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THE FUTURE OF ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA

Bachelor's thesis

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Declaration

I hereby declare that I worked on this bachelor´s thesis independently and that I used only the sources listed in references.

Prohlášení

Prohlašuji, že jsem bakalářskou práci vypracovala samostatně, s využitím pouze citovaných literárních pramenů, dalších informací a zdrojů v souladu s Disciplinárním řádem pro studenty Pedagogické fakulty Univerzity Palackého v Olomouci a se zákonem č. 121/2000 Sb., o právu autorském, o právech souvisejících s právem autorským a o změně některých zákonů (autorský zákon), ve znění pozdějších předpisů.

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Karina Vlková, Olomouc 2022

Abstract

This bachelor´s thesis focuses on the concept of English as a Lingua Franca and its position in the Czech educational system. The theoretical part describes the historical process of English becoming a global language and a Lingua Franca. It also describes the position of English in the Czech educational system and defines goals of the Czech Framework Educational Programme regarding English learning. The practical part analyses the accents used in selected English learning textbooks in the Czech Republic and examines the extent to which Czech students can understand accents they are not familiar with via employed sample listening exercises.

Key Words

English, Lingua Franca, global language, listening exercises, listening comprehension, accents, Czech educational system, Framework Educational Programme

Anotace

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá konceptem angličtiny jako lingua franca a její pozicí v českém vzdělávacím systému. Teoretická část popisuje historický vývoj anglického jazyka a popisuje proces, jak se z tohoto jazyka stal světový jazyk, kterým mluví lidé, kteří nemají stejný mateřský jazyk. Dále popisuje pozici angličtiny v České republice a definuje cíle Rámcového vzdělávacího programu s přihlédnutím k výuce tohoto jazyka. Praktická část analyzuje akcenty, jež jsou obsaženy ve vybraných učebnicích anglického jazyka a zkoumá do jaké míry jsou studenti schopni porozumět jiným akcentům, a to na základě poslechových cvičení vytvořených pro účely této práce.

Klíčová slova

Angličtina, lingua franca, globální jazyk, poslechová cvičení, poslech s porozuměním, akcenty, český vzdělávací systém, Rámcový vzdělávací program

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Glossary

L1	First language
L2	Second language
EFL	English as a foreign language
ELF	English as a lingua franca
NS	Native speaker
FEP	Framework Educational Programme
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
RP	Received pronunciation
GA	General American

Introduction

This bachelor thesis describes the contemporary role of English as a lingua franca in the field of pedagogy and the process of English becoming a global language as well as the universal and international tool of communication across the world within various areas of implementation.

The theoretical part describes the historical process of English becoming a global language and examines the origins as well as the reasons why it was English. It clarifies the contemporary role of English in the world and in the Czech Republic. The thesis designates the system of English teaching in the Czech Republic and defines the goals set by the Framework Educational Programme.

The practical part is based on research conducted by the author. It examines two commonly used textbooks at lower secondary level of education in the Czech Republic and their appropriateness for English learning. The subject of research is mainly accent variety and phonology. Based on the theoretical part, The underlying premise is the fact that students learning English in schools as a foreign language will interact not only with native speakers of English, but rather with non-native speakers. The textbooks should therefore consider this context and effectively meet the needs of these speakers. That means adjusting its content, e.g., introduction of suitable and practical vocabulary, and promoting intelligibility rather than insisting on correctness. Due to this fact, the following questions are asked, studied, and answered in the research:

What accents occur in English learning textbooks used in the Czech Republic?

To what extent can Czech students understand speakers with different accents?

The main goal of the thesis is therefore to test the students´ level of listening comprehension across wide range of accents, following the ELF approach. The sociological aspect of this is to build a community of students that are encouraged to speak with ease in their non-native language in diverse settings, as well as to become more considerate towards other people´s differences.

1 History of English

1.1 Old English

The history of the English language relates to the arrival of Anglo-Saxons to Britain and their settlement during the 5th century. The arrival of the Saxons from north-west Germany and the Angles and the Jutes from Danish areas is sometimes referred to as an invasion. On the contrary, they were originally invited to the land by Britons, who were facing occasional attacks by surrounding armies due to the departure of Romans. Britons asked the Anglo-Saxons for help (McIntyre, 2009). The Anglo-Saxons, however, came to this land with the intention to enslave it and with the increasing number of powerful invaders, the settlement began (Crystal, 1997). "By the end of the 5th century, the foundation was established for the emergence of the English language" (Crystal, 1997, p. 7*)*.

Before the aforesaid nations, who brought a new language, settled in the British Isles, the natives were Celtic speakers. The occupation by Romans then caused the spread and the use of Latin among these Celtic speakers, as it was used as an official language (McIntyre, 2009).

The Celtic language after these events was restricted only to border areas and had a very little influence on the newly forming Germanic language that came with the Anglo-Saxons – Old English. The Latin of late Roman civilization influenced the Germanic language mainly in the areas of trade, army, and agriculture (Görlach, 1997).

Major Latin influence on Old English was made by the re-introduction of Christianity in the 6th century, as McIntyre (2009) argues, "As Christianity spread, Latin was once again introduced to the country and became established as the language of the church and the language of learning" (p. 7).

The Anglo-Saxons had to face numerous raids from Scandinavian invaders – the Vikings. Since these raids were successful for the Vikings and they gained power, it resulted in their language-Old Norse having a noteworthy influence on the Old English and its lexicon (McIntyre, 2009).

1.2 Middle English

A new period in British history emerged due to the events of the 11th century that not only changed the history of the country, but also the language. This period is marked as the Norman conquest (Graddol, 1996). "The year 1066 marks the beginning of a new social and linguistic era in Britain, but it does not actually identify the boundary between Old and Middle English" (Crystal, 1997, p. 30).

In this era, England was under the rule of a French-speaking dynasty and therefore French was introduced. With the reign of William, the Conqueror, French became the language of the royals and the court and simultaneously, Latin became the language of administration and religion, which resulted in great degradation of the English language (McIntyre, 2009).

English, however, was not replaced by the French language, instead, a bilingual society was on the rise. English people started learning French due to the aristocracy, and French people started learning English because they were in a daily contact with the locals. What is more, it was also due to the marital reasons, as these two nations started mixing through marriage (Crystal, 1997).

French effected the English language mainly on the level of lexicology. Many new borrowings from the discourses of church, law and government were adopted from French (Graddol, 1996).

Crystal (1997) states, that due to political events, the society together with the language underwent another major change, leading to the rise of the English language:

King John of England came into conflict with King Philip of France, and was obliged to give up control of Normandy. The English mobility lost their estates in France, and antagonism grew between the two countries, leading ultimately to the Hundred Years War. (Crystal, 1997, p. 31)

English national pride and expression of their identity that they regained was reflected also through the language. English was used in political spheres to strengthen the national identity and express domination over the French enemy (McIntyre, 2009).

1.3 Early Modern English

The transition from Middle English to Modern English was a rather lengthy process lasting for centuries. In between these two eras, a period called Early Modern English took place. The beginning of this era is undoubtedly not entirely clear and is characterized by the events that marked major changes in the language (Crystal, 1997).

One of the significant events that changed the English language was the so-called Great Vowel Shift. This development that meant great alternations in the pronunciation and phonology in general, as well as spelling, occurred between the years 1400 and 1650 (McIntyre, 2009). McIntyre (2009) further explains that "In very simplified terms, what happened during the Great Vowel Shift was that the way in which people pronounced long vowel sounds altered and the long vowels in English were 'raised'" (p. 16).

Already during the late Middle Ages, first translations of the Bible into English were produced. John Wycliffe released an English translation of the Bible in 1380 during the times when Latin was the only language of the church. It was not until 1525 that William Tyndale attempted for another English translation. Both translations had a grand impact on the English language as it increased literacy among common people. Only at this time, common people had the motivation to learn to read, so that they would be able to read the Bible. A ban was, however, imposed on English translations and both Wycliffe and Tyndale were prosecuted, Tyndale ending up being burned at the stake. (McIntyre, 2009).

The situation finally changed in 1539, when King Henry VIII ordered the production of a new official English Bible which resulted in the authorised King James Bible, published in 1611. The impact of the Bible apart from spreading literacy was also the fact that English was finally taking over Latin and French and gaining prestigious position and the mass production reinforced the unification and standardization of the English language (McIntyre, 2009).

Another event that played a key role in the process of evolution and standardization of English was the invention of the printing press that dates back to 1476. This printing press was set up by William Caxton, who learned the technique of printing in Bruges. The impact of press production was immense. Firstly, the texts were being produced more quickly and the cost of it was lower, which helped to spread the knowledge. Secondly, it helped the standardization of the language, as the printers used a particular variety of English (McIntyre, 2009).

The impact of press production led to the standardization of the language and that initiated the need for a fixed language and therefore an in-depth explanation and description of English. There was therefore a growing demand for dictionaries and English grammar books. The first dictionaries produced were bilingual dictionaries that allowed for the English-Latin or English-French translations. Later, monolingual dictionaries containing definitions and etymologies started emerging (McIntyre, 2009).

One of the most important dictionaries of the Early Modern period was the work of Samuel Johnson. In 1775, Johnson produced A Dictionary of the English Language which contained more than 40,000 words and the completion of the dictionary took over 7 years (Crystal, 1995). McIntyre (2009) states that "What made Johnson´s dictionary especially noteworthy was the fact he used quotations from other texts to illustrate the meaning in context of the words he defined" (p. 24).

One of the most influential literary authors of this era was William Shakespeare. His works are still regarded as iconic even today. But it was not only his excellent writing that influenced the language. William Shakespeare also enriched the language with new words, broadening and thus impacting the lexicon (Crystal,1995).

This period was also the time of European exploration overseas, particularly to Africa and the Americas. These explorations resulted in new discoveries and concepts which needed a new name – therefore borrowings from the country of origin of these inventions entered the language, especially from the languages of North America, Asia, and Africa (Crystal, 1995).

1.4 Modern English

In the 18th century, English had already gone through the first process of standardization and unification and resembled the present-day English, with a few exceptions of spelling and some grammatical forms (McIntyre, 2009)

The foresaid process of standardization begun in the Early Modern period namely thanks to the dictionaries and resulted in codification of English. During Modern period, this process was carried out by the Oxford English Dictionary. The work on this voluminous and detailed dictionary started in 1882 and it was only completed in 1928 (McIntyre, 2009).

McIntyre (2009) argues that the further development of English during the 19th and 20th century was caused mainly because of the following events.

The Industrial Revolution in the late 1700s began with inventions that transformed industries in Britain and had a significant impact on the spoken language. The dialects that were present throughout the whole country started merging as people started migrating due to work opportunities. This resulted in vocabulary contributions, new grammar structures and new ways of pronunciation (McIntyre, 2009).

Another form of migration occurred due to the movement of troops during the unfortunate events in the 20th century, more specifically during the First and Second World Wars. Therefore, English speakers who used the language differently met and influenced one another. What is more, there were a lot of new inventions during this time that contributed to the lexicon (McIntyre, 2009).

During the 19th and 20th centuries, technological innovations were taking over which allowed for a fast connection with the entire world via radio, television, phones, and most recently the Internet. And since a big part of the telegraph network was owned by the British, English became the language for international communication (McIntyre, 2009). Furthermore, McIntyre explains that "The internet, developed in the 1960s as a resource for the US military, was popularised via the World Wide Web in the early 1990s, and has been an immensely important vehicle for the development of English into a global language" (p. 31).

2 English as a Global Language

Crystal (2003) defines global language as follows: "A language achieves a genuinely global status when it develops a special role that is recognized in every country" (p. 3).

As Crystal (2003) further states: "English **is** news" (p. 2). What made English a global language? And why was there even a need for one?

2.1 The reasons for a global language

In the previous chapter it was already stated that technology had a massive impact on the spread of English. Furthermore, it contributed to the "connectedness" of the world and this process is referred to as the process of globalization (McIntyre, 2009).

Globalization may be thought of initially as the widening, deepening and speeding up of worldwide interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary social life, from the cultural to the criminal, the financial to the spiritual. (Held, 1999, p. 2)

In the contemporary world, thanks to the Internet, TV, radio and other modern technology, news travels within minutes across the globe. In addition, the worldwide connections resulted in a global market, in which every event in one country leads to a series of consequences in other countries, as the countries are interconnected. (McIntyre, 2009)

Crystal (2003) states: "A language has traditionally become an international language for one chief reason: the power of its people - especially their political and military power" (p. 9).

It is important to point out that the reason, why a certain language becomes a global language has little to do with the linguistic attributes of the language. As stated above, it is initially due to geographical reasons. But in order to serve as an international medium for communication, the language needs to attain dominance among other languages. This dominance can be reached by, economic, cultural, and technological power of the country of origin and prestigious position of the language (Crystal, 2003).

2.2   The spread of English

It is possible to define why English became a global language based on two criteria: the geo-historical and socio-cultural reasons (Crystal, 2003). English has been associated with migration since the origins of the language and the spread was in its way similar, that the initial spread around the world was conducted by successful colonial attempts that started in the 17th century (Graddol, 2000).

The territorial expansion of the language started with voyages to America, Asia, and Antipodes, soon to be followed by South Pacific and Africa, resulting in English being present in every continent (Crystal, 2003).

2.2.1   Territorial expansion

2.2.1.1 America

The first expeditions from England to the New World – America date back to the 16th century, it was not, however, until 1607 that the first permanent English settlement was established, given the name Jamestown (Crystal, 1995).

In 1620, the first group of Puritans, later called the "Pilgrim Fathers", arrived on the Mayflower, and settled in todays Plymouth, Massachusetts. The immigration wave was accelerating and in 1640 there were about 25,000 immigrants in this area. Furthermore, by the end of the 18th century the population of this area would rise to 4 million inhabitants. People were entering the country from various areas, and apart from England, it was namely Scotland, Ireland, Spain, France, the Netherlands and moreover also people from Africa who were a subject of a slave trade. These aspects naturally had an impact on the language, more specifically the variety of different dialects emerging that led to a linguistic diversity. The incoming immigrants would learn English as it served as a link amongst the culturally and linguistically diverse population (Crystal, 2003).

In the 19th century, the USA recorded another massive immigration. People were fleeing their countries in Europe mainly due to poverty, famine, and political reasons. Later, in 1900 the population of the USA was about 75 million and by 1950 the number has doubled (Crystal, 2003).

In the 20th century, the US has gained a significant dominance as a technological, political, and economical superpower and that was one of the major factors that ensured the wide spread of English as a prestigious global language (McIntyre, 2009).

2.2.1.2 Canada

The first time that the English-speaking people entered Canada was in 1497 (Crystal, 2003). John Cabot, who was leading the expedition, was convinced that they reached the north-east of Asia. What they actually discovered is however todays Canada (Svartvik & Leech, 2006).

It was not until a century later that the English-speaking people settled in Canada, mainly due to the newly discovered potential of fur trading and fishing. These industries also attracted French people, who reached Canada in 1534, which subsequently led to an ongoing conflict between the French and the English. These conflicts were only resolved in the 18th century when France was defeated in colonial wars. Consequently, Canada became a British colony in 1763 (Svartvik & Leech, 2006).

French people and their language did not, however, disappear completely from Canada. In the 18th century, Canada was divided into two parts – Upper Canada that was dominated by the English language, and Lower Canada, dominated by French (Svartvik & Leech, 2006).

In 1931, Canada achieved independence but is still a part of the Commonwealth of Nations and recognizes the Queen and the Head of State. Despite these political events and the fact that English is a language in Canada spoken by a majority of its inhabitants, Canada remains a multicultural and multilingual nation (Svartvik & Leech, 2006).

2.2.1.3 The Caribbean

At the beginning of American settlement, English was also spreading to the south-the Caribbean (Crystal, 2003). The Caribbean islands, however, have a very complex colonization history, as many European colonizing powers such as Spain, Portugal, Britain, France, and the Netherlands fought over this area. These colonizers started importing slaves mainly from West Africa to work on the plantations (Svartvik & Leech, 2006).

> From the early seventeenth century, ships from Europe travelled to the West African coast, where they exchanged cheap goods for black slaves. The slaves were shipped in barbarous conditions to the Caribbean islands and the American coast, where they were in turn exchanged for such commodities as sugar, rum, and molasses. The ships then returned to England, completing an 'Atlantic triangle' of journeys, and the process began again. (Crystal, 2003, p. 39)

The slaves who were transferred on the ship came from different language backgrounds. This was done on purpose so that the slaves could not communicate together and potentially plot a revolt. This, however, resulted in various pidgin forms of communication (Crystal, 2003).

Svartvik (2006) defines a pidgin language as follows: "A pidgin is a reduced and simplified makeshift language used for contacts, especially trading contacts, between people who do not share a common language" (p. 176).

Once these people and their pidgin languages reached the Caribbean, the pidgin English persisted as a means of communication and then, with a new generation, this pidgin English was used as a mother tongue which resulted in the production of a creole speech (Crystal, 2003).

> In other words, a pidgin has no native speakers, while a creole has become native to some of its speakers and has therefore extended its communicative functions to those of a fully-fledged language. (Svartvik & Leech, 2006, p. 176)

2.2.1.4 Australia and New Zealand

James Cook reached Australia in 1770 and Britain established a penal colony in there in order to relieve the British prisons. It was not only the prisoners who entered the country, but also "free" people, most of whom came from Britain, and thus English had a dominant and prevailing position (Crystal, 2003). The discovery of gold in 1851 caused the acceleration of immigration and the population in Australia reached 1.2 million (Svartvik & Leech, 2006). Furthermore, Svartvik & Leech (2006) add that "the gold rush also brought to an end the transportation of convicts, since the gold seemed to provide an opportunity for reward, rather than punishment" (p. 100).

Before the arrival of the British colony, the native language used in New Zealand was Maori. The evolution of the British settlement and English development was similar to the situation in Australia. New Zealand, however, was never a penal colony, unlike Australia. Although just about 5 per cent of the population in New Zealand speak the Maori language today, it gained the official language status in 1987, alongside English (Svartvik & Leech, 2006).

2.2.1.5 Africa

The first European colonists to arrive to Africa – Cape were the Dutch together with their language in 1652 and British colonists followed only by the end of 18th century. The British, however, took over and in 1822 English was made the official language in the area. English was the language of law, education, and public life. The black majority perceived Afrikaans (a language that developed from Dutch) as the language of authority and repression, while English was seen as a way of unification within the black communities as well as a form of achieving international voice (Crystal, 2003). Crystal (2003), however, points out that English is a minority language in South Africa and as a first language is currently spoken only by about 3.7 million in a 2002 population of about 43.5 million (p. 45)

The full-scale colonization of Africa began in the late 19th century and the European powers fought over these countries. At the beginning of the First World War, it was only Liberia and Ethiopia that remained independent territories. That changed after the Second World War, when these powers were all weakened and had to face the aftermath of the wars. African colonies thus gained their independence again (Svartvik & Leech, 2006).

Crystal (2003) states that "The 1993 Constitution names eleven languages as official, including English and Afrikaans, in an effort to enhance the status of the country's indigenous languages" (p. 46). The administration of eleven languages is immense and that is why English is likely to prevail a lingua franca (Crystal, 2003).

2.2.1.6 Asia

The spread of English to South Asia happened thanks to Britain that formed the British East India company that became the trading monopoly in this era in 1600. During the British sovereignty in this area, English became a language of administration and education. When it comes to languages spoken in India, there is a great diversity, with Hindi being the official language in most areas, especially the north. There are also regional languages that are mostly spoken in the south and, of course, English that gained a status as an 'associate' official language in India and also acts as a medium of national unity. (Crystal, 2003).

The Southeast Asia was originally under the British influence. The British founded a settlement in Singapore and Malaysia and English became the language of contact. Although only Philippines was under direct American influence, today all these countries are heavily affected by American English. English in one of official languages in both Singapore and Philippines and although it does not hold an official status in Malaysia, it is still a compulsory subject in school and a prestigious lingua franca (Svartvik & Leech, 2006).

2.2.2 Cultural expansion

The British colonial expansion over the centuries led to settlements in different parts of the world and the spread of English language as seen in the previous chapters. In the 20th century, the importance and role of the US was rising, which resulted in English not only being the language of science, technology, and politics, but also the language of culture (Graddol, 2000). English travelled the world thanks to Americanisation and consumer culture via music and movie industries, press and media, phones, and the internet (Crystal, 2003).

The rise of global tourism also plays a key role in English expansion. The domains of transportation, accommodation, meeting etc. are usually mediated through English (Crystal, 2003).

Considering all these factors and the fact that English is used for international communication, English naturally entered the pedagogical field. Graddol (2000) states that "English is currently the most widely studied foreign language in the European Union" (p. 44). Graddol (2000) also further states that English is "the most popular modern language studied worldwide" (p. 44).

3 English as a Lingua Franca

3.1 Lingua Franca in general

Jenkins (2007) defines lingua franca as "a contact language used among people who do not share a first language, and is commonly understood to mean a second (or subsequent) language of its speakers" (p. 1).

Ostler (2011) adds that "a lingua franca is a language of convenience" (p. xv). Ostler explains that the world as a whole will only learn a language if it is convenient and useful for their future-no matter what language it is. (Ostler, 2011).

Furthermore, Ostler (2011) explains that in the past Greek, Spanish, French, Arabic, Sanskrit and Latin were world languages. He also mentions that these ruling languages are always changing, despite their appearance of permanence. What is more, for example Sanskrit and Latin are no longer in active use today in spite of their importance in the past, (Ostler, 2011).

The globalized contemporary world calls for a world language and there have been attempts to create an artificial language that would fit this purpose. There were, in fact, many languages e.g., Esperanto, Interlingua, Interglossa etc., however, they have not been very successful (Svartvik & Leech, 2006).

3.2 English as a Lingua Franca

Seidlhofer (2011) defines English as a lingua franca as "any use of English among speakers of different first languages for whom English is the communicative medium of choice, and often the only option" (p. 7).

However, Jenkins (2007) points out the difficulties connected with defining English as a lingua franca. The main argument among linguists is whether to include native English speakers in the concept of ELF. Jenkins (2007) argues that English is often a language used in political and business gatherings and conferences which may include interactions of both native and non-native speakers. Seidlhofer (2011) adds that the concept of ELF includes native speakers, but they are in the minority and therefore, the majority of English interactions happen between non-native English speakers.

3.3 English Language Speakers

Today there are three types of English speakers. This theory was defined by Indian American scholar Braj Kachru that formed the theory of three concentric circles (see Figure 1) (Svartvik & Leech, 2006). Each circle represents a particular type of a speaker based on their relationship with the language, more specifically on how they acquired the language (Crystal, 2003).

Figure 1

Kachru's Three Concentric Circles
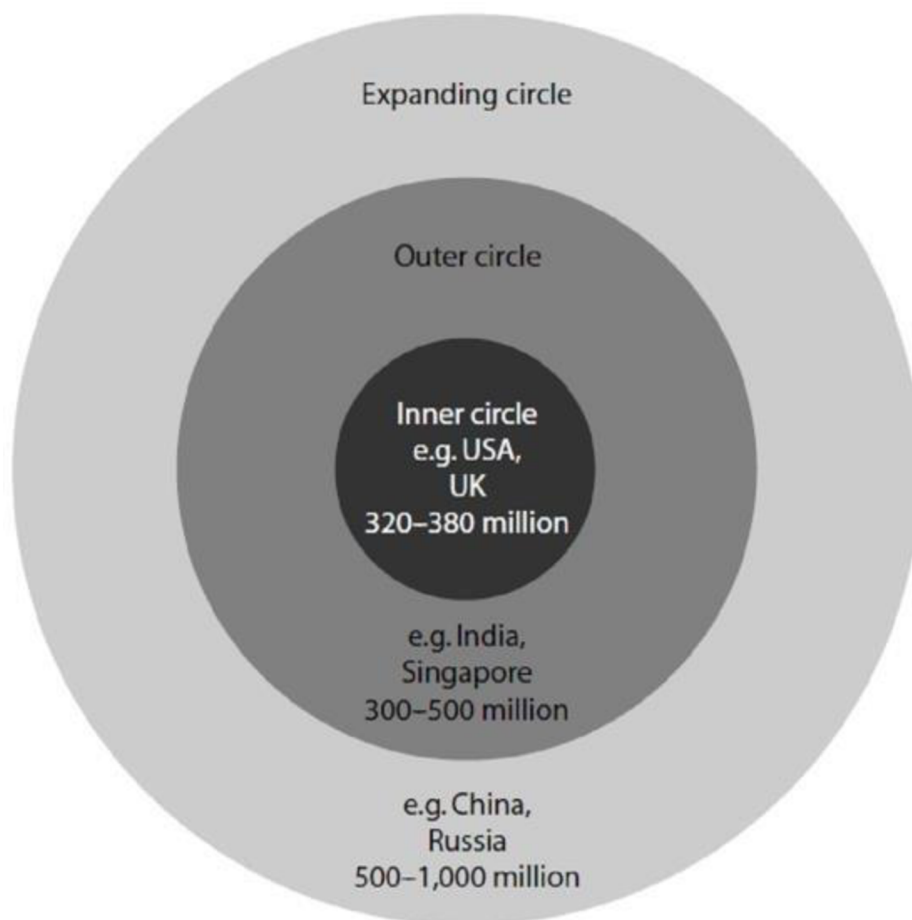
Note. The three circles of English by Braj Kachru with estimated number of speakers (qtd. in Crystal, 2003, p. 61).

The inner circle represents the countries in which English is used as a first language. It includes countries as the USA, UK, Ireland, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. The outer circle includes countries in which English spread during the early times of expansion and although the inhabitants often have a different native language, English is a very important language of the territory and is often one of the official languages or serves as a "second language" in multilingual setting. It includes Singapore, India, Africa, Malaysia, and other territories. The expanding circle involves countries that recognize the importance of English as a global language, although does not hold any special administrative status, nor have they a history of colonization by inner circle countries. This circle includes European countries as the Czech Republic, France, Germany etc., Asian countries as China and Japan and many other countries that were not listed in the previous circles. The number of countries that belong to this circle is expanding and increasing the number of states included (Crystal, 2003).

Although Graddol (2000) recognizes the importance of Kachru's three circles, he points out the drawbacks of this graph that locates the native speakers into the centre and therefore creates a false impression that they are the source of model of correctness (p. 10).

This model, however, will not be the most useful for describing English usage in the next century. Those who speak English alongside other languages will outnumber first-language speakers and, increasingly, will decide the global future of the language. For that reason, we retain here terminology of "first-language speaker" (L1), "second-language speaker" (L2) and "speaker of English as a foreign language" (EFL). (Graddol, 2000, p. 10).

Graddol (2000) illustrates this on his perception of the three circles (see Figure 2).

Figure 2

Graddol's Three Circles
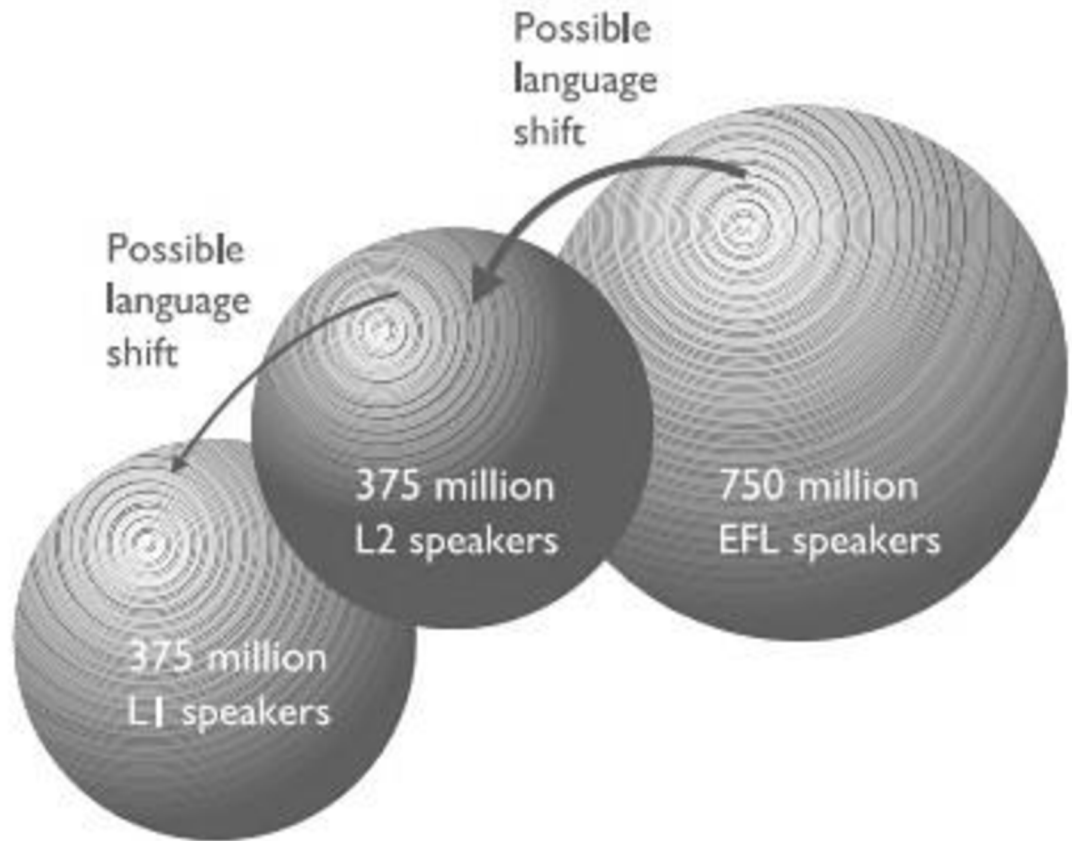
Note. Showing three circles overlapping makes it easier to understand the size of each circle and shows possible language shifts. (Graddol, 2000, p. 10)

3.4 Linguistic features of ELF

Svartvik & Leech (2006) state that "English as a lingua franca is a good illustration of what it means for native speakers of English to lose proprietorship of their native language" (p. 232). Furthermore, Svartvik & Leech (2006) explain that EFL has its own linguistic features that do not always follow the norms set by native speakers and which have been seen as the target.

EFL emphasizes the role of English in communication between speakers from different L1s, i.e. the primary reasons for learning English today; it suggests the idea of community as opposed to alienness; it emphasizes that people have something in common rather than their differences; it implies that "mixing" languages is acceptable…and thus that there is nothing inherently wrong in retaining certain characteristics of the L1, such as accent; finally, the Latin name symbolically removes the ownership of English from the Anglos both to no one and, in effect, to everyone. (Jenkins 2000, p. 11)

3.4.1 Phonology

In most cases, the communication in English occurs between people who do not share the same native language and are often non-native English speakers. The priority is to be intelligible. Therefore, the speakers do not have to sound like a native speaker, although it is set as a norm and any contribution made by EFL speaker is often considered as incorrect, as it does not reflect the standard native norm (Jenkins, 2007).

In order to maintain intelligibility, Jenkins (2000) conducted research to define the most important features of pronunciation in an EFL context.

According to Jenkins (2000) the speakers must meet these features of pronunciation in order to remain intelligibility:

1. Most consonant sounds

   During EFL communication, students often tend to replace the English consonant that does not occur in their native language with a consonant that they think is the closest to the English one (Walker, 2010). Jenkins (2000) argues that this cannot be used universally and is therefore necessary to address this and adjust the pronunciation. On the contrary, the pronunciation of /θ/ and /ð/ may be omitted and replaced by the sounds /f/ and /d/ and possibly in some accents by /s/ and /z/. Even though this pronunciation is often stigmatized by NS it does not affect the intelligibility. Dark /l/ can also be substituted by clear /l/. (Jenkins, 2000).

2. Aspiration of /p/, /t/, /k/

   Unaspirated consonants /p/, /t/, /k/ in initial positions sound much like their voiced opposites /b/, /d/, /g/. This could lead to a misunderstanding and therefore, it is essential to produce this aspiration to remain intelligible (Jenkins 2000).

3. Appropriate cluster simplification

   Walker (2010) suggests that addition of sound during cluster modification is better than elision of sound. For example, if you insert a vowel between the /p/ and /t/ cluster in the word "talked" it is better than an elision of /p/ or /t/.

4. Distinguishing vowel length

   It is necessary to distinguish vowel length to remain intelligible, e.g., in "ship" and "sheep", "sit" and "seat" etc.

5. Nuclear stress

   Nuclear stress is a unit that is stressed or emphasized, and Jenkins (2000) suggests that it is an essential part for intelligible communication. That means that speakers should be able to produce, understand and distinguish the meaning between e.g., "HE will pick you up at the airport", "he will pick YOU up at the airport" and "he will pick you up at the AIRPORT".

3.4.2 Lexicogrammar

In her research, Seidlhofer (2004) focuses on lexicogrammatical features that appear regularly among ELF speakers.

In particular, typical "errors" that most English teachers would consider in urgent need of correction and remediation, and that consequently often get allotted a great deal of time and effort in English lessons, appear to be generally unproblematic and no obstacle to communicative success. (Seidlhofer, 2004, p. 220)

Seidlhofer (2004) discovered the following recurrent features:

1. Omitting the 3rd person singular -s
2. Misuse of the definite and indefinite articles
3. Misuse of relative pronouns *who* and *which*
4. Incorrect use of tag questions (e.g., *isn´t it?* or *no?* instead of *shouldn´t they?*)
5. Use of redundant prepositions (e.g., *We have to study about…*)
6. Overusing verbs that have a general meaning (e.g., *have*, *do*, *make*, *put*, *take*)

Seidelhofer's and Jenkins's research on phonology and lexicogrammar define the linguistic features that are typical for ELF speakers. As stated before, some of these features might be stigmatizes among NS. These features are, however, present in English communication process and the speakers of English need to get acquainted with them. The author of this work examines the intelligibility of these features, especially the phonological part, among Czech speakers of English in research.

4   Teaching English

4.1   Teaching English in the Czech Republic

The countries in Europe show an immense diversity in languages. Foreign languages have always been a subject of studies in the educational sector. The history of language teaching in the Czech Republic was affected by the political events in Europe. The first compulsory language studied in the Czech Republic after the events of 1948 was Russian, as the Czech Republic was a part of the Eastern Bloc. This situation only changed in 1989 after the Velvet Revolution. The students were able to choose from a variety of foreign languages to study at schools (Průcha, 2010).

Nowadays, Czech students start studying a foreign language in the 3rd grade. English is not compulsory; however, it is recommended (RVP ZV, 2017). Although, English is only recommended, a total of 842319 students learn English as a first foreign language out of 849257 students in elementary schools today (Statistická ročenka školství – výkonové ukazatele, 2021/2022).

4.2   The Framework Educational Programme

The curriculum programmes in the Czech Republic are created by The Ministry of Education in a legally binding document - Framework Educational Programme. This document is employed on a national level and each school defines their School Educational Programme that is based on FEP. These documents consist of the content of education and the skills that students should learn, including receptive, productive, and interactive language skills. They also set the level of proficiency that should be achieved, which is the level A2 for lower-secondary students according to the CEFR (RVP ZV, 2017).

> The first foreign language and a second foreign language contribute to understanding and discovering facts that transcend the area of experience mediated by the mother tongue. They provide a language base and prerequisites for students' communication within an integrated Europe and the world. Learning foreign languages helps to reduce language barriers and thus helps to increase mobility of individuals both in their personal lives and in further study and future employment. (RVP ZV, 2017)

English in the Czech Republic is taught as a foreign language. EFL is based on the standardized English that is introduced via native speakers. Therefore, the main difference between EFL and ELF is the fact that EFL is based on normative native approach, while ELF expects interactions with non-native speakers and aims for intelligibility among these speakers (Seidelhofer, 2011). (see subchapter 3.4)

4.3   The future of teaching English in general

Due to the standard language ideology, and the stigma that surrounds any language change, the alternation of the system of teaching English is very slow. Jenkins (2007) states that "ELF, however, is likely to continue to evolve on its own accord as long as English remains the principal global lingua franca, regardless of the wishes of those who find it distasteful and independently of the pedagogic considerations and decisions that may follow later" (p. 252). Furthermore, Jenkins (2007) mentions that although English is often thought of as belonging to British and American native speakers, this appropriateness has been facing challenges lately. One of the signs of change appears in pedagogy. Jenkins (2007) mentions some authors of English learning textbooks that started including ELF materials, e.g., recordings featuring speakers from Expanding circle countries.

Surkamp & Viebrock (2018) urge teachers that "teachers can no longer rely on clear-cut and established models of language teaching, but have to demonstrate perceptual competences, context sensitivity and a sense of situational relevance" (p. 52). They also create a transformation model of future English teaching, in which English stands as a global plural system (lingua franca) and favours negotiation of meaning over correctness and prefers metalinguistic awareness over mastery of grammar rules (Surkamp & Viebrock, 2018).

5 Research

The theoretical part follows the evolution and expansion of the English language into the lingua franca. It also gives reasons why English should be taught as a lingua franca and therefore serves as a base for the practical part and research. This is supported by the amount of L2 and EFL speakers based on Graddol´s interpretation of Kachru´s Three Circles.

The research examines English learning textbooks used in the Czech Republic in terms of accent coverage. The main goal is to test whether the participants can understand a different accent than the standard one (RP, GA).

The research questions are:

1. What accents occur in English learning textbooks used in the Czech Republic?
2. To what extent can Czech students understand speakers with different accents?

This research consists of three parts.

The first part of the research examines the listening exercises found in two different English learning textbooks – *Project* and *English Plus*, both from Oxford University Press. The choice of *Project* is based on author´s personal experience with this textbook during her lower secondary education years and *English Plus* was chosen because the middle school whose students took part in this research work with this particular textbook. Moreover, both are a very popular choice on the market in the Czech Republic.

In the second part, the author creates sample listening exercises covering different accents of EFL speakers. These exercises were designed by the author and carried out by participants from Europe, Asia, and Africa.

In the third part, the sample listening exercises created by the author are employed and are subjected to Czech students in order to test to what extent they can understand EFL speakers and can therefore fulfil one of the main goals set by the FEP of the Czech Republic – to be prepared for the use of English as a means for international communication.

5.1 Listening exercises in selected textbooks

Listening skills and listening comprehension is one of the key parts of acquiring a language and it is also the first thing we encounter while learning a foreign language. With the rise of technology mentioned in the theoretical part it is obvious that more media uses an audio form rather than a printed version nowadays. As stated in the previous chapter, English has taken over various fields including politics, media, culture science etc. and has become a language used for international communication.

Based on Kachru´s Three Circles (see Figure 1), there are up to 1 billion EFL speakers and only about 380 million L1 speakers (qtd. in Crystal, 2003, p. 61). Considering these numbers, there is a higher probability that a person will interact with an EFL speaker, rather than an L1 speaker.

Therefore, I decided to observe and examine two English learning textbooks which are determined for lower secondary education and state how many different accents occur in the listening exercises across these textbooks.

5.1.1 Project

One of the subjects of research is the student´s book Project 4 by Tom Hutchinson. I listened to the audio that comes with each textbook and analysed the recordings. The listening part of the book contains 112 audio files. Some of the files are, however, additional audio for pronunciation exercises. The following graph depicts the variety of accents covered in the audio.

Figure 3

Accents in Project 4

100%

■ L1 speaker   ■ EFL speaker
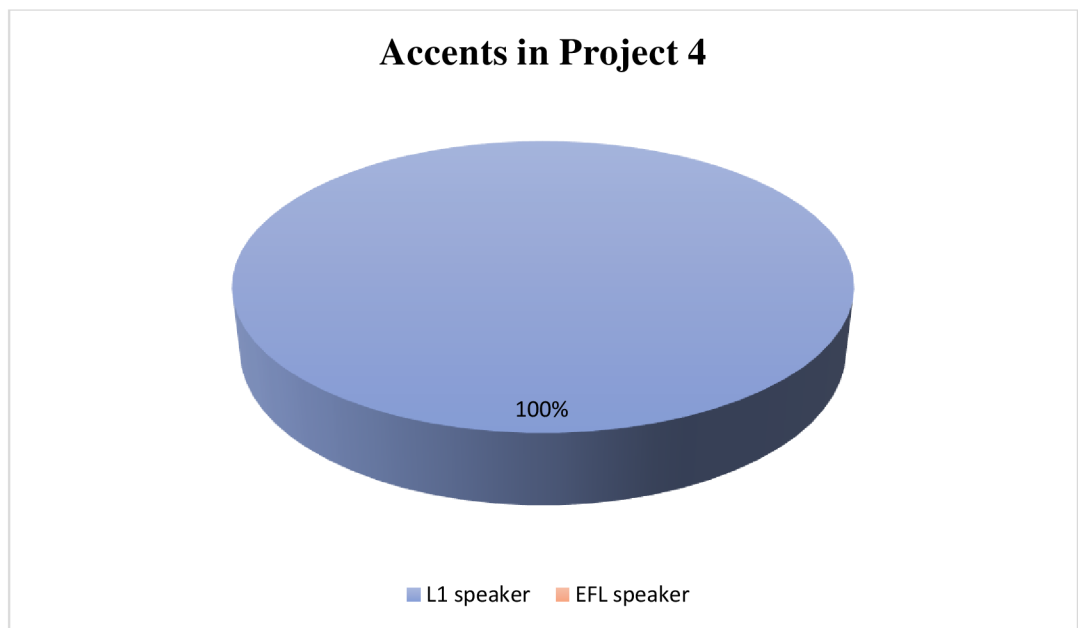
The graph clearly depicts that all 112 audio files were recorded by L1 speakers, more specifically, RP speakers exclusively.

5.1.2 English Plus

English Plus 4 by Ben Wetz underwent an audio analysis. The listening part of the student´s book contains 99 audio files. The following graph depicts the variety of accents covered in the audio.

Figure 4

Accents in English Plus 4

100%

■ L1 speaker   ■ EFL speaker
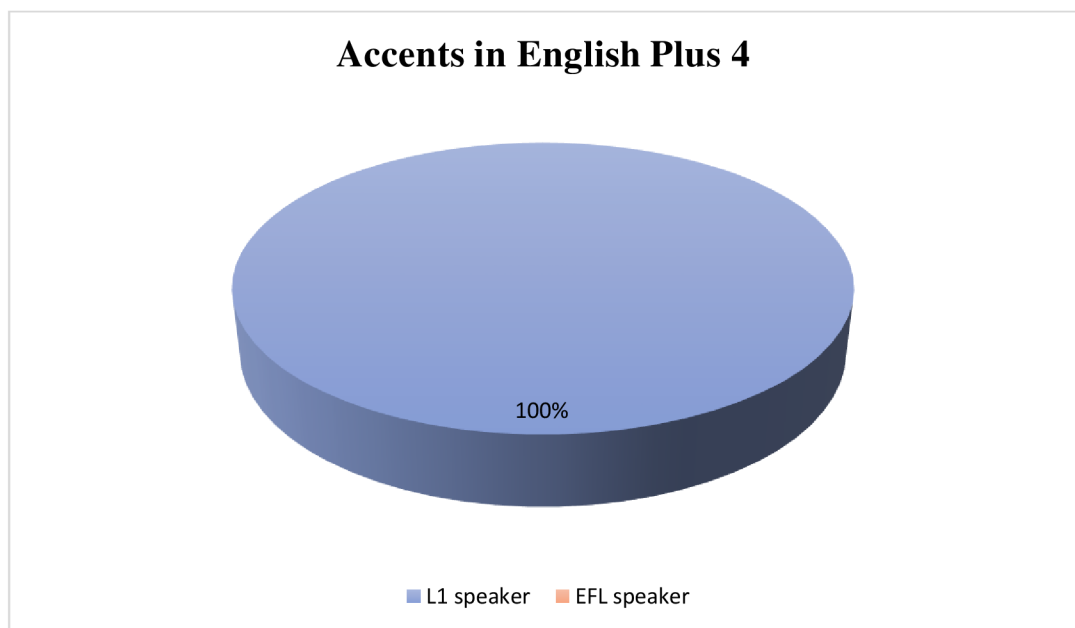
Based on the graph, all 99 audio files were recorded by L1 speakers, more specifically, RP speakers exclusively.

What accents occur in English learning textbooks used in the Czech Republic?

The conducted research shows that these textbooks contain only the standard English accent of L1 speakers. Van Engen & Peelle (2014) remarked that understanding a foreign accent is cognitively more challenging and requires more effort due to phonetic differences. This additional effort can be, however, reduced if the listener is familiar with the accent. The textbooks do not introduce any other accents except for RP and therefore serve as a tool to teach English as a foreign language, which is based on the native norm. It is possible to say that these audio files prepare students for a communication mainly with a person from the UK, and possibly also other L1 speakers. The textbooks do not match the purposes of English being a Lingua Franca.

5.2 Lesson plan

There are many types of exercises in the previously mentioned English textbooks. I chose two model exercises that require listening with a limited respond – true or false type of exercise and listening with a long response – a multiple choice exercise, in which only one answer is correct. The audio recordings include both monologues and dialogues which simulate real life conversations.

The audio files (see appendix) include four listening exercises:

1. Traveling to Egypt

   This audio is a monologue by an EFL speaker from Egypt – Africa.

2. Fasting for a month

   A monologue by and EFL speaker from Saudi Arabia – Asia.

3. With Love from Italy

   A dialogue between two EFL speakers from Europe. Speaker 1 is from the Czech Republic and Speaker 2 from Italy.

4. Social media and Career

   A dialogue between three EFL speakers. Speaker 1 is from the Czech Republic, speaker 2 from France, speaker 3 holds two nationalities – French and Korean.

5.2.1 Information about the speakers

Speaker	Sp. 1	Sp. 2	Sp. 3	Sp. 4	Sp. 5	Sp. 6
Name	Ramy	Ahmed	Karina	Lorenzo	Lucie	Louis
Recording	Traveling to Egypt	Fasting for a month	With Love from Italy	With Love from Italy	Social media and Career	Social media and Career
Country of origin	Egypt	Saudi Arabia	Czech Republic	Italy	France	France/ Korea
Native language	Arabic	Arabic	Czech	Italian	French	French/ Korean
Level of education reached	Bachelor´s level	Master´s level	Upper secondary education	Bachelor´s level	Bachelor´s level	Master´s level

This chart provides the basic information about the speakers that recorded the audio files. This information also effects the final result of the audio files. Speaker 3 is the author of this thesis and was only in the role of an interviewer.

5.2.2 Comparison of selected accents

There are numerous phonological and phonetic differences between the native languages of the participants and English. This fact is the cause of altered pronunciation of certain words, different intonation, and sometimes these factors lead to incomprehensibility.

Based on IPA, there is a lack of /ð/ and /θ/ sounds in French. These are therefore often substituted by the sounds /s/ /z/ and /f/. Some French speakers are aware of this and try to compensate for this, which often leads to the use of /ð/ and /θ/ sounds in words where they don´t belong. It is possible to hear this in the recording 4 in the minute 1:01. The phrase "with Lucie" is pronounced as /wɪs ˈlu θ i/ instead of /wɪð ˈlusi/. In the minute 2:06, the pronunciation of the word "clothes" makes it very hard to understand the word and the listener must rely on context.

The same phenomenon occurs also in Arabic. In the recording 1, it is possible to hear it from the start in the word "something" in 0:33, "things" in 0:44, etc. This pronunciation of "th" is consistent throughout the whole recording.

The pronunciation of /dʒ/ is also altered in the word "Egypt" that is pronounced as /iʒəpt/. These two problems, however, do not occur in the audio file 2, which was also recorded by an Arabic speaker. It might be due to the fact that they are from different countries, and also continents. What both Arabic speakers have in common is the pronunciation of the /ɹ/ sound that they pronounce rather as /r/. Another aspect withing the Arabic accent is also the pronunciation of /p/. The speaker from the audio file 2 pronounces the sound /p/ as /b/ while the speaker from the audio file 1 pronounces it as /p/.

Italian speaker from the recording 3 struggled with the correct placement of /h/ sound. This sounds in Italian is silent, which is often reflected in their English pronunciation. To compensate, this sounds sometimes appears where it should not be. It is possible to hear this in the pronunciation of the word "Italy" in 0:51, which the speaker pronounces as /hɪtəli/. Further in the recording, the speaker does not pronounce the /h/ sound, for example in the word "his" in 0:58. This mispronunciation is quite consistent throughout the whole recording.

These are just some of the most distinctive pronunciation differences that might lead to difficulties with understanding, especially for listeners that are not aware of these possible alternations.

5.2.3 Participating students

The research was conducted with the participation of two groups of students attending the 8th grade. First group formed by 14 students and second group formed by 16 students. Each group took part in two listening exercises. They have been studying English for 5 years at the time of this research, working with the coursebook English Plus. All of the students were native speakers of the Czech language. The students agreed with anonymous participation on this research.

5.2.4 Method

The research involves 4 audio files that serve as listening exercises. The audio tapes were recorded by EFL speakers from different countries from Europe, Asia, and Africa. This is to provide the listener with various accents that are not usually covered in their English textbooks but are very likely to be encountered. Each audio file is paired with two worksheets (see appendices A-H). The first worksheet includes comprehension exercises relating to the audio – either true-false, or multiple-choice exercise. The second worksheet includes the same questions from worksheet 1 but also provides the participant with a transcription of the audio file. The assumption is, that after a comparison of the two worksheets, it is possible to deduct, whether the participants made mistakes because they did not understand the audio, and therefore the selected accent, or because of the participants´ proficiency levels.

Before the research started, the researcher checked the proper functionality of the equipment used. Before the listening activity, the participants were informed that they were about to hear an audio recorded by non-native English speakers. They listened to the recording twice and during listening they worked with the worksheet 1. After listening, they were given the worksheet 2 with the transcript for comprehension verification. A speaking activity followed, related to the topic of the audio file as a post-listening activity. The worksheets were then collected and processed by the researcher.

5.3 Results

Table 1 shows the correct (+) and incorrect (-) answers of the listening part (L) and listening part with transcription – reading (R) for each question in the recording 1 – Traveling to Egypt.

Table 1

STUDENT	L+	L-	R+	R-
1	6	0	6	0
2	5	1	5	1
3	3	3	4	2
4	5	1	6	0
5	5	1	5	1
6	4	2	5	1
7	3	3	6	0
8	3	3	5	1
9	4	2	6	0
10	5	1	6	0
11	5	1	6	0
12	4	2	6	0
13	4	2	6	0
14	3	3	5	1
Total	59	25	77	7

Table 2 shows the correct (+) and incorrect (-) answers of the listening part (L) and listening part with transcription – reading (R) for each question in the recording 3 – With Love from Italy.

Table 2

STUDENT	L+	L-	R+	R-
1	6	1	7	0
2	3	4	6	1
3	4	3	7	0
4	5	2	7	0
5	4	3	7	0
6	5	2	7	0
7	7	0	7	0
8	5	2	7	0
9	5	2	7	0
10	5	2	6	1
11	4	3	7	0
12	5	2	7	0
13	4	3	6	1
14	5	2	7	0
Total	67	31	95	3

Table 3 shows the correct (+) and incorrect (-) answers of the listening part (L) and listening part with transcription – reading (R) for each question in the recording 2 – Fasting for a month.

Table 3

STUDENT	L+	L-	R+	R-
1	4	2	6	0
2	5	1	6	0
3	5	1	6	0
4	2	4	5	1
5	4	2	6	0
6	6	0	6	0
7	2	4	4	2
8	5	1	5	1
9	5	1	6	0
10	3	3	6	0
11	2	4	5	1
12	5	1	6	0
13	4	2	5	1
14	3	3	5	1
15	5	1	6	0
16	3	3	5	1
Total	63	33	88	8

Table 4 shows the correct (+) and incorrect (-) answers of the listening part (L) and listening part with transcription – reading (R) for each question in the recording 4 – Social media and Career.

Table 4

STUDENT	L+	L-	R+	R-
1	4	3	4	3
2	5	2	7	0
3	5	2	7	0
4	5	2	6	1
5	4	3	7	0
6	4	3	7	0
7	3	4	6	1
8	3	4	5	2
9	5	2	5	2
10	2	5	5	2
11	4	3	7	0
12	5	2	6	1
13	3	4	6	1
14	3	4	7	0
15	4	3	7	0
16	4	3	6	1
Total	63	49	98	14

5.3.1 Interpretation of the results

To what extent can Czech students understand speakers with different accents?

Table 5

Recording	1	2	3	4
% of correct answers in listening part	70.2%	65.6%	68.3%	56.2%
% of correct answers in reading part	91.6%	91.6%	96.9%	87.5%

The data shown in table 5 represent the number of correct answers for each exercise in percentage. The number of correct answers in the recording 1 was 70.2% after working only with the first worksheet i.e., only listening to an audio but after working with the transcript in the second worksheet the number of correct answers got up to 91.6%. This audio was recorded by a speaker from Egypt and the listening exercises include multiple-choice questions. See the worksheets for this audio in appendices. (Appendix A, B)

The number of correct answers in the recording 2 was 65.6% after conducting the listening part only. With the support of the transcript the number of correct answers was 91.6%. This audio was recorded by a speaker from Saudi Arabia and the listening exercises include multiple-choice questions. See the worksheets for this audio in appendices. (Appendix C, D)

The number of correct answers in the recording 3 was 68.3% after filling the listening worksheet and 96.9% after reading worksheet. This audio was recorded by a speaker from Italy and the type of exercise testing the listeners´ comprehension was a true-false exercise. See the worksheets for this audio in appendices. (Appendix E, F)

Lastly, the number of correct answers in the recording 4 was 56.2% for the listening activity. This is the lowest score out of the selected exercises. After receiving the transcript, the number of correct answers increased to 87.5%. Although this success rate is much higher, it is also the lowest level of comprehension out of the selected audios. See the worksheets for this audio in appendices. (Appendix G, H)

To conclude, these numbers show clearly that the listeners were experiencing more comprehension difficulties while listening to the audio recording. The reading exercise clearly depicts that these difficulties do not arise from the listeners´ limited vocabulary since they performed well in the reading part. These problems are stemming from the unfamiliarity with the presented accents that is caused by the lack of representation in their textbooks.

Although in some listening exercises (e.g., recording 4) the participants showed low level of comprehension, none of the participants failed completely.

6 Conclusion

The practical part of the thesis introduces and answers two research questions:

1. What accents occur in English learning textbooks used in the Czech Republic?
2. To what extent can Czech students understand speakers with different accents?

The first question was examined because textbooks are one of the main sources for language learning. The textbooks should therefore reflect the students´ needs. As stated in the practical part, the selected textbooks for this research, namely *Project* and *English Plus*, contain the standardized English accent (RP) exclusively. This approach mainly prepares students for a communication with a person from the UK, or other L1 speakers. It does not reflect the ELF concept, nor does it reflect the main goal of FEP, which is to "provide a language base and prerequisites for students' communication within an integrated Europe and the world" (RVP ZV, 2017).

The second question was based on the results of the research question 1, since it was found that the selected textbooks lack accent variety. Quantitative research was conducted with participants from the 8th grade. Their listening comprehension was tested via listening exercises (see appendices) created by the author together with people from different nationalities and therefore with different phonological features and accents. The results (see subchapter 5.3.1) depict that the research participants did not perform as well in the listening part as in the reading part, which is caused by the unfamiliarity with the selected accents due to their lack of representation in the selected textbooks. In order to raise the success rate, and a general intelligibility and comprehension, it would be beneficial if students had access to a variety of accents.

Based on the research, the concept of teaching English in the Czech Republic, in terms of listening comprehension, requires a shift in discourse and pedagogical practice in order to meet the needs of an EFL speaker.

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8 Appendices

Traveling to Egypt

1. **Ramy is talking about Egypt because**
   a. He was born in there
   b. He moved in there
   c. His family went there during the holidays.

2. **The most famous sightseeing in Egypt is**
   a. The library in Alexandria
   b. The pyramids
   c. The Sahara Desert

3. **The people have discovered**
   a. Less than 130 pyramids in Egypt
   b. Exactly 130 pyramids in Egypt
   c. More than 130 pyramids in Egypt.

4. **The Great Pyramid of Giza is the**
   a. Oldest pyramid
   b. The tallest building in the world
   c. The longest pyramid

5. **According to Ramy, the pyramids are**
   a. Not interesting at all
   b. Very interesting
   c. Only interesting from the outside

6. **Ramy has**
   a. Never visited the pyramids
   b. Only seen the pyramids once
   c. Seen the pyramids more than once

Traveling to Egypt

Hello, I´m Ramy from Egypt and today I´m gonna tell you something about my country – Egypt. I did not grow up here, but when I was 4 years old, my family moved to Egypt. Egypt is famous for many things – the Sahara Desert, the Alexandria library, the Red sea that is considered a natural reserve for its coral reefs, Siwa Oasis and Luxor & Aswan. The Capital city of Egypt is Cairo. The thing Egypt is most famous for is the pyramids. There are over 130 pyramids discovered in Egypt. The pyramids were built to protect the bodies of kings and queens of Egypt. The biggest and one of the oldest pyramids is the Great Pyramid of Giza - Khufu. In the past, it was also the tallest building in the world. The Great Pyramid of Giza in the past was located next to the River Nile, which is the longest river in the world. The pyramids are made out of massive stones and scientists believe that the builders moved these stones by boat on the river Nile. but they are not a hundred percent sure. An interesting fact is that the top of the pyramids is covered in gold and when the sun shines it is very beautiful. But the pyramids are not only interesting from the outside, but also from the inside. There are many rooms and tunnels. The kings and queens who died and were buried inside the pyramids also had a lot of jewellery and gold in there. And the rooms and tunnels were there to stop the robbers from stealing these expensive and valuable items. I have visited the pyramids many times and they are amazing. If you are ever in Egypt, you should go and see them too.

7. **Ramy is talking about Egypt because**
   d. He was born in there
   e. He moved in there
   f. His family went there during the holidays.

8. **The most famous sightseeing in Egypt is**
   d. The library in Alexandria
   e. The pyramids
   f. The Sahara Desert

9. **The people have discovered**
   d. Less than 130 pyramids in Egypt
   e. Exactly 130 pyramids in Egypt
   f. More than 130 pyramids in Egypt.

10. **The Great Pyramid of Giza is the**
    d. Oldest pyramid
    e. The tallest building in the world
    f. The longest pyramid

11. **According to Ramy, the pyramids are**
    d. Not interesting at all
    e. Very interesting
    f. Only interesting from the outside

12. **Ramy has**
    d. Never visited the pyramids
    e. Only seen the pyramids once
    f. Seen the pyramids more than once

Fasting for a month

1. Ramadan is a
   a. Celebration
   b. Lifestyle
   c. A diet

2. People who take part in Ramadan are
   a. Americans
   b. Muslims
   c. Christians

3. During Ramadan people can eat
   a. During the day
   b. Only at sunrise
   c. At night

4. The goal of Ramadan is
   a. To lose weight
   b. To become a better person
   c. To spend some time alone

5. Who has to fast?
   a. All people
   b. Only healthy people
   c. Only children and old people

6. How does Ahmed feel about Ramadan?
   a. He doesn´t enjoy it because he can´t focus at work.
   b. He likes it and doesn´t experience any problems.
   c. He knows it´s hard sometimes but he enjoys it anyway

Fasting for a month

Hi everyone, my name is Ahmed and I come from Saudi Arabia. What I would like to talk about today is the Arabic religious celebration called Ramadan. This celebration is very special because during Ramadan, Muslims fast. That means that they do not consume food or drinks from sunrise till sunset and this goes on for one whole month. Yeah, basically, we don´t eat anything during the day and we only start after the sun goes down. But it´s not all about food. Fasting is supposed to teach the people patience, discipline, and generosity. It is also a reminder that there are poor people who are often very hungry. It is also time for family to gather and spend some time together in the evening. People give up food during the day, but they should also try to give up their bad habits and improve themselves. Not all people have to fast though, for example children, old people, people who are sick or pregnant women can all eat during the day during Ramadan. I personally really enjoy the atmosphere. Every evening the streets are suddenly empty because everyone is at home eating. It can be however quite challenging, especially when I´m at work I sometimes experience problems with focusing. In the end I know that this is for a good cause, and I´m on my way of becoming a better person.

7. **Ramadan is a**
   d. Celebration
   e. Lifestyle
   f. A diet

8. **People who take part in Ramadan are**
   d. Americans
   e. Muslims
   f. Christians

9. **During Ramadan people can eat**
   d. During the day
   e. Only at sunrise
   f. At night

10. **The goal of Ramadan is**
    d. To lose weight
    e. To become a better person
    f. To spend some time alone

11. **Who has to fast?**
    d. All people
    e. Only healthy people
    f. Only children and old people

12. **How does Ahmed feel about Ramadan?**
    d. He doesn´t enjoy it because he can´t focus at work.
    e. He likes it and doesn´t experience any problems.
    f. He knows it´s hard sometimes but he enjoys it anyway

With Love from Italy		
Decide if the sentences are true or false.	**T**	**F**
The main character has to move to Norway because his dad gets a job in there.	T	F
The movie is based on a true story.	T	F
Communication with the cast on the set was easy.	T	F
They spent one month in Italy and three months in Norway to make the movie.	T	F
The movie cost 2 million euros.	T	F
Lorenzo has mixed feelings about winning the Oscars.	T	F
Lorenzo is not planning to make more movies in the future.	T	F

With Love from Italy

Interviewer: Good morning, Europe, I'm here today with the director of the movie With Love from Italy – Lorenzo Ferrara. Hi Lorenzo.

L: Hi Karina, thanks for invitation.

I: Thank you for coming. Your movie just won the Oscars. Can you tell us a little bit more about it?

L: With Love from Italy is a movie about a young fifteen-year-old boy from Italy who has to move to Norway because his dad is opening a restaurant there. It is about his everyday life, his feelings and problems he has to face because he doesn't know a word in Norwegian.

I: Why Norway?

L: The movie is based on a true story – my story. My dad is a great cook but if you don't live in a big city, the work in restaurant in Italy is mostly seasonal. One day my dad got offered a job to open his own restaurant – but it was in Norway. So the whole family moved there because it was my dad´s dream to open his own restaurant. That´s why the movie is set there.

I: I see. What genre is the movie?

L: It is a comedy drama. It is bitter sweet – just like life.

I: Hahaha I see. The movie won the Oscar for the best movie but also got more awards. Can you tell us more about the people you worked with?

L: The whole team was amazing. Working with them was sometimes more difficult because some of the actors were Italian and some Norwegian but, in the end, it worked out perfectly.

I: How long did you shoot and how much did it cost?
L: We had to shoot in both Italy and Norway, so it was a bit complicated. Also, covid started in 2020 so we had to stop and wait for about a year. Our original plan was to shoot for a month in Italy and then 3 months in Norway but because of Covid it took almost two years to finish the movie. Of course, because of this the price was much higher than planned, which was under 2 million euros. In the end we spent a little bit over 3 million.

I: But it was worth it since you won the Oscars. How does it feel?

L: Overwhelming. On one hand I'm very happy and grateful but I also feel a lot of pressure for my next movies.

I: Oh, you're already working on something new?
L: Yes, but right now I can´t tell you more about it. It is still a secret, but I can tell you that a big star is going to appear in the movie.

I: Okay, I can't wait to see it. Thank you for the interview.

Decide if the sentences are true or false.	T	F
The main character has to move to Norway because his dad gets a job in there.	T	F
The movie is based on a true story.	T	F
Communication with the cast on the set was easy.	T	F
They spent one month in Italy and three months in Norway to make the movie.	T	F
The movie cost 2 million euros.	T	F
Lorenzo has mixed feelings about winning the Oscars.	T	F
Lorenzo is not planning to make more movies in the future.	T	F

Career thanks to social media

Decide if the sentences are true or false.	True	False
Both Lucie and Louis are designers.	T	F
Lucie met Louis at an event and decided to talk to him.	T	F
Lucie first started making clothes during Covid.	T	F
She was immediately successful, a natural talent.	T	F
Lucie and Louis started making clothes together and posted their first product on their social media platform.	T	F
They created their fashion brand two and a half years ago.	T	F
Right now, their fashion brand has 27,000 followers on Instagram.	T	F

Career thanks to social media

I: I´m in the studio today with two influencers Lucie and Louis. Hello guys, welcome to What´s popping show.

L1: Hi, I´m Lucie.

L2: Hey, what´s up, I´m Louis.

I: I´m very glad to have you here with me. Can you introduce yourselves, even though I think a lot of people know who you are thanks to your fashion brand Nellie.

L1: I´m Lucie and I'm an influencer and content creator and also a cofounder of the fashion brand Nellie.

L2: I´m also and influencer and a designer and together with Lucie we created the brand.

I: How did you meet?

L1: It was actually such a coincidence. We have been following each other on social media for some time and then we randomly met in the city.

L2: Yeah, I saw Lucie at an event, and I decided to go talk to her because I really admired her work. And then we became friends and started creating content together.

I: What do you post about? How did you become influencers?

L1: During covid I was so bored at home, and I found an old sewing machine and I decided to try it. The first time using it was a disaster. I wanted to make a bag which is one of the easiest things to make as a beginner. But it ended up in trash. I did not give up though and I got better with time and then I started posting my journey on Instagram and also TikTok.

L2: I graduated from graphic design, and I started working for different companies and then I thought that I can also share my own art on my own social media account.

I: Okay but how did you think of creating a fashion brand?

L2: I was really into designing clothes and Lucie could make my designs into reality.

L1: When we met, we started joking about creating something together and then one day we were hanging out and in a day we created this amazing dress. When I posted it on my account, people started asking where it´s from and where they can buy it and that´s where it all started.

I: How many followers does your brand have? And when did you create the brand?

L1: I started sewing two and a half years ago but we posted our first product online 5 months ago and now I think we have about 20 thousand followers?

L2: I think it´s more, let me check… Oh yeah, its 27 thousand now.

I: Wow, congratulations. Could you tell our listeners how they can also become influencers or start their own company?

L1: Do what you love and don't let haters get you down.

L2: Yeah, don't be afraid of messing up. Push through and continue and don't be scared of posting it online. At first, I was also embarrassed but it completely changed my life and I'm happy I started creating online.

I: Okay, thank you very much for coming today.

Career thanks to social media

Decide if the sentences are true or false.	True	False
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Lucie met Louis at an event and decided to talk to him.	T	F
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Appendix I – CD with audio files 1-4