
| SPF | Linking, Intonation |
| Commentary | I didn't notice any problems regarding the pace and stress placement. However, words such as "wind", "unveil" and "woodland" were mispronounced. |

Appendix F1 – assessor overview

| Name | Sex | Age | Year | Previous experience |
|------|--------|-----|------|---------------------|
| NNA4 | Female | 22 | 3rd | None |

Appendix F2 – first recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 4 |
| SPF | Intonation |
| Commentary | The overall delivery is pleasant, though the intonation could be refined a bit to enhance clarity. |

Appendix F3 – second recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 2 |
| SPF | Aspiration, Stress placement, /θ/ and /ð/, /ŋ/, /r/, Strong forms |
| Commentary | The speaker is unsure of their performance and has a noticeable Czech accent. They struggle with the pronunciation of /θ/ and /ð/ and often fail to aspirate sounds. |

Appendix F4 – third recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 3 |
| SPF | Aspiration, /ŋ/, /r/, Final voiced consonants |
| Commentary | The articulation of the phoneme /r/ exhibits distinct Czech phonetic characteristics, and the prosody, while generally proficient, may benefit from enhanced clarity in intonation. |

Appendix F5 – fourth recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 5 |
| SPF | Aspiration |
| Commentary | I believe that the aspiration could be further enhanced to reach its full potential. |

Appendix F6 – fifth recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 3 |
| SPF | /r/ |
| Commentary | While the speaker makes an effort to pronounce /r/ correctly on occasion, there seems to be a strong influence of the Czech accent on the overall pleasant pronunciation. |

Appendix F7 – sixth recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 3 |
| SPF | Aspiration, Linking, /θ/ and /ð/, /r/ |
| Commentary | The speaker appears to have some difficulty with the pronunciation of certain sounds, such as /θ/ and /ð/, which are sometimes replaced with /t/. It was also noted that the word "presence" was pronounced with /s/ instead of /z/. Overall, the speaker appeared unfamiliar with the test, frequently pausing and stopping. |

Appendix F8 – seventh recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 5 |
| SPF | Aspiration, /θ/ and /ð/ |
| Commentary | The speaker exhibits some slight uncertainty in pronouncing the phoneme /ð/, however, overall the speaker demonstrates a level of fluency that is quite close to that of a native speaker. |

Appendix F9 – eighth recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 2 |
| SPF | Aspiration, Intonation, /θ/ and /ð/, /w/, /r/, /æ/, /ɜ:/ |
| Commentary | The speaker appears to have a distinct Czech accent, which may suggest an attempt to articulate the words in a Czech manner. Children frequently acquire knowledge through emulation, and in this instance, the demonstrated behavior may not have constituted an optimal role model. It is also worth noting that in some cases, the sounds of /θ/ and /ð/ are replaced by /t/. All the other mistakes in pronunciation are listed in the questionnaire. |

Appendix F10 – ninth recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 2 |
| SPF | Aspiration, Intonation, /θ/ and /ð/, /w/, /ŋ/, /r/ |
| Commentary | The speaker seems to have been influenced by the Czech language, as they tend to replace the sounds /θ/ and /ð/ with /t/ and /f/. Additionally, their pronunciation of /r/ may need some improvement. It might be worthwhile to consider that the speaker may not be the most ideal role model for children who may be learning to speak, as they may inadvertently pick up on these pronunciation habits. |

Appendix F11 – tenth recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 4 |
| SPF | Linking, Intonation, /w/ |
| Commentary | The speaker's pronunciation was pleasant overall, while there were a few instances of poor management of linking words, such as "of the air", and some unclear intonation. However, these are minor mistakes that can be easily worked on, and they do not significantly impact the speaker's teaching skills. |

Appendix F12 – eleventh recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 4 |
| SPF | Aspiration, Linking |
| Commentary | The speaker demonstrates a strong command of the language, albeit with a few minor slip-ups such as the use of "wise oak trees" and mispronunciation of the word "bushes." Overall, the presentation is of high quality and the speaker's clear and deliberate pace makes for easy comprehension. |

Appendix F13 – twelfth recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 4 |
| SPF | Aspiration |
| Commentary | The speaker's reading pace seems a bit slow, which makes it evident that he's putting in a lot of effort. However, this results in him sounding a bit funny. Other than that, the pronunciation is understandable, with no major mistakes. The word "babbling" is supposed to be pronounced with /æ/, but the speaker pronounced it with /a:/ instead. |

Appendix F14 – thirteenth recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 5 |
| SPF | none |
| Commentary | The speaker's delivery was impressive, sounding almost like a native speaker. Their intonation was quite pleasant and I hardly noticed any significant errors. Although there was a minor omission of liaison in "sound of the unseen creatures", it is possible that the speaker was not entirely familiar with the text. |

Appendix F15 – fourteenth recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 5 |
| SPF | Linking, /θ/ and /ð/ |
| Commentary | The speaker in question demonstrates a strong command of the language and speaks with a level of fluency that closely resembles that of a native speaker. While there were a few instances of false liaison, such as in "of the air" or "what it takes," overall the pronunciation was quite accurate. It should be noted that in some cases, the /θ/ sound was pronounced in a manner similar to the /f/ sound. |

Appendix F16 – fifteenth recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 3 |
| SPF | Aspiration, Intonation, /θ/ and /ð/, /w/, /ŋ/, /r/ |
| Commentary | The speaker displayed a clear and understandable pronunciation. However, there are some areas where improvement could be made. For instance, it would be beneficial to increase the presence of aspiration and ensure the proper use of liaison, as observed in "twist and turn". Additionally, the pronunciation of "creature" could benefit from the inclusion of the /i:/ sound, and the word "observe" should be pronounced with /z/ instead of /s/. |

Appendix G1 – assessor overview

| Name | Sex | Age | Year | Previous experience |
|------|------|-----|------|---------------------|
| NNA5 | Male | 25 | 3rd | None |

Appendix G2 – first recording

| | |
|------------|------------------|
| LSA | 5 |
| SPF | Intonation, none |
| Commentary | Nothing? |

Appendix G3 – second recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 2 |
| SPF | Linking, Intonation, Stress placement, /w/, /æ/, /ɜ:/ |
| Commentary | mysterious and mysteries pronounced as mistress, ancient?, every word containing "ae" was pronounced incorrectly, sometimes missed or even added words |

Appendix G4 – third recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 3 |
| SPF | Aspiration, Linking, Intonation, Stress placement |
| Commentary | journey - jorney, may - "maj", brook-book, skipping words, too fast, no pauses |

Appendix G5 – fourth recording

| | |
|------------|----------|
| LSA | 5 |
| SPF | none |
| Commentary | Perfect? |

Appendix G6 – fifth recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 3 |
| SPF | Linking, Intonation, Stress placement, /θ/ and /ð/, /w/, /r/, /ɜ:/ |
| Commentary | Strong Czech accent |

Appendix G7 – sixth recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 3 |
| SPF | Linking, Intonation, Stress placement, /w/, /æ/ |
| Commentary | pronunciation of the word "path", sometimes not pronouncing "o" as "a" in courage or touch, those pronounced as dose |

Appendix G8 – seventh recording

| | |
|------------|-----------------------|
| LSA | 4 |
| SPF | none |
| Commentary | courage mispronounced |

Appendix G9 – eighth recording

| | |
|-----|---|
| LSA | 3 |
|-----|---|

| | |
|------------|---|
| SPF | Aspiration, Intonation, Stress placement, /θ/ and /ð/, /w/, /æ/, /ɜ:/ |
| Commentary | "a" sound in words such as rustling and bubbling, the word "path" and sometimes courage |

Appendix G10 – ninth recording

| | |
|------------|-------------------------------------|
| LSA | 3 |
| SPF | Intonation, /w/, /r/, /æ/ |
| Commentary | the words "ancient" "tunes" "woven" |

Appendix G11 – tenth recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 4 |
| SPF | Aspiration, Intonation, Stress placement, /æ/ |
| Commentary | pronunciation of "bushes" "mysterious" "forest" |

Appendix G12 – eleventh recording

| | |
|------------|--------------------------------------|
| LSA | 5 |
| SPF | /æ/, none |
| Commentary | "branches" pronounced with "e" sound |

Appendix G13 – twelfth recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 3 |
| SPF | Intonation, Stress placement, /w/, /ɜ:/ |
| Commentary | "branches" pronounced with "e" sound, "creatures" pronounced incorrectly, 0 intonation |

Appendix G14 – thirteenth recording

| | |
|------------|---------|
| LSA | 5 |
| SPF | none |
| Commentary | nothing |

Appendix G15 – fourteenth recording

| | |
|------------|---------------------------------|
| LSA | 5 |
| SPF | none |
| Commentary | "faint" pronounced incorrectly, |

Appendix G16 – fifteenth recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 3 |
| SPF | Intonation, /æ/ |
| Commentary | "creatures", "wind's", "branches", "pause" |

Appendix H1 - assessor overview

| Name | Sex | How long have been teaching in Czechia? | Previous experience |
|------|------|---|---------------------|
| NA | Male | 6 years | None |

Appendix H2 – first recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 4 |
| SPF | none |
| Commentary | Pronunciation wind ..sounded unprepared due to hesitation and occasional halting delivery |

Appendix H3 – second recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 2 |
| SPF | Linking, Intonation, Stress placement, /θ/ and /ð/, /w/, /r/ |
| Commentary | Occasionally pronunciation bad enough to impede understanding. Not one single fault but a myriad of mispronunciation and poor intonation and stress. |

Appendix H4 – third recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 3 |
| SPF | /θ/ and /ð/, none |
| Commentary | Bar pace, this is a very good reading. Almost no mistakes. |

Appendix H5– fourth recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 4 |
| SPF | none |
| Commentary | Excellent reading, however something tells me that this is not a native speaker. Maybe the pace or intonation something is infrequently alien. |

Appendix H6 – fifth recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 3 |
| SPF | /r/, Final voiced consonants |
| Commentary | Unfortunately poor pronunciation of r dominates an otherwise good reading |

Appendix H7 – sixth recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 4 |
| SPF | Intonation, /w/, none |
| Commentary | Read with understanding, minor mistakes do not impede listeners comprehension |

Appendix H8 – seventh recording

| | |
|------------|--|
| LSA | 4 |
| SPF | /r/, none |
| Commentary | Very close to native speaker level. Just one Czech R |

Appendix H9 – eighth recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 3 |
| SPF | /θ/ and /ð/, /w/, /r/, Final voiced consonants |
| Commentary | Strong Czech R influences whole passage but does not impede comprehension |

Appendix H10 – ninth recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 3 |
| SPF | /w/, /r/ |
| Commentary | Strong Czech w and r but comprehensible |

Appendix H11 – tenth recording

| | |
|------------|------------------|
| LSA | 4 |
| SPF | /w/, none |
| Commentary | One error w only |

Appendix H12 – eleventh recording

| | |
|------------|-------------------------------------|
| LSA | 4 |
| SPF | /w/, none |
| Commentary | Two w errors only no other mistakes |

Appendix H13 – twelfth recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 4 |
| SPF | /θ/ and /ð/, Strong forms, none |
| Commentary | Very well read, good pace and read with understanding |

Appendix H14 – thirteenth recording

| | |
|------------|------------------------------|
| LSA | 5 |
| SPF | /θ/ and /ð/ |
| Commentary | very close to native speaker |

Appendix H15 – fourteenth recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 5 |
| SPF | none |
| Commentary | Very close to native speaker just winds error |

Appendix H16 – fifteenth recording

| | |
|------------|---|
| LSA | 4 |
| SPF | /θ/ and /ð/, /w/ |
| Commentary | very good pce and read with understanding |