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Univerzita Hradec Králové

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Katedra anglického jazyka a literatury

Postavení výslovnosti v učebnicích anglického a německého jazyka pro 2. stupeň ZŠ

Diplomová práce

Autorka: Michaela Rojková

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                    Učitelství pro 2. Stupeň ZŠ – německý jazyk a literatura

Vedoucí práce: Mgr. Vladimíra Ježdíková, Ph.D.

Oponent práce: Mgr. Bc. Pavlína Škodová

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Zadání diplomové práce

Autor:	**Michaela Rojková**
Studium:	P15P0979
Studijní program:	M7503 Učitelství pro základní školy
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Název diplomové práce:	**Postavení výslovnosti v učebnicích anglického a německého jazyka pro 2. stupeň ZŠ**
Název diplomové práce AJ:	Pronunciation in the Textbooks of English and German for the Lower Secondary School Level

Cíl, metody, literatura, předpoklady:

V teoretické části se diplomová práce zaměří zejména na roli výslovnosti ve výuce cizích jazyků, postavení výslovnosti v kurikulárních dokumentech, zásady efektivní výuky cizojazyčné výslovnosti a metody jejího testování. Nedílnou součástí práce bude kapitola věnující se učebnicím cizích jazyků, kritériím pro jejich hodnocení a přehled možných aktivit pro nácvik výslovnosti. Praktická část práce porovná přístupy k prezentaci výslovnosti ve zvolených učebnicích anglického a německého jazyka. Kvantitativní část bude doplněna vhodnými metodami kvalitativního výzkumu (např. strukturovaný rozhovor s učiteli, dotazníková šetření apod.). V návaznosti na výsledky výzkumné části může práce dále obsahovat návrh aktivit kompenzujících případně zjištěné nedostatky. Práce bude psána anglicky.

- CELCE-MURCIA, Marianne et al. Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language. Boston: National Geographic Learning, 2014.
- CELCE-MURCIA, Marianne et al. Teaching Pronunciation. New York: CUP, 2010.
- CUNNINGSWORTH, Alan. Choosing Your Coursebook. Oxford: Macmillan Heinemann, 1995.
- KELLY, Gerald. How to Teach Pronunciation. Harlow: Longman, 2000.
- KANG, Ong-mi, GINTHER, April. Assessment in Second Language Pronunciation. London: Routledge, 2018.

Zadávající pracoviště:	Katedra anglického jazyka a literatury, Pedagogická fakulta
Vedoucí práce:	Mgr. Vladimíra Ježdíková, Ph.D.
Oponent:	Mgr. Bc. Pavlína Škodová
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Prohlášení

Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto diplomovou práci vypracovala pod vedením vedoucí diplomové práce samostatně a uvedla jsem všechny použité prameny a literaturu.

V Hradci Králové dne ………………………

<div align="right">podpis</div>

Anotace

ROJKOVÁ, Michaela. *Postavení výslovnosti v učebnicích anglického a německého jazyka pro 2. stupeň ZŠ*. Hradec Králové: Pedagogická fakulta Univerzity Hradec Králové, 2023. 157 s. Diplomová práce.

Předložená diplomová práce si klade za cíl zmapovat roli výslovnosti ve vybraných učebnicích angličtiny a němčiny pro 2. stupeň ZŠ včetně přístupu a postoje českých druhostupňových učitelů a žáků k výslovnosti.

Teoretická část je rozdělena do čtyř hlavních kapitol. První kapitola představuje historický přehled výuky výslovnosti, přičemž je kladen důraz především na metody uplatňované od druhé poloviny 19. století až do konce 20. století (tzn. od gramaticko-překladové metody po metodu komunikativní, jejíž principy tvoří základ současné metodologické koncepce pro výuku cizích jazyků). Prezentovaný historický přehled je relativně komplexní, jelikož zahrnuje metody a přístupy, které marginalizují či úplně přehlížejí výslovnostní prvek. Cílem této kapitoly je nejen ukázat, jak se v průběhu let dramaticky měnil status výslovnosti v souvislosti s různými výukovými metodologiemi, ale také poskytnout informace umožňující lepší porozumění následujících kapitol.

Druhá kapitola se týká postavení výslovnosti v současné době. Tato rozsáhlá kapitola je rozdělena do šesti podkapitol. První podkapitola slouží jako úvod k podkapitole následující a zdůvodňuje, proč je výslovnost důležitá a proč by měla být nedílnou součástí výuky cizího jazyka. Podkapitola vyzdvihuje důležitost srozumitelné výslovnosti zejména s ohledem na výslovnostní chyby a jejich důsledky. Druhá podkapitola prezentuje řadu důvodů, proč výslovnost patří mezi aspekty jazyka, které jsou často považovány za nízko prioritní, a to i přes to, že srozumitelná výslovnost je prerekvizitou pro úspěšnou komunikaci. Prostřednictvím předložených důvodů je demonstrováno, že výslovnost je zanedbávána všeobecně v různých sférách – ve třídě, v učebnicích, v přípravě učitelů a v oblasti aplikované lingvistiky. Třetí podkapitola analyzuje dva hlavní kurikulární dokumenty (*RVP ZV*, *CEFR*) za účelem zjištění, jakou roli tu výslovnost hraje a do jaké míry poskytují učitelům podporu ve výslovnostní oblasti. Analýza prokázala, že kurikulární dokumenty přispívají k problému opomíjení výuky výslovnosti stejně jako další faktory zmíněné v předchozí podkapitole. Na základě uvědomění si nedostatků *CEFR* dokumentu, Rada Evropy vydala nové aktualizované vydaní, které mj.

představuje revidovanou fonologickou škálu a doplňuje ji o dvě zcela nové, které jsou věnovány segmentálním a suprasegmentálním aspektům. Čtvrtá kapitola se věnuje výslovnostním cílům. Nejprve je definován termín 'výslovnostní cíl', následně je objasněno, jaké výslovnostní cíle existují. Podkapitola se zaměřuje na to, jaký cíl byl upřednostňován dříve (princip „rodilosti"), jaký je upřednostňován v současné době (princip míry porozumění) a proč k tomuto posunu došlo. Dále podkapitola detailněji zkoumá pojmy 'srozumitelnost' a 'míra porozumění', které představují základní kámen komunikativní kompetence. V závěru kapitoly je definováno a vysvětleno trio pojmů: 'intelligibility', 'comprehensibility', 'accentedness'. Navazující podkapitola poskytuje informace týkající se výslovnostních modelů a poukazuje na rozdíl mezi výslovnostním modelem a cílem. Tato část práce je rozdělena do čtyř oddílů, přičemž první dva se zabývají výslovnostním modelem v kontextu příslušného cizího jazyka. Ve třetím oddíle jsou zmíněny různé vlivy, kterým jsou žáci vystaveni a které žákům slouží jako výslovnostní model. Část třetího oddílu se soustředí na učitele, kteří nejsou rodilými mluvčími, a jaké překážky a benefity v rámci výslovnosti s tím souvisí. Poslední podkapitola zkoumá kritickou otázku stanovování priorit pro výuku výslovnosti. Opět se zde nachází vysvětlení, k jakým změnám v této oblasti došlo v souvislosti se změnou výslovnostních cílů. Zprvu byla výuka výslovnosti orientována na osvojování si všech segmentálních prvků, následně tento pohled byl nahrazen tím, že z komunikačního hlediska jsou důležitější suprasegmentální elementy výslovnosti. V současné době převažuje názor, že výuka výslovnosti by měla směřovat k osvojování obou dimenzí.

Třetí kapitola shrnuje a komentuje šest hlavních principů, které usnadňují výuku výslovnosti a pomáhají konstruovat celý proces tak, aby byl jednak systematický a efektivní, ale také pro žáky zajímavý a zábavný. V poslední kapitole teoretické části se čtenáři seznámí s definicí učebnice a jejími funkcemi v rámci edukačního procesu. Jsou zde představeny výhody a nevýhody používání učebnice a také kritéria pro hodnocení výslovnostní složky v cizojazyčných učebnicích.

Praktická část diplomové práce obsahuje vlastní výzkum, který se zaměřuje na vybrané učebnice anglického a německého jazyka a názory na výslovnost mezi učiteli a žáky obou jazyků. Komparativní analýza cizojazyčných učebnic se zejména věnuje celkovému postavení výslovnostních aktivit, jejich počtu ve srovnání s dalšími jazykovými složkami a jejich povaze a zaměření. Diskutována je i metodologická povaha obou sad učebnic a míra podpory, kterou materiály poskytují učitelům pro nácvik výslovnosti.

Dotazníkové sekce se věnují názorům respondentů na roli výslovnosti a přístupům k jejímu zařazení do běžné výuky. Dotazník pro učitele pak ještě obsahuje dotazy týkající se používaných učebnic a popsaná zjištění jsou dána do souvislosti s analýzou učebnic.

Poslední závěrečná kapitola obsahuje autorčino závěrečné zamyšlení se nad rolí výslovnosti v cizojazyčném vzdělávání a poskytuje čtenářům několik doporučení, která na základě studia literatury, zpracování výzkumné části a vlastní učitelské zkušenosti mohou vést k lepšímu využití učebnic v této oblasti.

Klíčová slova: výuka výslovnosti, anglický a německý jazyk, učebnice, výzkum, dotazníky, 2. stupeň ZŠ

Annotation

ROJKOVÁ, Michaela. *Pronunciation in the Textbooks of English and German for the Lower Secondary School Level.* Hradec Králové: Faculty of Education, University of Hradec Králové, 2023. 157 pp. Diploma thesis.

The presented diploma thesis aims at exploring the role of pronunciation in selected textbooks of English and German for the lower-secondary school level and the approaches and attitudes of Czech lower-secondary teachers and learners of English and German to pronunciation. The theoretical part presents a historical overview of pronunciation teaching, discusses its importance, specifies the major reasons for pronunciation neglect, and explores relevant curricular documents to assess the pronunciation role in them. Further, it describes three critical issues of pronunciation pedagogy: pronunciation goals, pronunciation models and priorities, together with effective pronunciation techniques. It also characterises the role of textbooks in the educational process.

The practical part consists of three-section research. The first one analyses the role of pronunciation in selected English and German textbooks. The next one presents results from teacher questionnaires and the last one from the learner questionnaire on the subject of pronunciation. The final part includes some general recommendations that the author believes should be taken into consideration when using a textbook for foreign language teaching.

Keywords: pronunciation teaching, English and German language, textbooks, research, questionnaires, lower-secondary school level

Prohlášení

Prohlašuji, že diplomová práce je uložena v souladu s rektorským výnosem č. 13/2022 (Řád pro nakládání s bakalářskými, diplomovými, rigorózními, dizertačními a habilitačními pracemi na UHK).

Datum: ……………………… Podpis studenta: …………………………………

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Introduction

Mastering a foreign language is a must in today's world and involves several components. For most people, it includes a perfect knowledge of grammar rules and a wide range of vocabulary used in communication. While pronunciation might not be considered a core component of language proficiency by many non-linguists, it is nevertheless an integral part and should be regarded as such. After all, the way you sound creates a lasting first impression. It can quickly shape their perception of you, even before they have a chance to appreciate the breadth of your mastered grammar structures and the virtuosity of your vocabulary selection. Even if the individual sounds are correct, there is much more to be conveyed through the melody we assign to our utterances. It is not without reason that parents all over the world frequently chastise their offspring not for what they say but for how they say it. Hence, the power with which pronunciation can affect what we say should be clear to everyone.

Nevertheless, we feel that though we see the clear benefits of treating pronunciation equally with other language components, it is not often the case in the teaching/learning environment, and we always wondered why that might be. While thinking about the possible reasons, we realised that to a great extent, what happens in language lessons is heavily influenced by the teaching materials used, i.e., mainly the textbooks, that, from our own experience, are often followed rather rigorously by teachers. All this led us to the topic of this diploma thesis, in which we wanted to test our hypothesis that language textbooks may be the culprit of this situation. However, we also wanted to give them the benefit of the doubt and allow other voices – of teachers and learners – to be taken into consideration, as textbooks are only a tool. It is up to the teachers how they will use them and whether they will try to supplement them with their own expertise, compensating for their potential weaknesses. As the author of this thesis aspires to become a teacher of both English and German, it was deemed fitting to seize this opportunity and investigate whether there are notable differences in the treatment of pronunciation in German and English language textbooks.

The thesis consists of a theoretical and practical part with a research component. In the theoretical part, we will attempt to introduce the topic of pronunciation teaching in a foreign language in a complex way, starting with a look at the historical perspectives on its teaching and whether and in what periods, if any, it was prioritised. The next chapter will deal with

the importance of pronunciation teaching, and up-to-date research findings will be introduced to test our initial assumption. We will also tackle the potential reasons why pronunciation is often neglected and explore whether the curricular documents support this perceived neglect. Further, the thesis will discuss the main goals of pronunciation teaching, including the question of pronunciation models, before we move to the questions of effectiveness in pronunciation teaching. The final chapter of the theoretical part will discuss textbooks as a teaching tool and criteria that can help us in their analyses.

The practical part will then consist of researching two textbook series – *Project* and *Beste Freunde* – and their comparison. We would like to overcome the descriptiveness of such a comparison, and so we decided to complement the textbook analysis with insights about pronunciation teaching and learning from both language teachers and language learners that were gathered through online questionnaires. We believe this will offer us a more realistic and comprehensive picture of the whole issue.

The final chapter of the practical part will include a series of recommendations relating to the textbook use that the author of this thesis would like to offer from her own experience and in which she will reflect on some of the key issues discussed throughout the whole diploma thesis.

Regarding the typographical aspects, the thesis will use in-text citations for both printed and online sources, with complete bibliographical data available in the reference list. The footnotes will serve as a platform for additional comments, and all translated quotes will be rendered by the author of the thesis.

THEORETICAL PART

1. The History of Pronunciation Teaching

1.1 Introduction

The history of foreign language teaching has witnessed many methods and approaches, each giving priority to a specific language aspect, favouring particular skills, or viewing language as a whole and thus emphasising none of its areas or skills (Jarosz, 2019). As with other areas of language, pronunciation instruction has been historically influenced by various methods and pedagogical trends. However, pronunciation has occupied a somewhat unique position in the history of foreign language teaching as its importance has been in a state of constant change. In other words, pronunciation has experienced dramatic changes in status over the years through the different methodologies employed. It has moved from being completely ignored to being an indispensable component of language curricula. This chapter presents a historical overview of pronunciation teaching, focusing primarily on the methodologies practised from the second half of the 19th century until the end of the 20th century. The historical overview is comprehensive, including methods and approaches that disregard and marginalise pronunciation.

The historical background is an essential part of the thesis for several reasons. Firstly, it provides information that helps explain and understand the current situation of pronunciation teaching. As Grant (2014, p. 1) puts it, *"if we know where we have been, we often have a better understanding of where we are and where we need to go."* Secondly, exploring the earlier approaches highlights techniques and ideas that have significantly influenced and continue to influence contemporary pronunciation practices and teaching materials. Thirdly, the awareness of past methodologies helps teachers diversify their set of techniques and thus target the individual pronunciation needs of students more effectively.

Since the thesis deals with the pronunciation teaching of two foreign languages, English and German, the information covered in this chapter relates to both. The following subchapters constantly refer to the terms 'method' and 'approach'. The difference between the two will be explained later in the text.

1.2 The Intuitive-Imitative and Analytic-Linguistic Approach

Before examining the individual methodological conceptions of foreign language teaching, two main approaches to pronunciation pedagogy must be introduced.

The first principle, the Intuitive-Imitative Approach (IIA), attaches importance to the imitative aspect of phonological acquisition. It uses the student´s natural ability to learn through listening to and imitating the sound system of the target language (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p. 2). Since pronunciation practice is largely restricted to 'listen and repeat' exercises and no theoretical information on pronunciation rules or articulatory settings is provided, pronunciation is acquired unconsciously through the student´s intuition (Jarosz, 2019, p. 3).

The IIA dominated pronunciation teaching until the late 19th century, when the achievements of the Reform Movement resulted in the emergence of the Analytic-Linguistic Approach (ALA). The ALA focuses on the linguistic analysis of the speech sound system, hence the name of the approach (ibid., pp. 3-4). Learning correct pronunciation happens through explicit phonetic instruction rather than the careful mechanical practice of imitating native speaker models (Newton, 2018, p. 338).

The approach is cognitively oriented, aiming for theoretical training based on conscious knowledge of how sounds are produced. To explain the phonetic basis, it uses phonemic information, contrastive analysis, and various tools such as phonemic charts, detailed descriptions of articulatory settings, and a phonetic alphabet. As a result of being exposed to informed pronunciation instruction, students are equipped with phonetic knowledge, which facilitates and reinforces listening, imitation and production (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p. 2; Jarosz, 2019, p. 28).

It is essential to say that the ALA did not emerge to replace the previous approach but rather to complement and support it. Therefore, the two approaches are not mutually exclusive and can be combined to enhance educational outcomes. In the history of pronunciation teaching, there have been methods incorporating both approaches; however, some methods have tended to emphasise one approach over the other (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p. 2; Newton, 2018, p. 338) (for more information, see *Table 1*).

1.3 The Grammar-Translation Method

The origins of the Grammar-Translation Method date back to the late 18th century as *"[the method] was introduced in a reform of the German secondary school system"* to the teaching of modern languages (Harmer, 2007, p. 48). Having been derived from teaching classical languages, the method was used to help students read, understand, and translate literary texts written in the target language. Aside from this, it was believed that students would benefit from the mental exercise and intellectual development provided by the study of a foreign language (Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p. 11).

The very name of the method reveals its fundamental principles. The Grammar-Translation Method put great emphasis on learning and memorising grammar rules. Once the grammar rules had been presented, illustrated, and deeply analysed, they were practised by translating sentences and longer texts from the students' first language into the target language and vice versa. Apart from memorising grammar rules, students were also required to learn long bilingual lists of words whose selection was purely based on the texts used in class (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, pp. 5-6).

Regarding language skills, reading and writing were prioritised while speaking and listening were disregarded and considered unimportant. Since the spoken language and the ability to communicate in the target language were of minor or no significance, little, if any, attention was given to pronunciation instruction (Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p. 18). The whole situation becomes even more transparent by the following facts: the students' native language was used as the language of instruction, and the teacher was not obliged to speak the target language in order to teach (Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p. 18; Celce-Murcia, 2001, p. 6).

The Grammar-Translation Method was the dominant teaching method in Europe from the 1840s until the 1940s. Despite being frequently discredited for its shortcomings, it remains to be practised in many places today (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 6).

According to Murphy and Baker (2015), the mid-19th century marked the beginning of change. Innovators such as C. Marcel, F. Gouin, T. Prendergast, and M. Berlitz made the first attempts to challenge and question the traditional practices of the Grammar-Translation Method. They promoted an increased emphasis on using L2 (second language) for communication, which did not necessarily indicate the focus on pronunciation instruction. Although their innovative ideas failed to achieve widespread support and recognition then, they laid the foundation for more pedagogical reforms in subsequent decades.

1.4 The Reform Movement

Toward the end of the 19th century, the demand for practical speaking skills increased, intensifying the desire to abandon and reject the classical approaches (Dieling, 1992). As a result, teachers and linguists from several European countries began to write about the much-needed change in foreign language pedagogy. Their reformative ideas and attempts became known as the Reform Movement in language teaching history (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 9). This movement was initiated and greatly influenced by keen phoneticians such as Henry Sweet[1] (England), Wilhelm Viëtor (Germany), and Paul Passy (France) (Jarosz, 2019, p. 4).

The work of these prominent phoneticians stressed, among other things, the primacy of spoken over the written language and, therefore, the importance of teaching oral skills and pronunciation (ibid., p. 26). Following the establishment of phonetics as a separate scientific discipline, other basic principles were formulated – these included the implementation of phonetic findings in language instruction and the necessity of proper phonetic training for teachers and, subsequently, students (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p. 3).

Wilhelm Viëtor (1850-1918), a German scholar and philologist, severely criticised the drawbacks of the Grammar-Translation Method and justified his radical views on language teaching in his pamphlet *Language Teaching Must Start Afresh*[2] (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 10). Not only did he argue that the ability to communicate should be the goal of language study, but he also *"stressed the value of training teachers in the new science of phonetics"* (ibid.).

Viëtor's pamphlet was so influential that it largely contributed to forming the International Phonetic Association in 1886 (Murphy & Baker, 2015). This professional organisation, in which linguists and teachers closely collaborated, developed the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) in 1887 with the original intention of fostering the scientific study of phonetics (Dahmen, 2013, p. 23; Baker, 2018, p. 256). Thanks to the IPA, it was possible for the first time to represent all sounds of any language by written symbols (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p. 3). Even though the IPA did not receive acceptance in L2 classrooms immediately, it

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[1] Henry Sweet (1845-1912) was an English phonetician *"known as the man who taught Europe phonetics"* (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 9; Murphy & Baker, 2015, p. 7).
[2] The pamphlet was originally published in the German language (*Der Sprachunterricht muss umkehren*) under a pseudonym and its translation into English was not published until 1984 (Murphy & Baker, 2015; Neuer & Hunfeld, 1993).

became widely recognised about a decade later and continues to influence pronunciation teaching today (Baker, 2018, p. 256).

Pronunciation instruction was segment-based and provided students with explicit information about and practice with the sound system. Apart from phonetic symbols, other tools, such as the IPA chart and articulatory descriptions of sounds, were integral to phonetic training in the language classroom (Murphy & Baker, 2015). Introducing these instructional practices based on explicit knowledge of phonetics rather than rote mechanical imitation gave rise to the Analytic-Linguistic Approach to pronunciation teaching (Jarosz, 2019, p. 4).

In conclusion, the Reform Movement was a momentous revolution in the history of foreign language teaching and pronunciation teaching specifically. The end of the 19th century saw the beginnings of deliberate and systematic pronunciation teaching, and its innovative principles and techniques opened a modern era of pronunciation pedagogy (ibid.).

1.5 The Direct Method

The Direct Method developed at the end of the 19th century in Europe[3] as a reaction to the restrictions and ineffectiveness of the Grammar-Translation Method (Newton, 2018, p. 338; Celce-Murcia, 2001, p. 6). Since the instructional goal of the Direct Method was to teach students how to communicate in the target language, the method was widely adopted and became extremely popular, especially in the early part of the 20th century (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p. 3; Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p. 23). Just like the Grammar-Translation Method, the Direct Method continues to have its supporters even today (Celce-Murcia, 2001, p. 4).

The essential principle of the Direct Method was the exclusive use of the target language during lessons. Since no translation into the students' native language was allowed, the meaning of words and structures was conveyed 'directly' through visual aids, items of realia, mime, and gestures. (Lindsay & Knight, 2006, p. 16; Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p. 23).

As mentioned above, speaking skills were of paramount importance to this method. That is why pronunciation was viewed as crucial and was intensively focused on right from the start and in a rather systematic manner.

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[3] The Direct Method became widely known in the USA under the name the Berlitz Method. Its principles underpin the teaching in Berlitz language schools which developed throughout the USA and Europe as well (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 12; Howatt, 1984, p. 203).

Although pronunciation instruction was highly prioritised, the methodology was based mainly on the naturalistic language learning principles of intuition and imitation. Direct Method teachers were ideally native speakers or speakers with nativelike fluency in the target language who provided a model that students tried to approximate as closely as possible through imitation and repetition (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p. 3; Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 13). In a quest for native-speaker accuracy, students were given no phonetic explanations and had to rely only on their abilities to imitate (Murphy & Baker, 2015). The Direct Method is a typical example of the Intuitive-Imitative Approach to pronunciation teaching for the techniques and principles employed. Interestingly, it also represents the most widely known of the naturalistic language methods.[4]

Compared to the Grammar-Translation Method, the Direct Method was undoubtedly a significant step forward. However, as far as the methodology is concerned, it was rather primitive since it was limited to intuitive-imitative practice. Despite its limitations (expressed by Henry Sweet, for example), *"it offered a methodology that appeared to move language teaching into a new era. It marked the beginning of the "methods era""* (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 14).

1.6 The Audiolingual Method

The influence of the Direct Method began to wane with the emergence of Reading-Based Approaches, which dominated foreign language teaching in the USA until the late 1930s (Celce-Murcia, 2001, p. 5). The Audiolingual Method, whose proponents advocated a return to an oral-based methodology, developed in the 1940s and 1950s in the USA[5] and continued to enjoy popularity in the 1960s thanks to the post-war advances in technology such as language laboratories and audiotape recorders (Murphy & Baker, 2015; Harmer, 2007; Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

Jarosz (2019, p. 5) describes three historical events that led to the birth of the Audiolingual Method. The first event contributing to the emergence of Audiolingualism was the outbreak of the Second World War. Many training programmes were established in response to the urgent need for American soldiers to develop foreign language proficiency in listening

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[4] Celce-Murcia et al. (2010, p. 3) mention two other examples of naturalistic methods which developed later – Total Physical Response (created by Asher) and Natural Approach (associated with Krashen & Terrell); nevertheless, these two approaches did not focus on pronunciation practice directly. Just like children acquire the first language, pronunciation was supposed to develop naturally (Jarosz, 2019, p. 4). According to Celce-Murcia et al. (2010), the initial listening period gave students time to *"internalize the target sound system"* (p. 3).

[5] In Britain, the same tendency occurred within the Oral/Situational Approach (Celce-Murcia, 2001, p. 5)

and speaking skills. The soldiers were trained intensively through aural-oral drills in a short period of time and, most notably, with a high success rate (Jarosz, 2019, p. 5; Neuer & Hunfeld, 1993, p. 45).

The second relates to structural linguistics, a theory of language which became highly recognised at that time (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 54). Structuralism described language as a complex system consisting of various hierarchical subsystems, each having its own structurally related elements - phonemes, morphemes, words, phrases, and sentences (Morley, 1991).

The third influential factor refers to the development of behavioural psychology, which *"claimed to have tapped the secrets of all human learning, including language learning"* (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 56). According to behavioural theory, learning is based on developing habits using the stimulus-response-reinforcement model (Harmer, 2007, p. 64).

The two theoretical concepts described above hugely shaped the audiolingual methodology, which will be described next.

Following the fundamental structuralist principle, language was perceived as speech, not writing, meaning that oral communication was prioritised, with pronunciation instruction taking centre stage in the foreign language curriculum (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, pp. 55, 58). As Richards and Rodgers (2001) point out, *"oral proficiency [was] equated with accurate pronunciation…"* (p. 58).

In line with the learning theory of behaviourism, the audiolingual approach saw language learning as a process of mechanical habit formation (Harmer, 2007, p. 49.). *"Since pronunciation was considered a deeply ingrained and automatised feature of language competence"* (Pennington & Rogerson-Revell, 2019, p. 121), it was necessary for pronunciation to be trained relentlessly and systematically from the very beginning to overcome the old habits of the first language (Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p. 46). In order to form new habits in the target language, pronunciation practice relied heavily on drilling and repetition of structural patterns (Harmer, 2007, p. 64).

Drills, predominantly in the form of minimal pairs[6], were designed to help students achieve a native-like accent (Grant, 2014). They focused on listening discrimination followed

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[6] The technique of minimal-pair drill *"based on the [structuralist] concept of the phoneme as a minimally distinctive sound"* (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p. 4) was the most popular type of exercise during the audiolingual era. A contrastive analysis between the first and the target language played an important role

by the production of individual sounds and words (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p. 5). Repetition drills were performed chorally in the classroom as well as individually in the language laboratory using the audiotape recorder and headphones. In essential, audiolingual-oriented classes centred almost exclusively on the accurate articulation of segmental features (consonant and vowel sounds). However, when paying attention to the correct production of grammatical phrases and sentences, the prosodic features such as stress, rhythm and intonation were emphasised too (Pennington & Rogerson-Revell, 2019, p. 121; Murphy & Baker, 2015).

Like the Direct Method, Audiolingualism stressed the importance of good oral production and focused on learning through imitative speaking practice. In contrast to the Direct Method, it also employed analytic-linguistic principles (charts, transcription, phonetic explanations) advocated by nineteenth-century reformers (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p. 4).

In the 1960s, audiolingual practices brought disappointing results since students could not use the automatised phrases in real-life situations outside the classroom. Moreover, students found the exercises and materials dull and unattractive (Jarosz, 2019, p. 6). The method became less and less popular with teachers and students, and it ultimately fell into decline because too much focus on tedious drills and pronunciation accuracy led to nothing but considerable frustration (Grant, 2014).

Furthermore, the representatives of cognitive psychology and transformational-generative linguistics challenged the theoretical principles underlying the Audiolingual Method. It was Noam Chomsky who attacked and strictly rejected both structuralism and the behaviouristic theory of language learning. He argued that humans had an innate ability to produce new utterances from the acquired set of abstract rules. Thus, language was viewed as a creative behaviour built upon rules rather than habit formation (Jarosz, 2019, p. 6; Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p. 5).

The representatives of the Cognitive Approach[7] disregarded pronunciation on the grounds that native-like pronunciation was an unrealistic and unattainable goal (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p. 5). Apart from the revolution in linguistics and psychology, there was a revolution in biology, providing evidence indicating the impossibility of adult L2 learners attaining native-like competence in pronunciation (Levis, 2019). The outcome was that

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in the selection of potential problematic sounds which were then practiced within minimal pairs (Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p. 49).

[7] The Cognitive Approach emerged in linguistics under the influence of cognitive psychology and Chomsky's transformational generative grammar (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p. 5).

pronunciation teaching was marginalised in favour of more learnable aspects, mainly grammar and vocabulary (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p. 5).

In summary, although the Audiolingual Method began to fall into disfavour and disrepute in the late 1960s for reasons outlined above, audiolingual techniques, namely phonetic drills, are still very popular with many teachers today.

1.7 Alternative approaches

As Larsen-Freeman (2000) points out, "*no language teaching method ever really developed directly from the Cognitive Approach; instead, a number of 'innovative methods' emerged*" (p. 53). The alternative approaches which came into being are often referred to as 'Humanistic Approaches' because they attempted to perceive students as individuals whose emotions needed to be respected and involved in the learning process (Celce-Murcia, 2001, p. 7; Pokludová, 2010). The 1970s period saw the development of the following methods: Total Physical Response, Suggestopedia, Community Language Learning and the Silent Way.

In terms of pronunciation, two of the methods, the Silent Way and Community Language Learning, placed pronunciation teaching at the centre of the classroom practice (Jarosz, 2019, p. 7). Essentially, they treated pronunciation beyond the two basic approaches to pronunciation teaching, intuitive-imitative and analytic-linguistic, and came up with highly innovative and experimental concepts for pronunciation methodology (Pokludová, 2010).

The Silent Way focused students' attention on the accuracy of both segmental and suprasegmental features without familiarising them with the phonetic alphabet or any other linguistic information (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, pp. 5-6). Based on the premise that the teacher should be as silent as possible, the Silent Way introduced several tools to facilitate the teaching and learning process. These included a sound-colour chart, a set of colour-coded Fidel charts containing sound-spelling correspondences, and Cuisenaire rods, small coloured wooden/plastic pieces of different lengths to illustrate stress, linking, contractions or intonation visually. Besides, this method has popularised using gestures to tap out rhythmic patterns or indicate the stressed syllables in words (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, pp. 6-7; Jarosz, 2019, p. 7).

Figure 1 – Four Fidel wall charts representing sound-to-letter correspondences (Pronunciation Science, 2011, [online])

Since the alternative approaches are not generally widespread nowadays, they will not be analysed in any further detail.

1.8 Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative Language Teaching (also known as the Communicative Approach[8]) was developed in the early 1970s as a reaction to the limitations and impracticalities of previous methods, especially the Audiolingual Method, whose methodology proved inappropriate for teaching students how to communicate in the world outside the classroom (Levis & Sonsaat, 2018, p. 267; Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p. 121). In other words, the disappointment with the ineffectiveness of traditional pronunciation practices opened the door to the communicative era (Grant, 2014).

With the arrival of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), language teaching shifted its focus away from accuracy and linguistic competence (knowledge of the language and its rules) towards fluency and communicative competence (the ability to use the target language effectively and appropriately) (Levis & Sonsaat, 2018, pp. 267, 271). As a consequence of the shifting paradigm, the traditional pronunciation techniques of

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[8]An interesting remark concerns the very name of the approach. In Jarosz' words (2019), "*the Communicative Approach is widely regarded as an approach, not a method, due to its comprehensiveness*" (p. 10). However, the same approach is known under the term 'die kommunikative Methode' within the framework of teaching German as a foreign language. Describing the difference between 'a method' and 'an approach', Richards and Rodgers (2001, p. 245) refer to a method as a single set of practices prescribing how to teach a foreign language. Methods are also often based on a particular theory of language and language learning. On the other hand, an approach contains no prescribed teaching procedures and specific techniques to be followed in the classroom. An approach is more flexible and adaptable in its nature as it is characterised by "*a set of generally agreed upon principles that can be applied in different ways*" according to individual students' needs and the teaching context (Richards, 2006, p. 22).

decontextualised and non-communicative drills were incompatible with the core principles of CLT (ibid., p. 280) and *"pronunciation as a whole was dumped overboard"* (Gilbert, 2016, p. vi). What mattered most was to empower students with the ability to make themselves understood quickly and without restraint. The fact that well-developed basic knowledge of phonetics enables them to understand and be understood in the first place was overlooked entirely (Dieling & Hirschfeld, 2000, p. 14). Fraser (2000, p. 33 [online]) also comments on the neglect of pronunciation in the CLT era's initial phase: *"Pronunciation was so strongly associated with the 'drill and kill' methods that it was deliberately downplayed, rather than being incorporated into the communicative method."* Another issue was that CLT proponents had no idea how to approach pronunciation from a communicative perspective and integrate it into CLT practice (Levis & Sonsaat, 2018, p. 269). On top of that, under the influence of Krashen's theory, it was believed that pronunciation would be picked up naturally by mere exposure to L2 (Derwing, 2018, p. 322).

Nevertheless, around the mid-1980s, pronunciation was brought to the centre of attention again (Levis & Sonsaat, 2018, p. 268). Since many speakers, despite a great deal of exposure to L2, still struggled to achieve intelligible speech, instructional methodologists recognised the indispensable role of intelligible pronunciation in achieving communicative competence (Grant, 2014; Morley, 1991). Thus, the goal of native-like competence valued in the days of Audiolingualism was replaced with intelligibility, a far more realistic goal that remains central to pronunciation instruction today (Levis & Sonsaat, 2018, p. 272). Accordingly, pronunciation practitioners made great efforts to combine pronunciation teaching with the new communicative paradigm and devised activities and guidelines for teaching pronunciation communicatively. For instance, Celce-Murcia et al. (2010, pp. 44-45) proposed a communicative framework for teaching pronunciation. Grounded in CLT principles, the framework consists of five phases going from accuracy-focused to fluency and meaning-oriented practice.

Along with the growing recognition of intelligible pronunciation as an essential component of oral communication, a greater emphasis was placed on suprasegmental features such as stress, rhythm, and intonation. It was argued that prosodic features should be prioritised because they carry the message's meaning and contribute to its intelligibility (Jarosz, 2019, p. 10). The renewed interest in pronunciation teaching was also reflected in the publication of many pronunciation-focused articles and resource materials in the final decades of the 20th century. From the mid-1990s onwards, the research base has been expanded with a growing

number of empirical studies supporting pronunciation teaching and tying research and classroom practice together (Morley, 1991; Murphy & Baker, 2015).

CLT has retained its dominance in the 21st century, and its principles continue to provide a basis for language teaching methodology even today. Some scholars (e.g. Richards & Rodgers, 2001) even argue that language teaching has reached a post-method era while entering the new millennium. Brown (2014, p. 170) describes the post-method era as a period "*in which each teacher may develop their own eclectic approach to teaching, drawing on aspects of previous approaches and methods.*" Richards (2006) and Nunan (2000) also elaborate on the issue and characterise language teaching in the current post-communicative period as being derived from a close analysis of the context and individual students' needs and systematic observation of what happens in the classroom.

To conclude, this chapter has provided insight into the history of pronunciation teaching. As depicted, the role of pronunciation teaching has waxed and waned over the years. Ignored in the Grammar-Translation Method, pronunciation was put at the forefront of instruction with the rise of the Reform Movement, Direct Method and Audiolingualism, only to be pushed once again to the margins with the advent of Communicative Language Teaching in the early 1970s (Jones, 2002). However, pronunciation has not lost its relevance in the long run. With a resurgence of interest in pronunciation teaching in the mid-1980s, "*pronunciation teaching has been making a slow, but steady, comeback*" ever since (Grant, 2014, p. 3). *Table 1* on the next page summarises the areas of change pronunciation instruction has undergone over the past two centuries. These include a transformation in the position, a shift in the overall target and priorities, and the evolution of instructional approach along with didactic principles.

Name of the methodological conception	Position	Goal	Prioritised features	Instructional approach	Didactic practices
Grammar-Translation Method	irrelevant	-	-	-	-
Reform Movement	prioritised	nativeness / native-likeness	segmentals	explicit, analytic-linguistic	phonetic symbols, IPA chart, phonetic explanations, articulatory descriptions of sounds
Direct Method	prominent	nativeness / native-likeness	segmentals	implicit, intuitive-imitative	listening, modelling, imitation & repetition
Audiolingual Method	prominent	nativeness / native-likeness	segmentals	blended	listening discrimination, drills, minimal pairs, repetition & charts, transcription, phonetic explanations
Cognitive Approach	prioritised	-	-	-	sound-colour charts, Fidel charts, Cuisenaire rods, gestures
Silent Way	prioritised	nativeness / native-likeness	segmentals & suprasegmentals	explicit, employing facilitating tools	sound-colour charts, Fidel charts, Cuisenaire rods, gestures
Communicative Language Teaching	prominent	intelligibility	suprasegmentals	implicit, integrated, contextualised & communicative	illustrations of pronunciation features, focused listening practice, minimal-pair sentences, information-gap activities, role-plays, drama scenes, problem-solving tasks[9]
Post-Method Teaching	prominent	intelligibility	suprasegmentals	blended	derived from a close analysis of the context and individual students' needs and systematic observation of what happens in the classroom

Table 1 – The development of pronunciation teaching

[9] More information in *Appendix 2* – A communicative framework for teaching pronunciation by Celce-Murcia et al. (2010, p. 45)

2. Pronunciation Teaching Today

After reviewing the main historical developments in the area of pronunciation teaching, the current situation needs to be analysed. The first part of this chapter acts as an introduction to the subsequent chapter. It justifies the need for teaching pronunciation, highlights the value of intelligible pronunciation and aims to provide a clear picture of its importance in foreign language instruction. The chapter proceeds to specify the major reasons pronunciation is the aspect of language which is frequently treated as a low priority of study even if it has an indispensable role in communication. The following subchapter explores relevant curricular documents to detect the role pronunciation plays within them. Then, the chapter dwells upon three critical issues of pronunciation pedagogy: pronunciation goals, models and priorities.

2.1 The importance of pronunciation teaching and learning

Pronunciation teaching and learning should be considered an integral part of L2 instruction for many reasons.

First and foremost, pronunciation constitutes an essential component of spoken language whose quality impacts the efficiency of oral communication. Good pronunciation in an L2 improves the speaker's communicative ability and thus contributes to successful and effective interactions. In addition to this beneficial outcome, adequate pronunciation creates favourable impressions and boosts learners' confidence to interact orally in the target language. On the other hand, poor pronunciation skills often lead to misunderstandings and, in the worst case, severe breakdowns in communication (Jarosz, 2019, ix; Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015, p. 226). According to Jenkins (2000), pronunciation errors represent the major cause of communication breakdowns and the greatest barrier to intelligibility. The importance of intelligible pronunciation is further supported by the fact that native speakers are more sensitive to pronunciation errors and perceive them as more irritating than lexical, grammatical or syntactic inadequacies (Rogerson-Revell, 2011, p. 5). Fraser (2000, p. 7 [online]) also notes that "*with poor pronunciation, a speaker can be very difficult to understand, despite accuracy in other areas.*" For that reason, the comprehensibility of a speaker is severely hindered by inadequate pronunciation, regardless of their proficiency in other areas of language expression, such as vocabulary, grammar, and syntax.

Since pronunciation is the feature that has the most impact on how the speaker is judged by listeners, pronunciation difficulties negatively impact evaluations of the speaker's credibility

and overall linguistic ability. Moreover, limited pronunciation skills are associated with negative stereotypes and prejudices; sometimes, they are a source of social exclusion, disadvantage and discrimination (Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015, p. 46).

As noted above, pronunciation is intimately connected with self-confidence and self-esteem. Situations in which the communication process constantly fails due to pronunciation problems can be immensely frustrating and demotivating for the speaker. Such negative experiences can shatter the speaker's confidence to such an extent that they lose their confidence and willingness to participate in further conversations in the target language (Zielinski & Yates, 2014, p. 58). However, these situations are just as frustrating for listeners as well. Speech that exhibits a lot of phonetic errors is difficult to process and requires "*greater effort and concentration on the part of the listener*" (Backley, 2013). Szpyra-Kozlowska (2015, p. 3) explains the consequences of heavily accented speech this way: "*Pronunciation which puts too much strain on the listeners is very likely to cause them irritation and annoyance and, in consequence, discourage them from further contact with the foreign speaker.*" It should also be noted that there is a close relation between pronunciation and all language skills, not only speaking. Just like poor pronunciation can have grave implications for speaking, the negative impact of poor pronunciation on listening comprehension, reading and writing is also evident (Walker, 2014).

This preliminary section has illustrated, especially with regard to pronunciation errors and their negative consequences, how beneficial and powerful attention to a proper way of pronouncing can be for foreign language learners. To sum it up, effective pronunciation instruction enhances intelligibility, which equips learners with the ability to succeed in aspects of life that depend on spoken language communication. Not only is intelligible pronunciation a prerequisite for successful communication, but it is also the key to building learners' confidence to speak. On top of that, developing pronunciation skills is essential for learners to make adequate progress in all other language competencies.

Based on this part of the chapter, the significance of pronunciation in the language learning process should be obvious. As far as language teachers are concerned, most generally recognise the value of pronunciation instruction. They are aware of the advantages of pronouncing a language correctly as well as the consequences of pronunciation irregularities for their learners (Fraser, 2000, p. 27 [online]). Similarly, language learners see the fundamental importance of intelligible pronunciation as they understand its vital role in understanding and

making themselves understood (Jones, 2018). Many studies (e.g. Baker, 2011; Foote et al., 2011; Jarosz, 2019) have revealed that learners attach great significance to pronunciation and desire more practice to improve their pronunciation skills.

Even though both groups are convinced of the relevance of pronunciation in overall linguistic competence, it is still frequently neglected in the foreign language classroom. This state of affairs is referred to as the 'pronunciation teaching paradox', and the reasons behind it will be discussed in the upcoming section (Darcy, 2018, p. 16 [online]).

2.2 The neglect of pronunciation teaching

Following the widespread recognition of the communicative importance of pronunciation and the learners' desire to master it, a logical assumption is that pronunciation instruction occupies a significant position in the field of foreign language teaching. However, the reality is that teachers devote their class time and curricular space to teaching other areas while pronunciation continues to be marginalised. This neglect does not stem from the teachers' lack of interest in the subject or their unwillingness to teach it; other reasons prevent them from addressing pronunciation in their classes which are presented below (Kelly, 2000, p. 13).

The reason most commonly quoted for the neglect is a lack of time. Teachers often claim they cannot afford to allot time to practice pronunciation since there are many other aspects of language to teach. They feel overwhelmed and pressured to cover the already packed curriculum, so pronunciation becomes sidelined or is dropped altogether (Yoshida, 2014, pp. 6, 166). When pronunciation teaching is not entirely ignored, it primarily consists of correcting errors as they arise in the classroom with no strategic pre-planning (Kelly, 2000, p. 13). Some teachers tend to provide corrective feedback at any sign of pronunciation error, while others pay attention to pronunciation only when intelligibility becomes an issue. Especially the latter way of addressing pronunciation suggests that teachers do not perceive pronunciation as an integrated and fundamental part of the foreign language curriculum but rather as an add-on and optional extra, which can be overlooked if learners' pronunciation is easy enough to understand (Mcdonald, 2002, pp. 7-8). However, there are several problems with this reactive unsystematic approach. Firstly, it is not an effective way of teaching intelligible pronunciation, and secondly, teachers quickly get used to pronunciation errors that reoccur in class and stop noticing and correcting them. Although such a form of pronunciation instruction is necessary, it should not be the only one learners receive (Grant, 2014, p. 155).

A low level of confidence and the absence of adequate skills and subject knowledge are other key reasons teachers tend to avoid pronunciation instruction (Macdonald, 2002). Research indicates that many language instructors find themselves ill-equipped and underprepared to teach pronunciation because they received insufficient training in the area or no training at all (e.g. Breitkreuz et al., 2001; Henderson et al., 2012; Murphy, 2014). The comments of European teachers in Henderson et al.'s (2012) survey-based study reveal that most teachers are critical of their pre-service training concerning pronunciation teaching. They generally complain about the nature of their training that provided them with a theoretical foundation of phonetics and phonology and improved their pronunciation but failed to approach the issue from a practical language-teaching perspective.

Lack of self-confidence, skills and knowledge and subsequent treatment of pronunciation as unimportant are not the only consequences of poor teacher preparation. Those instructors who find time and courage and incorporate pronunciation practice into their syllabi are prone to present the subject from a technical point of view because that is what they experienced during their teacher training (Gilbert, 2008, p. 42). Also, language instructors do not very often possess modern tools and procedures, so they adopt traditional techniques that copy the ones used during their own L2 acquisition (Hismanoglu & Hismanoglu, 2010; Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015, p. 63). The range of pronunciation exercises they employ in their classes is somewhat limited, with reading aloud, repeat-after-me activities and minimal pair work being the predominant task types. Pronunciation training thus "*often amounts to the practice of a series of tedious and seemingly unrelated topics. Drilling sounds over and over often leads to discouraging results; discouraged students and teachers alike end up wanting to avoid pronunciation altogether*" (Gilbert, 2010, p. 3). Additionally, many teachers today purposefully disregard pronunciation instruction on the grounds of the feeling that it is mainly a drill thing that conflicts with CLT methodology. In this case, teachers naturally see to mirror the approach adopted by their coursebooks which is justified in the following paragraph.

Furthermore, the position of pronunciation in general-skills L2 textbooks also reinforces its fringe status. Pronunciation is treated there in a very marginal way or is wholly absent. When included, pronunciation content is addressed in a non-systematic manner and presented as an add-on to a unit that is likely to be skipped if time is short (Derwing et al., 2012; Marks, 2011). Moreover, pronunciation practice rarely offers something more than uncommunicative and

decontextualised 'listen & repeat' exercises.[10] Thus, teachers are left to design their pronunciation activities or adapt existing ones and integrate them into an existing curriculum. But this is not an easy task for teachers who lack the technical expertise to do it adequately because they were not sufficiently instructed in pronunciation pedagogy.

When untrained teachers faithfully follow the contents of textbooks with limited pronunciation focus, pronunciation does not receive the attention it truly deserves (Jones, 2018). Yet, provided that these teachers decide to deal with pronunciation against all odds, they may be guided only by their intuition and choose pronunciation publications, online materials or software programmes that do not have to be wholly appropriate for their students. Another problem is that many of these sources are not grounded in solid research findings (Derwing & Munro, 2005, p. 389). In order to provide proper and targeted instruction, teachers need to be able to distinguish between materials that are evidence-based and those that are not. Again, evaluating pronunciation teaching materials can be demanding and challenging for teachers unqualified in the field.

Sadly, the list of reasons for the neglect of pronunciation teaching goes on. Non-native language teachers often shy away from the subject because they feel uncertain and insecure about the poor quality of their own pronunciation. The truth is that such feelings are unwarranted. When it comes to pronunciation instruction, non-native teachers have certain advantages over teachers who are native speakers. For example, they represent a natural and realistic pronunciation model for learners to aspire to. Their personal experience with acquiring L2 pronunciation is also a great asset that can inform their teaching and facilitate the whole process (Murphy, 2014, p. 205).

Before finishing the list, one more issue needs to be pointed out. Teachers' reluctance to engage in pronunciation instruction may stem from the observation that pronunciation is the most problematic aspect of a foreign language to master, especially when native-like speech is set as the ultimate goal. Given the disappointing results pronunciation practice brings, teachers see pronunciation teaching as ineffective and, consequently, dedicate energy, effort, and precious instructional time to those aspects of language that are teachable and learnable (Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015, p. 5). Apart from this, teachers refuse to deal with pronunciation due to the complex issues concerning the crucial questions of what pronunciation areas to focus on, what model to adopt, or what goal to set (Pennington & Rogerson-Revell, 2019, p. 126).

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[10] The issue of pronunciation, its status and its treatment in textbooks will also be touched upon later in the thesis.

Learners seem to be left on their own while being expected to develop correct pronunciation during their studies, despite various empirical studies that have confirmed explicit pronunciation instruction is both beneficial and worthwhile (Thomson & Derwing, 2014).

Even though there appears to have been a rapid increase in the number of L2 pronunciation studies in recent years (ibid.), research in this area continues to be underrepresented compared to research "*on other skills such as grammar and vocabulary*" (Derwing & Munro, 2005, p. 380). The two Canadian researchers also lament the gap between the published pronunciation research and classroom practices (ibid.). Unfortunately, teachers are not the target audience of such publications and, on that account, are not aware of the latest significant research findings "*which can influence their decisions regarding pronunciation teaching content, goals and priorities, and approaches and methods*" (Pennington & Rogerson-Revell, 2019, p. 450).

As demonstrated in this section, there are numerous reasons for pronunciation being an overlooked area of language teaching. Pronunciation suffers from general neglect in L2 classrooms, textbooks, teacher-training curricula, and applied linguistics, which is a disturbing finding considering its real-world value for successful spoken communication.

2.3   The role of pronunciation in formal curricular documents

The list of reasons presented in the previous section is far from being comprehensive. Teachers also complain about insufficiently detailed guidance on teaching, learning goals and assessment in the formal curricula, which leads them to omit pronunciation instruction (Mcdonald, 2002). Therefore, two essential curricular documents will be analysed in this separate subchapter to determine the gaps and how they encourage and support teachers in this area. Since the need for adaptation was felt, the Council of Europe published an updated document which will also be examined to determine to what extent the identified weaknesses have been addressed and eliminated.

The *Framework Education Programme for Elementary Education* (*FEP EE*) is the first document explored. The *FEP EE* represents the state-level of curricular documents in the Czech Republic. It defines the objectives of elementary education and key competencies necessary to be achieved by pupils by the end of their elementary education. It further divides the educational content into nine areas consisting of one or more educational fields. Then, the content of each field is specified in the form of expected outcomes and subject matter (MŠMT, 2021). The *FEP EE* has been innovated and revised several times throughout its existence. The latest version

was published in 2021 to adjust the educational content to meet the dynamic character and needs of the twenty-first century (MŠMT, 2022). Apart from the *Framework Education Programmes*, there are also school-level documents, the so-called *School Education Programmes*, put together by individual schools following the principles and objectives anchored in the corresponding *FEP*.

The two educational fields relevant to this work, 'Foreign Language' and 'Second Foreign Language', are part of the 'Language and Language Communication' area. The expected outcomes for the lower-secondary school level are categorised in both fields according to the basic language skills into four groups: Listening with comprehension, Speaking, Reading with comprehension and Writing (MŠMT, 2021). Even though pronunciation is not a language skill, it is a crucial language component that helps develop all language skills. Based on this circumstance, one would expect pronunciation to be included in the aforementioned language skills, especially speaking. The analysis reveals that no particular pronunciation goals are aligned with language skills. The only remarks about pronunciation can be found in the following outcomes regarding the language skill of listening:

> The pupil shall understand the information in simple listening materials if pronounced slowly and carefully. The pupil shall understand the content of a simple and carefully pronounced speech or conversation related to the topics being covered (ibid., p. 27; own translation).

> The pupil shall understand simple instructions and questions pronounced slowly and carefully by the teacher and react accordingly. The pupil shall understand words and simple sentences which are pronounced slowly and carefully [...] (ibid., p. 28; own translation).

The subsequent section of 'Subject Matter' is the only one to specify some goals in terms of pronunciation:

> Sound and Graphic Form of the Language – the development of sufficiently intelligible pronunciation and the ability to distinguish the features of the phonological language system by hearing, word and sentence stress, intonation, mastering the orthography of acquired vocabulary (ibid., p. 28; own translation).

The subject matter of 'Second Foreign Language' corresponds with the subject matter of 'Foreign Language' for the primary school level. Its first category, 'Sound and Graphic Form,' describes the goals as follows: "*phonetic symbols (passive use), basic pronunciation habits, spelling-to-sound relationship*" (ibid., p. 29; own translation).

The analysis implies that pronunciation does not occupy a central and integrated position within the *FEP EE*. Based on this finding, it is understandable that teachers feel "*uncertain where and how to incorporate it into their syllabi*" (Machová et al., 2013, p. 57). Consequently, pronunciation is often left out or treated in a marginal or reactive manner (ibid.). On the bright side, the *FEP EE* takes pronunciation into consideration and gives it at least as much space as other language components. On the negative side, the pronunciation goals set in the *FEP EE* are too general and broad. It is undoubtedly the intention here, but teachers struggle to apply these directives to their teaching practice (ibid., p. 58). Moreover, if teachers consider these goals the only objectives to be achieved, the other aspects not explicitly mentioned in the *FEP EE* can be easily overlooked. On the other hand, it leaves enough space for creative teachers and teachers with experience and knowledge in the field (Pištora, 2016).

The *FEP EE* derives its requirements for foreign-language education from another curricular document called the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (*CEFR*). Published by the Council of Europe in 2001, the *CEFR* is primarily known for its six-point scale that organises foreign language proficiency in six common reference levels, from A1 for beginners to C2 for proficient language users. The individual proficiency levels are further characterised through 'can-do' statements describing what learners should be able to do using the language in the real world (Council of Europe, 2001). Undoubtedly, the *CEFR* is a handy material and a powerful reference tool for teachers from all across Europe. It helps them measure, monitor and assess their learners' progress and language ability at each stage of learning and on a life-long basis. Also, many learners use the *CEFR* levels and descriptors as a self-assessment tool to evaluate their ability, track their progress, and determine their proficiency level in each language skill domain (Council of Europe, 2022). Based on the levels in the *CEFR*, the *FEP EE* sets that learners are supposed to reach the A2 level of proficiency in the field of Foreign Language and the A1 level in the field of Second Foreign Language at the end of the lower-secondary education (MŠMT, 2021).

The fifth chapter of the *CEFR* focuses on the competences users and learners draw upon "*in order to carry out the tasks and activities required to deal with the communicative situations*

in which they are involved" (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 101 [online]). On the basis of language-relatedness, the *CEFR* divides competences into general competences and communicative language competences, with each group subdivided into other competence categories. After interpreting general competences, the *CEFR* offers 'can-do' descriptors for three categories of communicative competence, linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic. The most relevant to this thesis is the linguistic one, which comprises six more sub-competences, phonological being one of them (ibid.).

The first part of the phonological section, listed fourth after lexical, grammatical and semantic, defines phonological competence and describes what constituents make it up. According to the *CEFR* (ibid., p. 116 [online]), phonological competence is defined as *"a knowledge of, and skill in the perception and production of"* the following teaching/learning content:

- the sound-units (*phonemes*) of the language and their realisation in particular contexts (*allophones*);
- the phonetic features which distinguish phonemes (*distinctive features*, e.g. voicing, rounding, nasality, plosion);
- the phonetic composition of words (*syllable structure*, the sequence of phonemes, word stress, word tones);
- sentence phonetics (*prosody*): sentence stress and rhythm, intonation;
- phonetic reduction: vowel reduction, strong and weak forms, assimilation, elision (ibid., pp. 116-117 [online]).

Hirschfeld and Reinke (2018) comment on the very name of the section as it does not fully match the definition provided. Since both knowledge and skills are involved, the term 'phonetic' instead of 'phonological' would be more accurate or should also be incorporated into the name. They proceed with their commentary stating that the content points listed in the *CEFR* are well applicable in linguistically heterogeneous classrooms that need to be systematically introduced to all areas of pronunciation, but, in linguistically homogenous groups, the content should be adapted and specified by interference aspects.

The second part of the section introduces the scale for pronunciation, termed 'Phonological control' (Council of Europe, 2001). Interestingly, the German version of the *CEFR* uses a different title for the pronunciation grid – 'Beherrschung der Aussprache und Intonation' translated into English as 'Pronunciation and Intonation Control' (Europarat, 2001). The German title appears to be terminologically incorrect and thus misleading since pronunciation and intonation are presented separately here, even though pronunciation serves

as an umbrella term for both segmental and suprasegmental phenomena, i.e., individual vowel and consonant sounds and intonation in the broader sense. The fact is that texts dealing with German phonetics (e.g. Dieling & Hirschfeld, 2000; Hirschfeld & Reinke, 2018) often distinguish between intonation in the broader and narrower sense. Whereas 'intonation in the broader sense' is used as a synonym for suprasegmental features, 'intonation in the narrower sense' refers to one specific element of prosody only – i.e. intonation or melody of speech (ibid.). The English title seems more accurate and less confusing in this respect.

However, the terminological discrepancy in the German title is not the only object of criticism. Researchers criticised the section on phonological competence, especially the phonological control scale, for other reasons. For example, compared to lexical or grammatical competence, whose descriptions for individual levels are precise and detailed, the guidelines for the acquisition of pronunciation are mostly too general and unclear and of little help to teachers when planning their lessons or during assessment (Dahmen & Hirschfeld, 2016, p. 4). Also, the terminology employed in the rating scale is ambiguous, overly vague and abstract, not allowing a clear differentiation between competence levels (Dahmen, 2019). Dahmen (ibid., p. 196; own translation) poses the following questions: "*Where exactly is the boundary between a 'noticeable foreign accent' (A2) and a foreign accent that is sometimes evident (B1), and what does a 'clear, natural pronunciation and intonation' mean (B2)?*" The B2 reference level of both German and English pronunciation presents 'pronunciation' and 'intonation' as two separate terms, which is, as discussed above, not terminologically correct. On top of it all, *Figure 2* shows that the pronunciation scale offers descriptors for only five of the six proficiency levels, excluding the C2 level.

	PHONOLOGICAL CONTROL
C2	*As C1*
C1	*Can vary intonation and place sentence stress correctly in order to express finer shades of meaning.*
B2	*Has acquired a clear, natural, pronunciation and intonation.*
B1	*Pronunciation is clearly intelligible even if a foreign accent is sometimes evident and occasional mispronunciations occur.*
A2	*Pronunciation is generally clear enough to be understood despite a noticeable foreign accent, but conversational partners will need to ask for repetition from time to time.*
A1	*Pronunciation of a very limited repertoire of learnt words and phrases can be understood with some effort by native speakers used to dealing with speakers of his/her language group.*

Figure 2 – The CEFR Phonological Control Scale (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 117 [online])

Furthermore, the phonological control scale was criticised by researchers as lacking consistency, logical structure and progression across levels (e.g. Dahmen, 2019; Harding, 2017). Dahmen (ibid.) argues that it is impossible to discover advancement here since there are no references to specific phonological features whose acquisition would be attributed to particular proficiency levels. Especially between levels B1 and B2, when the pronunciation goal changes from a 'foreign accent that is sometimes evident' to a 'clear, natural pronunciation and intonation', it is not apparent what steps need to be taken to reach the B2 level. However, the distinction between 'pronunciation' and 'intonation' that occurs in B2 for the first time may suggest that once B2 is attained, it is suprasegmental aspects of pronunciation that should be the focus of pronunciation teaching/learning. Until then, segmental features should be prioritised.

Nevertheless, both segmental and suprasegmental elements are crucial in developing intelligible pronunciation, and both should be included in the scale from the very beginning (ibid.).[11] This desideratum is also supported by Harding (2017, p. 29), who calls for incorporating "*all assessed elements of pronunciation across rating scale levels […]*" and avoiding "*the assumption that suprasegmental information is only important at higher levels.*" On the other hand, it is not considered possible to produce a scale that would embrace all the pronunciation phenomena and be applicable across languages (Dahmen, 2019). Even though Hirschfeld and Reinke (2018) claim that the phonetic content cannot be portioned and divided into individual levels, Dahmen (2019) urges a more refined scale covering both dimensions.

The A1 descriptor, describing that learners at this level can pronounce some learnt words and phrases in a way that is hard to understand by native speakers used to being in contact with speakers of their language groups, is also a weak point of the scale. As competence orientation is one of the core *CEFR* principles, positively worded 'can-do' statements of the achieved competences are much more appreciated during assessment than negative formulations of learners' deficits. In this way, the A1 descriptor contradicts the *CEFR*'s demand not to employ negative competence descriptors because speaking causing comprehension difficulties is by no means a desirable goal for learners to aim for (ibid.). Moreover, the goals set for individual levels do not match reality. The *CEFR* attempts to distribute pronunciation skills across the levels without considering that even beginners can have a 'clear and natural

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[11] More on the topic of segmental and suprasegmental features will be addressed later in the thesis.

pronunciation' while advanced learners can still speak with a 'noticeable foreign accent' (Dahmen & Hirschfeld, 2016, p. 4).

On the grounds of the criticism and shortcomings of the *CEFR*, the Council of Europe launched the *CEFR Companion volume* in 2018, an online publication, which updates the *CEFR* version from 2001 and refers to the complete revision of the scale for 'Phonological control' as one of the most crucial innovations (Council of Europe, 2020, [online]). With the recognition that *"phonology had been the least successful scale developed in the research behind the original descriptors in 2001"* (ibid., p. 243), the *CEFR Companion volume* presents an entirely new scale for the area of general phonological competence (Overall phonological control) and two brand new scales for the subsectors of segmental (Sound articulation) and suprasegmental (Prosodic features) competence (see *Appendix 1* for the updated Phonological control scale).

The scale for 'Overall phonological control' replacing the old one has been substantially revised and expanded. The pronunciation descriptors are much more nuanced and elaborated and cover all the *CEFR* levels, from A1 to C2.

The general scale also aims to establish the balance between 'accentedness'[12] and 'intelligibility'[13] as an assessment basis for phonological competence, at least from the A2 level, since the description for A1 remains almost unchanged. For example, there is a progression from B1, where *"pronunciation is generally intelligible; accent is usually influenced by the other languages(s) they speak,"* to B2, where *"accent tends to be influenced by other language(s) they speak, but has little or no effect on intelligibility"* (ibid., p. 134). Even though the two levels are still close together, the progression between them is further specified by the two categories of 'Sound articulation' and 'Prosodic features', making it easier for evaluators to identify the correct proficiency level. Dahmen (2019) recommends putting all three scales next to each other for the rating process since the formulations in individual scales are still not clearly differentiated from one another. The Sound articulation scale makes a difference between *"is generally intelligible throughout, despite regular mispronunciation of individual sounds and words they are less familiar with"* (B1) and *"is intelligible throughout, despite a few systematic mispronunciations"* (B2), which is not a selection criterion for an assessable progression (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 134 [online]; Dahmen, 2019).

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[12] Accentedness is defined in the *CEFR Companion volume* as an *"accent and deviation from a "norm""* (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 133 [online]).
[13] Intelligibility is termed as *"accessibility of meaning for interlocutors, covering also the interlocutors' perceived difficulty in understanding (normally referred to as "comprehensibility")"* (ibid.).

Furthermore, it is noticeable that the role of the 'interlocutor' comes into play only at the A1 and A2 levels in the form of a person who needs to ask questions and encourage or demonstrate the sounds to be imitated. It is not until the B1 level the balance between accentedness and intelligibility becomes consistently introduced as an assessment criterion. The interlocutor role remains thus unclear from this level, which creates the impression that learners need no more support from their instructors (Dahmen, 2019).

The issue of inconsistency in terms of segmental and suprasegmental features of pronunciation has been solved by introducing two specific scales. Individual sounds and prosody are taken into account from the beginning level, and the impression that prosodic elements play an essential role only at higher levels has been eradicated. Nevertheless, inconsistencies still occur. For example, in the scale providing descriptors for segmental competence, the B2 level indicates that learners are able to identify phonological features of unknown words using their prior knowledge, with word stress being given as an example that is, however, an element of the suprasegmental dimension (Council of Europe, 2020, [online]).

Lastly, the original competence descriptors with objectives firmly focusing on the accentedness of the learner's pronunciation faced sharp criticism for being outdated and non-communication-oriented. More specifically, a foreign accent[14] was appointed as the basis for assessing phonological competence for the A1-B1 levels. From level B2 onwards, accentedness receded into the background, and the pronunciation goal was changed to a 'clear, natural pronunciation and intonation' (B2). The wording 'clear and natural' and the A1-B1 level descriptions in which the foreign accent was seen as a deficit indicated that the ultimate learning objective was to achieve the (almost) native-like pronunciation (Dahmen, 2019).

However, the question arises whether it is a native-speaker norm that should be adopted. With the focus being shifted towards communicative competence, modern foreign language teaching no longer stresses the importance of formal accuracy. In terms of pronunciation, it means that speakers are allowed to have a foreign accent as long as their pronunciation is intelligible enough not to impede communication. Besides, Dahmen (2019) suggests that even very advanced learners may still display a perceptible accent, and following the outline of the original scale, such learners could never reach higher levels above B1. This characteristic of the scale is also identified as problematic by one of the raters from Harding's study (2016):

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[14] Dahmen (2019, p. 197; own translation) explains the meaning of a foreign accent "*as the transfer of L1 phonetic and phonological features in L2 pronunciation.*"

[…] I'm not very happy with this term 'foreign accent' which is used in B1 and A2 […], and doesn't then appear afterwards which strikes me as a bit odd because, you know, all of them had a foreign accent so […] if you were to apply these strictly you wouldn't want to give anybody above a B1. So I think that's a flaw within these descriptors (p. 21).

Thus, a shift away from a deficit-based assessment of phonological competence based on the degree of a foreign accent and turning toward the criterion of intelligibility of a learner's pronunciation as a desirable goal was a great desideratum for the new version of the scale (Dahmen, 2019). As a result, the revised phonological scale reflects the paradigm change in teaching by eliminating references to 'native speaker' in the criteria and abandoning the goal of the (almost) native-like pronunciation in favour of intelligibility:

In language teaching, the phonological control of an idealised native speaker has traditionally been seen as the target, with accent being seen as a marker of poor phonological control. The focus on accent and on accuracy instead of on intelligibility has been detrimental to the development of the teaching of pronunciation. Idealised models that ignore the retention of accent lack consideration for context, sociolinguistic aspects and learners' needs (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 133 [online]).

A foreign accent should no longer be perceived as a deficit but should be accepted as a natural phenomenon accompanying L2 speaking. Despite this, accentedness being defined as an "*accent and deviation from a 'norm'*" in the *Companion volume* still appears to be an evaluation factor in the descriptors (ibid.). On the other hand, it is always weighed against intelligibility. For illustration, the C1 descriptor contains the formulation that "*some features of accent retained from other language(s) may be noticeable, but they do not affect intelligibility*" (ibid., p. 134). Even the previously non-existent C2 level descriptor indicates that some accent elements may still be present in the pronunciation.[15]

The A1 descriptor remains problematic because it keeps mentioning that learners at this level should be able to produce only a few learnt words and phrases with pronunciation that is not easy to understand. Yet, there are considerably more can-do descriptors and less negatively

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[15] The concept of pronunciation goal and foreign accent discussed in greater detail in a separate chapter of the work that focuses solely on this subject.

worded formulations in the new scale than in the old one giving the impression of a competence-oriented instead of a deficit-oriented rating scale.

In conclusion, the newly developed scale for assessing phonological competence tackles all the mentioned problematic features and solves them for the most part. Even though the revision represents a vast improvement in comparison to the previous scale, some aspects still need to be refined and made clear, such as the role of the interlocutor across the entire grid, what pronunciation norm is accepted or how much variation (e.g. regional varieties) is allowed.

On the whole, the analysis of the *FEP EE* and the *CEFR* proved that curricular documents contribute to the problem of neglecting pronunciation instruction as other factors. There is no particular emphasis placed on the area of pronunciation, which is alarming considering its vital role in effective communication. Also, the section devoted to this language component is not as extensive as that of other ones. Unfortunately, this might lead teachers to conclude that pronunciation does not need to be cared for. Apart from that, the *CEFR* fails to provide realistic scales and concrete descriptors to guide and encourage teachers and learners "*in the delicate and crucial process of acquiring an appropriate and effective pronunciation of the target language*" (Piccardo, 2016, p. 6). Nevertheless, releasing the volume to the *CEFR* with the revised phonological scale supports the value of intelligible pronunciation as a language aspect worth assessing and striving for.

2.4 Goals of pronunciation teaching and learning

First, the term 'pronunciation goal' has to be clarified. Pennington and Rogerson-Revell (2019, p. 132) define it as the learning target or the level of competence set by the teacher or learner, which the learner aims to reach to interact successfully. Walker (2020, [online]) highlights how essential it is to determine pronunciation goals and know them before the pronunciation work commences. Obviously, setting standards is central to all learning processes, but setting goals and, more importantly, setting realistic and attainable goals is fundamental to effective pronunciation instruction.

Section 3.1 has argued why pronunciation and its instruction matter and why learners should strive to develop good pronunciation skills. Still, the question is *how* good learners' pronunciation skills need to be or what degree of accuracy ought to be expected. In other words, a decision must be made about what goal learners should aim for in terms of pronunciation. It would seem reasonable to assume that the main objective of learning a second language is to

acquire an accent that is as good and accurate as that of a native speaker of the language. But is the development of native-like speech always the desired result of foreign language learning?

As outlined in Chapter 2, goals have shifted in the history of pronunciation teaching. During the Audiolingual period, pronunciation instruction was based on getting learners to imitate target sounds and precisely mimic a native-speaker accent in order to master a perfect, accent-free pronunciation indistinguishable from that of a native speaker. This approach to pronunciation teaching is what Levis (2005) terms the 'nativeness principle' in his seminal paper *Changing Contexts and Shifting Paradigms in Pronunciation Teaching*. He explains that this principle operates on the assumption that the development of unaccented speech is both an attainable and desirable learning and teaching goal.

A significant shift occurred in the 1970s with the advent of more communicative approaches to language teaching, which knocked native speakers off their pedestal. Once the emphasis was shifted away from native speakers as standards of linguistic correctness and the acquisition of native or near-native proficiency receded into the background, an intelligible pronunciation began to be favoured as the ultimate goal within a communicative language teaching framework. This contradictory ideology follows what Levis (ibid.) calls the 'intelligibility principle.'

This notable transition was partly encouraged by the research about age-related differences in pronunciation achievement, supporting common knowledge that young children acquire native-like fluency and phonetic accuracy naturally, more efficiently and easily than older children or adults (Grant, 2014, pp. 139-140; Pennington & Rogerson-Revell, 2019, p. 135). With time, more and more researchers have confirmed that despite the conscious effort adult learners have to exert as opposed to children, the instances where they demonstrate native or near-native pronunciation are exceedingly rare and particularly limited to "*a very small number of highly motivated individuals and to those with special aptitude*" (Derwing & Munro, 2005, p. 384; Grant, 2014, p. 139). The apparent influence of age factor on the ultimate attainment in second language acquisition, notably pronunciation, may be evidence of what Lenneberg (1967) termed a 'critical period'. In 1969, Lenneberg's Critical Period Hypothesis was extended to L2 pronunciation acquisition by Scovel, who argued that there is a critical period after which learners will never be able to pronounce precisely like a native speaker because of neurological changes in the brain that typically have an onset during puberty (Grant, 2014, pp. 139-140; Rogerson-Revell, 2011, p. 16; (Pennington & Rogerson-Revell, 2019, pp.

77-78). Nowadays, there is enough empirical evidence suggesting the impossibility of reaching a native speaker-like competence for the overwhelming majority of foreign learners. This conclusion is especially true for adult learners and those not exposed to an L2-language-rich environment (Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015, p. 7).

The fact that an accent cannot be removed or unlearned at a later age makes the terms like 'accent reduction' or 'accent elimination' seem meaningless. A more appropriate expression of 'accent addition' has been established by Kjellin (1999), who promotes designing pronunciation instruction in a way that does not focus on eradicating one's accent but instead sees the whole process as adding *"a new skill or talent to one's repertoire"* (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p. 174).

Since the quest for perfect native-like pronunciation is futile in most cases, pronunciation instruction will fall short and bring a lot of frustration and disappointment to teachers and learners if a near-native command is taken as the goal (Gilbert, 2008; Derwing & Munro, 2005). As Yoshida (2014, p. 6) puts it: *"Trying to sound like a native speaker is like throwing a ball at a moving target – difficult, frustrating, and likely to fail."* In failing to reach unreachable, learners become easily discouraged and may lose interest in pronunciation as such, which is an undesirable outcome. Luckily, nowadays, more and more language instructors worldwide see aiming for native-speaker performance as unfeasible, leading them to reevaluate the pronunciation goals of their instruction and embrace the approach geared towards intelligibility enhancement.

Not only are the expectations that most language learners ever attain a target-like accent unrealistic, but they also lack relevance and practicality. Abercrombie (1949, cited in Thomson, 2018, p. 17) once wrote that native-speaker perfection in a second language is neither necessary nor desirable for everyone but secret agents and teachers. The point here is that learners do not need to aim this high because such a level of competence is not fundamental to whether an interaction is successful. Thus, teachers and learners should be informed and remember that *"communicative competence does not imply a native speaker-like competence"* (Watkins, 2005, p. 50).

Although it is widely acknowledged today that intelligibility is the gold standard for pronunciation because perfectionistic performance goals are elusive for learners who initiate their L2 study after the age of puberty or learn a second language in the instructed setting, several studies have reported (Brabcová & Skarnitzl, 2018; Derwing, 2003; Nowacka, 2012;

Timmis, 2002) that there are still learners who have a need or a strong desire to speak with perfect native pronunciation and consider it an appropriate goal. The reason is that they associate the concept of accent-free pronunciation with perfection and, in terms of the general British accent, elegance, prestige and sophistication (Brabcová & Skarnitzl, 2018). Teachers must be careful with interpreting such studies because a considerable body of scientific research shows limitations to acquiring native-like speech (Murphy, 2017). It is sometimes argued (Harmer, 2007) that learners should never be discouraged from setting themselves such a high objective. Wells (2005) contends that learners' personal aims and aspirations in language learning should not be ignored. Instead, teachers should respect their learners' motivation and enthusiasm and cater for their individual needs. However, Derwing and Munro (2005, p. 384) take a different view than Harmer and Wells, advocating that:

> Though all learners should be encouraged to reach their full potential, which may well exceed the minimum required for basic intelligibility, it may do more harm than good for teachers to lead learners to believe that they will eventually achieve native pronunciation or to encourage them to expend time and energy working toward a goal that they are unlikely to achieve.

Murphy (2017, p. 18) provides one possible solution to this situation: teachers should help their learners "*gain a realistic understanding of what may more reasonably be accomplished.*" He further points out that "*one of a pronunciation teacher's central roles is to lead learners to better informed [sic] appreciation for what the process of L2 pronunciation learning entails and what it means to be a competent non-native speaker […].*" Grant (2014, p. 149) and Thomson (2014, p. 182) also call for practising ethical pronunciation instruction by informing learners about what is realistic and achievable in a typical classroom setting. For example, Walker (2020, [online]) supports teachers in discussing pronunciation goals with their learners. He claims that such a discussion may raise learners' awareness of an alternative objective which is far more meaningful and attainable. Like Walker, Grant (2014, pp. 149-150) proposes that teachers should clarify pronunciation goals to their learners and set these in partnership with them.

It is vital for teachers to bear in mind that pronunciation is a more sensitive area of language acquisition than other areas, such as grammar and vocabulary, in that it involves modification of accent, which can raise deeply personal issues such as the one of identity. (Rogerson-Revell, 2011, p. 240). Some learners are proud of their nationality and may have

more profound and enduring ties to their home culture and language than others (Grant, 2014, p. 141). It is common for such learners to feel uncomfortable speaking a foreign language and copying a foreign accent (Gilbert, 2008). Speaking with a foreign accent makes them think they are betraying their fidelity to their L1 (first language) community and feel they are transforming their personality and identity. Therefore, these learners may resist adopting L2 (second language) pronunciation patterns and wish to maintain identifiable features of their accent when they speak to express their L1 identity (Brown, 2014, p. 159; Morley, 1991). As L2 perfection may not appeal to all learners, a more appropriate goal of easily understandable pronunciation should be set that allows them to retain unobtrusive traces of their accent and does not threaten but value their L1 and identity instead.

There is one more issue making native-like pronunciation an undesirable target. Morley (1991, p. 449) contends that the very notion of a perfect native-speaker accent is not easy to grasp because it raises more questions than it answers: *"What is perfect?"* and *"Which native speaker are we talking about?"* But other questions arise, such as to what extent learners are aware that non-native speakers may be just as intelligible as native speakers and, sometimes more so, or that a native-speaker accent does not guarantee intelligibility and may even have a detrimental effect on communication (Walker, 2020, [online]).[16]

The notion of intelligibility has been mentioned several times in this work. It has been stated how central intelligibility is in matters of pronunciation and how fundamental it is for successful and effective human interaction. Due to its immense importance, this cornerstone of communicative competence deserves to be scrutinised more closely. Intelligibility is now a well-established idea firmly grounded in pronunciation pedagogy and applied linguistic research, and as a sound teaching principle seems undisputed (Munro, 2011).

The concept of intelligibility[17] as such is not new. In reality, it has a long history and dates back to Professor David Abercrombie (1949), who is often cited for coining the term

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[16] Not only non-native speakers but also native speakers are often ridiculed for their accents. One research revealed that accent-based discrimination persists in educational, workplace and social settings in the UK – especially individuals with regional accents, particularly from the north of England and the Midlands, face mockery, criticism, and singling out based on their accents (Shaw, 2022, [online]).
According to another survey conducted by YouGov in 2014 (Horton, 2014 [online]), which rated British accents based on how attractive or unattractive they are, the Brummie accent (Birmingham) has been ranked as the least attractive accent in the British Isles. The accent was followed by the Scouse accent (Liverpool) and the Mancunian accent (Manchester) regarding perceived attractiveness. On the other hand, the poll identified the Southern Irish accent as the most attractive, followed by Received Pronunciation (RP) and Welsh accents, ranked as the second and third most appealing, respectively.
[17] The notion has been referred to by many writers and has been variously sub-classified. Apart from the term 'comfortable', the qualifiers such as 'functional' or 'overall' have been used in conjunction with intelligibility

'comfortable intelligibility'.[18] He argued that it is sufficient for language learners to strive just for a comfortably intelligible pronunciation and nothing more (Abercrombie, 1963, cited in Tench, 1981, p. 17). Abercrombie proceeded with his argumentation with the following words:

> I believe that pronunciation teaching should have, not a goal which must of necessity be normally an unrealized ideal, but a *limited* purpose which will be completely fulfilled: the attainment of intelligibility (ibid., pp. 17-18; italics in original).

One might impose a question here, why worry about intelligible pronunciation that is comfortable? Is it not enough if someone's productions are just intelligible? Unfortunately, the answer is *no*. Abercrombie (ibid.) also defined in his work what he meant by the word 'comfortably' to pin down its importance as the primary requirement for ensuring efficient and effortless communication between both parts, the speaker and the listener. Conversations cannot be described as comfortable if the listener experiences difficulty understanding someone who makes frequent pronunciation errors. So if the effort required to get the message right is too great because the listener has to ask for repetition or rephrasing the utterance all the time, then, at some point, the listener becomes confused or frustrated and eventually switches off and stops listening (Kenworthy, 1987). This is, again, an upshot neither party wants. So just like Abercrombie once proclaimed, developing a listener-friendly pronunciation that is easy to follow and puts no undue stress or discomfort on the person to whom it is being spoken is an adequate objective to aspire to.

Although 'intelligibility' is a widely embraced term, it is unfortunately just as slippery and vague as the very idea of native-speaker perfection (Morley, 1991). No matter how appealing intelligibility is, it is a complex matter challenging to define. Another issue contributing to its complexity is that it is hard to identify the best means to measure it (Mcdonald, 2002, p. 8). Even the intelligibility researchers who participated in the PSLLT conference 2010 found it arduous to detect the features most impairing intelligibility in the

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(Morley, 1991; Morley, 1999, cited in Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p. 274). There is also so-called 'international intelligibility', which has been proposed to be the pronunciation goal in ELF (English as a Lingua Franca) contexts, i.e. in situations where English is used as a means of international communication among non-native speakers from various L1 backgrounds (Walker, 2014, [online]). Jenkins (2000, cited in Walker, 2005) has put forward a restricted set of pronunciation features which she refers to as the 'Lingua Franca Core' and whose mastery is crucial for safeguarding mutual intelligibility within ELF interactions.

[18] Szpyra-Kozlowska (2015, p. 7) contrasts 'comfortable intelligibility' with 'basic' or 'minimal intelligibility', which she describes as the level of pronunciation which enables "*rudimentary communication but puts a considerable strain on the listener and requires much effort on their part to understand the message.*"

speech samples of two international students and could not reach a general agreement (Koffi, 2013, p. 55).

As depicted, Abercrombie's conception of 'comfortable intelligibility' sees communication as a two-way process considering, apart from the role of the speaker, the listener too. Given the reciprocal nature of the oral interaction, what is intelligible depends purely on the listener. Since no one can be intelligible on their own, it is crucial to ask: To whom should learners be intelligible? Who is to be the judge of what is intelligible? (Rogerson-Revell, 2011, p. 9; Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015, p. 8; Yates & Zielinski, 2009, p. 12). It is more than evident that every listener will not judge the intelligibility of the same speaker equally. Yates and Zielinski (2009, p. 12) list several variables that, to a certain degree, influence the listener's judgements about how understandable someone is. These, for example, include:

- the listener's personal experiences with the speaker's accent;
- the listener's tolerance and attitude towards the non-native speaker and others from the same ethnic group or a similar background;
- or familiarity with the topic that is under discussion.

In an instructed setting such as a classroom, it is teachers and other classmates who judge whether someone's pronunciation is intelligible or not. Regarding foreign language teachers, they do not seem to be the most appropriate judges to make such assessments for one simple reason – they generally have a low threshold of intelligibility resulting from their rich experience teaching other people from the same language background. Very often, teachers grow accustomed to how their learners speak and pronounce and can grasp the meaning of what they are trying to say relatively easily (Tench, 1981, p. 19; Yoshida, 2014, p. 7). However, it is no good when teachers are too indulgent and tolerant towards their learners and their pronunciation inaccuracies. As mentioned earlier, responsible teachers should not set pronunciation goals impossibly high, but the opposite is also true (Yoshida, ibid.). Teachers must remember that what they perceive as intelligible does not necessarily need to be acceptable or understandable to others outside the classroom. What learners genuinely need is to sound intelligible in different contexts and to a broader range of listeners because people in the outside world do not always need to be as patient and sympathetic as teachers tend to be (Macdonald, 2002).

As presented above, intelligibility, instead of accent, has been set as a new legitimate goal of pronunciation pedagogy due to studies showing that only a handful accomplish native-

like performance in a second language, and even that requires exceptional motivation, determination and intensive input. However, the dissemination of such studies was not the only driving force behind the paradigm shift. The increasing emphasis on intelligibility as the main focus of pronunciation instruction has also been fuelled by research providing empirical evidence that there is no straightforward correlation between the constructs of accentedness and intelligibility (Derwing & Munro, 2015, pp. 6-7).

In order to understand L2 pronunciation, it is helpful not to think of it as a single construct. The two prominent empirical researchers in the field, T. M. Derwing and M. J. Munro (1997, 2015), see pronunciation as a multidimensional construct that consists of three interrelated but partially independent components: intelligibility, comprehensibility, and accentedness.[19] The way they differentiate these speech dimensions is summarised in the points below:

- *intelligibility,* the extent to which the intended content of the speaker's message is recognisable/identifiable by a listener; in other words, how much a listener can actually understand of what is being said (Munro & Derwing, 1995; Derwing & Munro, 1997);

- *comprehensibility*, the degree of difficulty involved when interpreting the message, i.e. how much effort a listener must put into following and understanding what the speaker is saying (Munro & Derwing, 1995; 2011; Derwing & Munro, 2015);

- *accentedness*, the strength of a foreign accent, that is, how much an L2 accent diverges from the listener's native pattern/norm (Munro & Derwing, 2011; Munro, 2011; Derwing & Munro, 2015).

In short, intelligibility refers to the actual apprehension of the speech material, comprehensibility to the ease of processing one's L2 speech, and accentedness to the difference in one's productions from those of the listener. After explaining the essential terms, a couple of points still warrant mentioning.

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[19] The notions of 'intelligibility' and 'comprehensibility' were presented in 1985 by Smith and Nelson as part of their tripartite approach to L2 speech analysis. They define the former as the ability to speak in a way that individual linguistic components such as words, phrases or utterances can be recognised by a listener and the latter as "*the listener's ability to understand the meaning of the word or utterance in its given context*" (Smith & Nelson, 1985, cited in Okamura, 2013, p. 16; Smith & Nelson, 1985, cited in Pennington & Rogerson-Revell, 2019, p. 423).

Firstly, there is a common belief that a foreign accent is the source of intelligibility problems and, thus, an obstacle to successful communication. It obviously can be, depending on its degree, but so can a native accent to those unfamiliar with such varieties. The fact is that everyone has an accent, a particular manner or style of pronunciation, including native speakers, who often consider their speech to be standard or accent-free (Munro & Derwing, 2011).

Munro and Derwing's ground-breaking and most widely cited study (1995) examined the interrelationship among the three dimensions of pronunciation. One particularly significant finding emerged from the survey: even L2 speakers with heavily accented productions can be highly intelligible to their interlocutors and carry on all kinds of communication without hindrance. In contrast, strongly accented speech is more likely to affect its comprehensibility and thus may require some cognitive effort from listeners to process it.

The data collected disproved the belief that a foreign accent automatically leads to a breakdown in communication and that one needs to achieve native-like proficiency to be intelligible. Simultaneously, the researchers (ibid.) underscored the findings by stating that there is no need to view a foreign accent as a problem that needs to be intervened, remedied or even erased. It is not wrong to have some degree of foreign accent identifying the country, region, or background the speaker is from as long as they can be effortlessly understood by others.

Secondly, the investigation determined that intelligibility and comprehensibility are more closely related. Despite being linked, Munro and Derwing (ibid.) make it clear that these are two separate dimensions that should not be confused. Unfortunately, the terms are usually not distinguished from one another and are used interchangeably as synonyms to refer to the same thing (Levis, 2006, p. 252). It is not surprising, given that Abercrombie's definition of intelligibility refers to little or no listener effort, which appears to be aligned with Munro and Derwing's (1995) term of comprehensibility representing ease of interpretation.

Thirdly, research findings about the three speech dimensions do not have only different implications for communicative effectiveness but pronunciation practice in foreign language classrooms as well. Since both intelligibility and comprehensibility have proved crucial to communicative success and improvable through formal instruction, they should be the primary goals of pronunciation instruction. In contrast, the dimension of accentedness that has emerged as loosely tied to the two other constructs and irrelevant to second language teaching does not need to be a priority (Derwing & Munro, 2014; Thomson & Derwing, 2014).

Despite an extensive body of research and the updated version of the *CEFR* both promoting adherence to the intelligibility principle as the pronunciation goal, its nativeness counterpart, which puts a foreign accent in a negative light, continues to influence pronunciation teaching practices to date. The nativeness principle has dominated pronunciation in the language curriculum for many decades and has become embedded in schooling so profoundly that it seems impossible to dislodge. A plausible explanation for the nativeness principle to remain alive is that many teachers are unaware of the latest research findings or rely on textbooks that reflect such an approach. There are also surveys like Pištora's (2015), which portrays that Czech schools are not an exception because the traditional ideology of nativeness still governs much pronunciation work. The fact that many Czech teachers keep clinging to the nativeness principle does not stem from their unawareness that it employs largely unattainable and unnecessary things but rather from being unfamiliar with the concept of intelligibility, which should replace the outdated goal of pronunciation instruction. This finding is even more alarming, considering that also the *FEP EE* specifically sets 'the development of sufficiently intelligible pronunciation' as the desired outcome.

2.5 Pronunciation models

No language is uniform; each language differs in various ways and exists in many different forms due to numerous factors, which is true of all aspects of language, not just pronunciation.

Having official status in more than one country, English and German are examples of pluricentric languages. Each country has its own standardised form called a standard or national variety, or simply a standard language. Standard varieties differ in terms of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation and are all widely recognised, codified and equal. Apart from standard languages, there are regional dialects, non-standard variations, that also have independent language systems and norms, including pronunciation ones, but are not always codified (Hirschfeld & Reinke, 2018, pp. 31-32; Skubis, 2017, [online]).

The pronunciation aspect of a variety or a dialect is called an accent. There is not a single English or German pronunciation. On the other hand, both languages show great accent diversity, which should be reasonably considered when teaching pronunciation. Teachers thus face the decision of which accent or accents to adopt as a pronunciation model that will form the basis of pronunciation instruction. This task does not seem easy, and teachers often do not know which pronunciation model to choose, considering the wide variety of accents the languages can offer. Fortunately, analysed sources for this section provide guidelines and decisive criteria to help teachers select the appropriate pronunciation model for their learners.

The previous section has commented on the issue of pronunciation goals and the causes underlying the significant paradigm change. It has been demonstrated that nativeness has given way to intelligibility as the main focus of pronunciation teaching and that the native-speaker level of performance is neither reachable nor necessary. Traditionally, a native model of pronunciation and native-speaker norms were adopted. However, the updated goal of intelligibility does not depend on producing speech identical to a specific native model anymore, which leads to the question of whether native-speaker accents are still relevant and, if not, what they should be replaced with, or whether the choice of a target model should be an issue at all.

Teaching pronunciation, just like the teaching of any other language aspect, necessitates selecting some model for learners to refer to. Learners must have a clear, unambiguous model to guide them in the right direction (Rogerson-Revell, 2011). As Walker (2011, cited in Jarosz, 2019, p. 21 & Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015, p. 16) puts it, *"without a stable model, learners will*

have nothing to base their attempts at pronunciation", which is *"an unacceptable situation."* Essentially, the chosen accent variety is used as a point of reference from which sounds and other pronunciation features are practised and with which pronunciation appropriacy or accuracy is measured. It is important to remember that establishing a particular spoken variety as the primary model for production does not assume that it is exclusively the best and the only correct one; it is a norm that provides a set of standard pronunciation forms for guidance purposes (Rogerson-Revell, 2011, pp. 8; 10).

After highlighting the importance of selecting a pronunciation model, the question is whether native-speaker standards should be adopted. At this point, it is worth pointing out a distinction between a native-speaker *model* and a native-speaker *target* because there is often confusion between them. A native-speaker model *"merely serves as a reference point and does not make any claims about target levels"* (Van den Doel, 2010, cited in Kanellou, 2011, p. 454). With this statement, Van den Doel (ibid.) stresses the need for teachers to realise that employing a native-speaker model does not indicate targeting for a native-like speech, which, as illustrated, is beyond reach for the vast majority of learners. Thus, teachers are still encouraged to adopt a standard native-speaker accent as a model, but they need to keep in mind that the desired outcome is intelligibility (Kanellou, 2011, p. 446). It means they should be able to recognise when learners' productions are comfortably intelligible and should not judge them on the grounds of how native-like their pronunciation is. Also, teachers need to be selective and focus only on the helpful pronunciation features, i.e., those that may lead to misunderstandings and interfere with pronunciation in a way that impedes intelligibility (Hancock, 2020; Walker, 2014, [online]).

Since further information on this topic can no longer be presented generally for both foreign languages as it was until now, it will be divided into two parts, each focusing on the issue from the perspective of the particular language.

2.5.1 Pronunciation model in the context of teaching German as a foreign language

The situation in this context seems to be less complicated and thus will be presented first. In principle, there are three standard varieties of German, i.e. German Standard German (spoken in Germany), Austrian Standard German (used in Austria) and Swiss Standard German (prominent in the German-speaking part of Switzerland). Each variety has its pronunciation standard for which clear rules have been formulated. Since employing one of the pronunciation standards is highly recommended, the question is which exactly it should be (Hirschfeld &

Reinke, 2018, pp. 22, 34-35). Luckily, the decision is simple here because it is broadly agreed that what should be elevated to model status is the pronunciation standard of German spoken in Germany (so-called *Standardaussprache* or *Standardlautung)* (Dahmen & Hirschfeld, 2016, p. 5; Hirschfeld, 2016, p. 11; Švermová & Nečasová, 2019, [online]). The reasons why this particular norm is regarded as an appropriate model for foreign learners are listed below. This pronunciation norm:

- is easily understandable (even when a foreign accent is present) and acceptable in all German-speaking regions;

- closely reflects actual speech and the written standard;

- is clear – the sounds are more distinctly pronounced than in colloquial speech;

- is uniform, i.e. features no or only a minimum phoneme variation;

- is dialect neutral, containing no regional pronunciation forms;

- is used or expected to be used in public/official situations;

- predominates in the vast majority of coursebooks and the accompanying audio materials;

- thoroughly described and codified in general usage and pronunciation dictionaries (e.g. das *Duden-Aussprachewörterbuch, Großes Wöterbuch der deutschen Aussprache)* (Dieling & Hirschfeld, 2000, pp. 13-14; Hirschfeld & Reinke, 2018, pp. 35-36; Malwitz, 2016, p. 16).

2.5.2 *Pronunciation model in the context of teaching English as a foreign language*

English also has a lot of different standard native-speaker accents, which could serve as a pronunciation model. In the past decades, two of them dominated the English teaching scene worldwide – the choice was between Received Pronunciation (RP) as the model for a British variety of English and General American (GA) as the model for an American. The choice of a standard English language, including pronunciation, was resolved by the teaching context and the context in which learners were more likely to interact (Pennington & Rogerson-Revell, 2019, p. 127). Currently, most teachers and learners still opt for these two reference accents, each group for their reasons (Kanellou, 2011, p. 126). In a European context, RP is a favourite accent to be used as a model for production for EFL (English as a Foreign Language) purposes (Ivanová, 2011, p. 94, Przedlacka, 2018, p. 54). The following points summarise arguments speaking in favour of Received Pronunciation:

- RP is recognised as the most prestigious British accent and evokes many positive associations, such as good education, intelligence, and credibility (Machová et al., 2013, p. 47). Many learners studying English as a foreign language in European countries prefer the RP accent to GA as their target model (Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015, p. 55). Finding a learner who fears sounding educated, posh and competent would undoubtedly be an exception because, as Rogerson-Revell (2011, p. 7) remarks, *"adopting such a model gives learners access to the social status and power related with it."*

- RP is unquestionably the most frequently and extensively described English accent and thus is easy to get information about (ibid., Robinson, 2007, [online]).

- Apart from a large number of theoretical descriptions, just as with Standardaussprache, a significant part of instructional materials, such as dictionaries, textbooks and recordings, is based on RP. Being well grounded from the pedagogical point of view, this accent is a practical solution for teachers (Ivanová, 2011, p. 74; Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015, p. 30).

- Similarly to Standardaussprache, RP is a widely comprehensible and regionally non-specific accent displaying no clues to a speaker's geographical background. Trudgill and Hannah (1994, cited in Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015, p. 31) comment on this point as follows:

  […], while RP originated in the south-east of England, it is now a genuinely regionless accent within Britain; if speakers have an RP accent, you cannot tell which area of Britain they come from, which is not the case for any other type of British accent. This means that this accent is likely to be encountered and understood throughout the country.

- Szpyra-Kozlowska (2015, p. 31) observes that the RP accent is well-known and intelligible not only across the British Isles but also on the international level *"due to the BBC channels and […] its use as a pronunciation model in EFL in many countries, particularly in Europe […]."*

However, this accent and its suitability for teaching purposes have recently been put under much discussion, and many objections have been levelled against using RP as a pronunciation model. Since a detailed account of the arguments on this topic and their

subsequent interpretation are beyond the scope of this thesis, only some will be depicted to provide an insight into the situation (for more information, see, for example, Przedlacka, 2008; Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015).

A frequently quoted argument supporting the view that RP is an inappropriate reference model is that only a fraction of L1 English speakers use it. According to Crystal (2022, [online]), only about 2% of the British population speaks RP in its pure form. Based on this, learners have a limited chance to come across an RP speaker, so getting learners to emulate this accent may not serve their communicative needs (Rogerson-Revell, 2011, p. 6).

Apart from that, this accent has been increasingly associated with negative connotations. Regarding personality traits, RP speakers tend to be negatively evaluated for sounding cold, distant, unfriendly, arrogant, unnatural and affected (ibid.). Besides, the British, especially the younger generation of RP speakers, consider the pure version of RP old-fashioned and outdated. As with any other accent, RP has undergone tremendous change and development over time. The traditional RP has been replaced by a modernised version of RP that has incorporated many features of regional accents and, thus, sounds different than it did a few decades ago (Rogerson-Revell, 2011, pp. 6-7; Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015, p. 31). Moreover, the alternative terms such as 'BBC Pronunciation', 'Oxford English' and 'the Queen's English' are outmoded nowadays as the RP accent is no longer restricted to the BBC, Oxford, let alone the Queen and aristocratic circles (Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015, p. 9).

On the grounds of these arguments, scholars (e.g. Rogerson-Revell, 2011) suggest that RP can no longer constitute a feasible pronunciation model for foreign learners and point out that other native accents, such as Irish, Scottish or General American, would provide a suitable alternative because they are easier to acquire.

Nevertheless, it is essential to mention that if an accent declines in status and loses some prestige with time, finding an immediate replacement is not required. In this case, RP is not likely to be replaced as a codified accent, and its above-mentioned assets make this task even more impractical (Przedlacka, 2008, p. 29). Przedlacka (ibid., p. 26) paraphrases Christophersen (1987), who argues that "*[RP] will long continue to serve as a model for foreign learners because any suitable replacement seems to be lacking. In consequence, discarding it might create chaos.*" Trudgill (2001, cited in Jarosz, 2019, p. 21) expressed a pertinent remark on the appropriacy of RP as a model: "*My own response to the old issue of 'why teach RP' is 'why not?'. We have, after all, to teach something.*" Przedlacka (ibid., p. 32) also advocates the

use of RP for teaching purposes, especially its modern updated version, while claiming that *"given the constant updating of the major pronunciation dictionaries, coupled with an awareness of the accent changes from British media, this should be a readily achievable goal which will satisfy the needs and interests of the students."*

2.5.3 Teacher as the pronunciation model

An interesting point has been made by Hancock (2020, pp. 6-7), who claims that teachers sometimes put too much emphasis on choosing an appropriate English accent of reference. He bases his argument on the fact that there are many different influences learners are exposed to in and outside the classroom, so there is no need to make a big deal of it. The variety of influential factors that provide learners with a model is summed up in the following points:

- Outside the classroom, learners nowadays have easy access to a wide range of both native and non-native speakers of English via the Internet, social media and films. Thus, a famous film star, singer, sports celebrity or YouTuber may present an attractive model for language learners to aspire to (ibid., p. 7; Pennington & Rogerson-Revell, 2019, p. 130; Walker, 2014, [online]).

- There are also several models to which learners are subjected in the classroom. Firstly, there are the models available in the teaching materials whose accents form the basis of recordings, phonemic transcriptions and pronunciation notes. As mentioned above, these are predominantly native speakers with prestige accents (Hancock, 2020, pp. 7, 25). Thus, when teachers struggle to resolve which variety of English to present as a model, the textbook teachers have at their disposal, whether mandated or freely chosen, can help them make this decision (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p. 282). However, there is a risk that teachers whose decision merely depends on the textbook might believe that any other variety than the selected one is non-standard, i.e., incorrect (Pištora, 2015).

Secondly, there is the classroom teacher, who, in many cases, will not be a native speaker or speaker with a standard accent, and whose pronunciation is an unavoidable and the most available model for most learners, for some even the only one (Walker, 2014, [online]). While this fact is undisputed, the debate on the proficiency level English and German teachers should achieve in pronunciation brings some contrasting views.

Many teachers worry that due to the non-prestige variety they speak, they are not qualified enough to teach pronunciation, let alone act as appropriate models for their learners. The truth is that only a minority of all English teachers worldwide speak RP or its American counterpart, GA (Hancock, 2020, pp. 24-25). Scholars (e.g. ibid.) who occupy themselves with *English* pronunciation pedagogy generally agree that teachers do not need to speak with a standard accent unless they are widely intelligible. Technically, as Hancock (2013, [online]; 2019, [online]) states, anyone who is an intelligible speaker and, thus, a competent communicator can be a perfect model.

Increasingly, it is becoming recognised that non-native teachers, who share the same first language as their learners, as is usually the case in EFL settings, are in a stronger position than native teachers because they own certain qualities that might benefit pronunciation instruction. For example, having learnt the language and made the journey of learning the target language pronunciation themselves, they can better reflect on the pronunciation difficulties their learners face and pass on personally proven techniques and tricks to help them conquer them (Hancock, 2013, [online]; Hancock, 2020, pp. 3, 7; Marks & Bowen, 2012, p. 10; Walker, 2014, [online]).

Since teachers are advised to provide a natural model and present what they know and typically use, teaching the accent they speak or the accent they have received training in is appropriate (Kelly, 2000; Scrivener, 2011).

Realistically, if non-native teachers have something of a foreign accent, as is often the case, so will their learners if they come from the same linguistic background (Hancock, 2013, [online]). However, non-native teachers should never fail to realise that they provide an aspirational and inspiring model as someone who has attained high levels of intelligibility and comprehensibility and simultaneously preserved their own linguistic identity (Marks & Bowen, 2012, p. 10). Teachers should also not be concerned about their speech being L1-flavoured. If their spoken productions are fully intelligible and understandable, they demonstrate a more realistic and achievable model for learners to embrace (Murphy, 2017, p. 16).

As attractive as it may be for teachers to sound as intelligible as possible and not worry about their non-standard or non-native accents, several small-scale surveys, such as the ones that were conducted in 2013 in a Polish grammar school and 2023 in a Czech lower-secondary school (the results of both have not been published), undermine the arguments above. The responses reveal that learners expect the teacher to have at least near-native pronunciation. In the other case, when the teacher's speech is heavily accented, the teacher is not valued and respected. It is clearly illustrated by the Czech learners of English and their responses collected during an interview.[20] They were asked to comment primarily on their English teacher's pronunciation. As the interview progressed, other questions were asked to gather more information related to the topic. The most interesting ones have been selected and translated into English for demonstration:

Our English teacher cannot speak English. Her pronunciation is terrible; everyone in class thinks so. There is no point in practising pronunciation with her; she should practise herself.

My English teacher has too much of a Czech accent, it used to be funny at first, but it is rather sad today. There are many opportunities today that can help refine our accents. So what is the problem, then?

I do not like my English teacher's accent. The teacher's pronunciation should be top, but unfortunately, our teacher's is not. Thankfully, I know how to speak English right because of the internet.

I do not look up to our English teacher as a pronunciation model because I want to sound sophisticated and native and not feel ashamed.

I am glad we do not practise pronunciation very often. Maybe, the reason is that the teacher's accent is not very good.

I am not eager to imitate our English teacher because she mispronounces some words, and her speech as such does not sound very English to me.

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[20] The learners were ninth-graders whose answers were written down during the lesson within the group interview was conducted. The learners responded in Czech and were informed that their answers would be used only for academic purposes. The discussion was not pre-planned, it was a spontaneous decision of the interviewer to ask about it when teaching pronunciation during a conversation lesson.

As demonstrated, the learners' responses seem brutally honest, showing no mercy to the teacher. They did not hesitate to imitate the teacher's pronunciation even though they knew there was no anonymity and the interviewer and the teacher were colleagues.

The answers clearly suggest that the learners are *very well* aware of the teacher's shortcomings and rated the state of the teacher's pronunciation as insufficient, funny and the one that should be worked on and improved. Also, the pronunciation level of the teacher gives them no motivation or encouragement to participate in any pronunciation activity. The way they expressed their opinions displays that the teacher, whose pronunciation is obviously far from perfect, is not appreciated only as a pronunciation model but also as a teacher. It can be concluded that the learners perceive the teacher's pronunciation as an indicator of how competent, proficient and knowledgable the educator is as a teacher, a pronunciation teacher and a user of the target language in general.

Surprisingly, the opinions of German scholars do not concur with those of English scholars. The former group (e.g. Dahmen & Hirschfeld, 2016) is pretty much consistent in their opinion on teachers' pronunciation attainment level, advocating that teachers should not be able to speak as intelligibly as possible but as close to the standard as possible. Again, this is rarely the case.

To conclude this subsection, a wealth of audio and video material learners have access to nowadays makes high demands on teachers when their pronunciation is compared with the pronunciation of other model speakers. Teachers should be aware of their own pronunciation, and if they do not speak a standard variety or their speech is heavily L1-flavoured, they should come clean about their pronunciation deviations and explain them to learners. However, most importantly, non-native teachers should not content themselves with sounding just intelligible. It should be in their interest to work on their pronunciation skills and aim for native-speaker-like competency because their speech will be heard, imitated, constantly analysed and critically compared.

2.5.4   Productive and receptive skills and language varieties

When teaching and learning L2 pronunciation, a distinction must be made between the two related areas, reception and production, for which different requirements are set. The standard variety as the applicable norm is only one form of pronunciation that learners may encounter in real life. Therefore, to cater for their learners' communicative needs, teachers must also prepare them for the role of listeners and, thus, for encounters with different accents. While using one single accent as a model for imitation is recommended, the requirements for receptive competence are much broader in their scope because, in real-life situations, learners will have to deal with a wide range of accents, including native and non-native ones (Hirschfeld, 2016, p. 14; Hirschfeld & Reinke, 2018, pp. 16, 21; Kanellou, 2011, p. 454). In order to process and interpret them, learners must be provided with proper and sufficient listening practice that will train *their ears to expect variety, [...] to tune in quickly and notice distinctive features of unfamiliar accents*" (Marks & Bowen, 2012, p. 10).

In the real world, learners as listeners are confronted with much more than different native and non-native accents. They are also exposed to changes in pronunciation depending on a situation (situational variation), an emotional state (emotional variation), or an individual (individual variation), which can cause them great difficulty in understanding if they are not prepared for them in class (Dieling & Hirschfeld, 2000, pp. 12-13; Hirschfeld, 2001, pp. 874-875). Supposing the course materials do not include recordings of speakers with various accents and pronunciation styles to listen to, teachers can find ample examples on the Internet to demonstrate this accent diversity (Hirschfeld, 2016, p. 15).

2.6 Pronunciation priorities

As the title suggests, this subsection explores the critical issue of setting priorities for pronunciation teaching and learning. Since different goals have different implications for pedagogical priorities, it is only after an appropriate objective has been selected that the step towards determining pronunciation priorities can be taken (Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015, p. 7; Walker, 2014).

As pointed out several times throughout the thesis, pronunciation goals have shifted historically, and logically, teaching priorities have changed along with them (Darcy, 2018, [online]). Before the shift, when pronunciation instruction was preoccupied with the pursuit of perfect, native-like speech, every pronunciation detail that contributed to the perception of a foreign accent was aimed to be eradicated. In order to help learners acquire a native-like accent, pronunciation instruction exploited the findings of contrastive analysis juxtaposing sound inventories of L1 and L2 and focused almost exclusively on *all* L2 vowel and consonant sounds that were predicted to pose problems for learners of a specific L1. The segmental-based practice took the format of auditory discrimination followed by the articulation of target sounds via minimal-pair drills. Since its excessive concern for pronunciation accuracy and learning sounds in isolation using decontextualised exercises proved frustrating, insufficient and incompatible with the philosophy of the new communicative approach to language teaching, pronunciation instruction was discredited and swept under the carpet for a while (Brinton, 2014, p. 232; Grant, 2014, pp. 2-3).

A renewed interest in pronunciation teaching brought a switch from the traditional narrow-focused to a broader instructional model, encouraging an increased emphasis on the suprasegmental/prosodic dimension of pronunciation that operates above the segmental level and transcends the individual sounds. The shift may be attributed to many empirical studies that argued for suprasegmental supremacy, as suprasegmental aspects help learners increase their overall intelligibility and listening comprehension (Brown, 2014, pp. 6, 8; Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p. 11; Goodwin, 2001, p. 117; Hahn, 2004, pp. 202-203, [online]; Przedlacka, 2018, p. 50; Rogerson-Revell, 2011, pp. 201, 238; Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015, pp. 111, 230). Subsequently, many pronunciation practitioners have demonstrated the communicative value of suprasegmentals in their research showing that discrepancies within the suprasegmental level result in more misunderstandings and breakdowns in communication, sometimes with severe consequences, than those within the segmental one (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p. 163; Gilbert,

2014, p. 111; Munro & Derwing, 1999, p. 285; Pennington & Rogerson-Revell, 2019, pp. 15-16). Studies also support establishing prosody as the top priority, mainly because it yields better improvements in comprehensibility with native listeners who rely on the prosodic cues that act as road signs and help them follow and understand the meaning the speaker is trying to convey (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p. 217; Gilbert, 2008, pp. 2, 6; Gilbert, 2014, pp. 122-123). The prime role of prosodic features can be further supported by the following sentences used by E. M. Foster (2020, [online]) in his novel *A Passage to India*: "*Tangles like this still interrupted their intercourse. A pause in the wrong place, an intonation misunderstood, and a whole conversation went awry.*" Gilbert (2014, p. 133) comments on the importance of melodic aspects for pronunciation pedagogy with her simile: "*Teaching pronunciation without prosody is like teaching ballroom dancing, only the students must practice standing still, without a partner, and without music.*"

Understandably, language teachers do not have the luxury of allotting unlimited attention to pronunciation instruction, so many pronunciation experts urge to concentrate first on the core prosodic system. Other lower-priority and more nuanced topics can be addressed if extra time is left (Gilbert, 2008, p. 42; Gilbert, 2016, p. vi; Grant, 2018, p. 1 [online]). Even though the suprasegmentals carry the bulk of meaning in utterances and are promoted to be the overriding instructional focus, it does not suggest that segmentals should be wholly rejected and omitted from the pronunciation syllabus. Naturally, individual sounds are inescapable components when acquiring a new language, and their instruction has merits.[21] But the point here is that mere segmental work is unsatisfactory if it does not help minimise miscommunication (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p. 33; Derwing & Rossiter, 2003, p. 14 [online]; Keys, 2000, p. 90 [online]).

Many pronunciation specialists (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010; Dieling & Hirschfeld, 2000; Grant, 2018, [online]; Derwing & Munro, 2015; Dickerson, 2010; Murphy, 2017; Rogerson-Revell, 2011) see the value of instruction in both pronunciation dimensions, the segmental and the suprasegmental. They argue that both systems have a place in the foreign language classroom since one cannot be successful without the other. Even though their features may be taught in isolation, perceiving them separately and unconnected is unfortunate. Instead, the two

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[21] Murphy (2017, p. 15) describes the benefits of segmental instruction identified in several studies as follows: "*[…] a focus on segmentals better equips learners to notice their own mispronounced forms and to sustain such awareness over time. It also better positions them to be able to self-monitor and self-correct errors in their production when needed.*"

systems should be viewed as one dynamic system consisting of components that work in concert and interrelate.

As they influence each other and belong together, like two sides of a coin (Dieling & Hirschfeld, 2000, p. 12), both dimensions are *"viewed as mutually reinforcing facets of pronunciation instruction"* (Murphy, 2017, p. 15). The mutual relationship can be further illustrated by Murphy's (ibid., p. 4) explanation that the topics of prosody provide *"the phonological context within which most other pronunciation phenomena occur"* or by Laroy's (1995, p. 39) statement that the suprasegmental elements *"deeply affect the quality of speech sounds (phonemes)"*, which suggests that work on prosody impacts segmentals. Also, the American linguist Dwight Bolinger (1961, in Dieling & Hirschfeld, 2000, pp. 32-33) graphically captured the relationship between intonation (prosody) and articulation (of segments). According to him, the waves are like prosody because they provide the medium for carrying the boat that symbolises articulation (*Figure 3*).
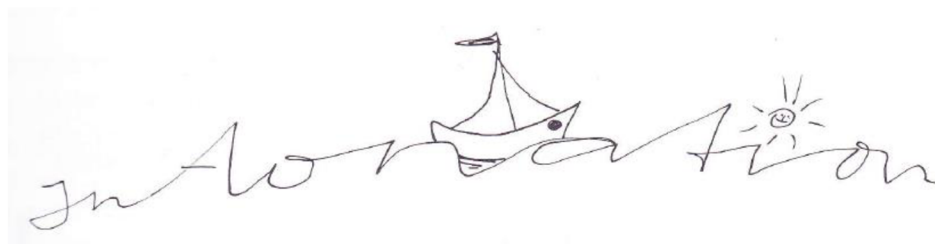
Figure 3 – Relationship between prosody and articulation

With this recognition, the current approach to pronunciation instruction has moved away from the pedagogical dilemma of whether teaching practices should focus on segmentals or suprasegmentals, often referred to as the 'segmental vs suprasegmental debate', towards a less radical view seeking a balance between the two systems. Therefore, the pronunciation syllabus should be well-balanced, including both areas of pronunciation (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p. 11; Goodwin, 2001, p. 117; Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015, p. 138; Yoshida, 2014, p. 8). As Szpyra-Kozlowska (2015, p. 114) explains, the focus of instruction does not reside in whether *all* segmentals or *all* suprasegmentals should occupy the central position in the pronunciation syllabus but in which of these, in particular, should come to the fore. *Figure 4* is a parallel example illustrating the communicative relevance of *both* dimensions for intelligible pronunciation. Just like the juggler cannot do the trick without using their props, a speaker cannot be easily understandable without employing the components of both segmental (vowels, consonants) and suprasegmental (intonation, stress, rhythm) phenomena in their speech (Liu et al., 2022, p. 67).
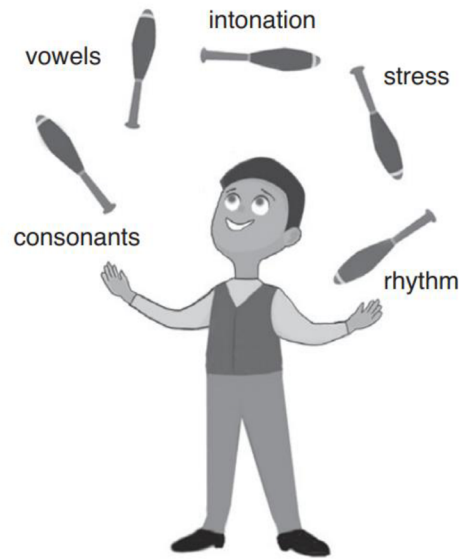
Figure 4 – Importance of the musical and segmental aspects for 'performing' intelligible speech

Since, as already mentioned, class time is at a premium and teaching too much is generally counterproductive, a targeted, more focused approach is needed that will lighten the workload. Hence, teachers must be selective and set priorities (Brown, 2014, pp. 196-197; Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, pp. 182, 305; Munro, 2011, p. 9). In other words, they must decide which features will form the core of pronunciation content and which, on the other hand, "*are relatively unimportant and may be overlooked until a more advanced level*" (Brown, 1991, cited in Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p. 280). Walker (2020, [online]) reminds teachers that "*ignoring certain things deliberately isn't a dereliction of duty. It's strategic planning*".

Given the goal of achieving intelligible, listener-friendly rather than native-like pronunciation, the pronunciation syllabus should highlight those phonetic features that most hamper learners' intelligibility and comprehensibility (Derwing & Munro, 2014, pp. 42-43, 48). According to Rogerson-Revell (2011, p. 246), it is the teacher's job to decide which aspects of pronunciation ensure comfortable intelligibility. However, making teachers fully responsible for this task seems unrealistic and unfair. To a large extent, teachers have been driven by their intuition in determining teaching foci (Levis, 2005, p. 369). Derwing and Munro (2005, p. 389) believe that "*relying on experiences and intuitions sometimes serves teachers well*", but, as Szpyra-Kozlowska (2015, p. 68) explains, it is an unreliable way to approach this issue that "*often leads to contradictory didactic decisions*". Designing a scaled-down syllabus of pronunciation features whose mastery will safeguard intelligibility for a particular L1 learner group is a challenging and demanding task for teachers to perform because it requires a good

understanding of phonology, sufficient training in pronunciation pedagogy, and considerable practice (Darcy, 2018, p. 32 [online]; Derwing, 2018, pp. 326, 329). Nevertheless, the reality is that teachers do not often possess the necessary knowledge and skills to implement this task on their own, so they need help from pronunciation specialists to guide them in the right direction (Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015, p. 69).

Even though various lists[22] pinning down pronunciation priorities that warrant intelligible speech have been formulated, teachers must be cautious in interpreting them (Derwing, ibid.; Szpyra-Kozlowska, ibid.). Such pre-tailored lists can come in useful, especially for those teachers who feel lost, are short of time or teach heterogeneous groups of learners. But in EFL settings, where homogenous classes are standard, they should be taken only as general guidelines, not as the final product for learners to acquire (Hirschfeld & Reinke, 2018, pp. 19-20; Pištora, 2016). Szpyra-Kozlowska (2015, p. 115) rejects the use and usefulness of generalised catalogues setting minimum requirements for ensuring intelligibility on the following grounds:

> [...] proposals for universal pronunciation priorities [...] fail to predict all of the unintelligibility-causing phonetic features [...] since no such general lists can be applicable to all learners with different L1 backgrounds. On the one hand, they provide too much by including phonetic features irrelevant for [sic] many learner groups. On the other hand, they offer too little and are not detailed enough for specific L1 students.

She further argues that the pronunciation content should be established individually for each L1 learner group by considering the differences and similarities between the mother tongue and the target language sound system. Then, she adds that a pure contrastive analysis as a priority-setting strategy is insufficient because even though it can generate a database of

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[22] Universally valid proposals setting priorities for teaching English pronunciation have been put together, for example, by Jenkins (2000), Gilbert (1999), Darcy (2018, [online]) and Szpyra-Kozlowska (2015) (she compiles a set of core pronunciation items having its base in three other priority-setting lists, including Jenkins' concept of Lingua Franca Core). The functional load principle (Catford, 1987) is considered a valuable tool for identifying the focus at the segmental level. According to the principle, phonemic contrasts that distinguish many word pairs have a high functional load and, thus, most affect intelligibility. For this reason, they should merit more attention in the curriculum than those carrying a low functional load (Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015, pp. 69-70). Catford's hypothesis was empirically verified by Munro and Derwing (2006, cited Derwing & Munro, 2014), who found supporting evidence.
Regarding German pronunciation teaching, for example, Hirschfeld and Reinke (2018) or Malwitz (2016) have introduced a list of pronunciation topics (both segmental and suprasegmental) essential to maintaining an intelligible speech.

potential areas of learning difficulty[23], it fails to identify those properties vitally significant for maintaining intelligibility. Following the fact that not every difference is equally important in terms of intelligibility and comprehensibility, this is when researchers should step in and evaluate the communicative impact of individual segmental and suprasegmental differences in the course of solid empirical research. Szpyra-Kozlowska (ibid., p. 90) concludes her section on this topic with a pessimistic comment on the contribution of the recent research: *"In brief, current research has so far failed to provide a fully-fledged, consistent and empirically supported set of phonetic features that could guarantee comfortable intelligible to EFL learners."*

When teachers finish constructing a list of core pronunciation elements suitable for the target learner group, they face one more issue: how to structure them to make the pronunciation instruction as effective and successful as possible. While vocabulary items and grammar structures can be sequenced in various ways (e.g. from elementary to advanced), pronunciation has no such obvious sense of progression because all aspects are needed right from the start. Still, many learners need more than spontaneous correction of their pronunciation errors; they need targeted and systematic instruction to develop adequate pronunciation skills (Hirschfeld, 2016, p. 124; Malwitz, 2016, p. 19).

In general, pronunciation instruction has been governed by two approaches that organise the teaching content in a linear and systematic way. The traditional 'bottom-up' approach goes from the segmental to the suprasegmental level, whereas the opposite 'top-down' processing introduces suprasegmentals first (Pennington & Rogerson-Revell, 2019, pp. 187, 189; Poesová & Uličná, 2019 [online]). As proved, both orientations have their pros and cons. For example, Rogerson-Revell (2011, p. 242) claims that while the traditional way of organising the pronunciation content might be especially beneficial for learners at lower proficiency levels, there is the risk that learners will fail to *"get the bigger picture or to understand how the various elements fit together or interrelate"* (Pennington & Rogerson-Revell, 2019, p. 187). In recent years, pronunciation specialists have increasingly emphasised embracing the 'top-down' strategy that sees the prosodic aspects of the language as the initial or only focus of instruction

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[23] Based on the contrastive analysis, comprehensive lists of pronunciation features that can cause difficulty to Czech learners of German have been created, for example, by Maroušková and Schmidt (2005). As for Czech learners of English, Melen (2010) contrasts the Czech with the English phonological system to show and explain the individual differences in each pronunciation dimension. His work not only helps teachers to understand the problems Czech learners may have but also predict them.

because deviations on the suprasegmental level highly threaten intelligibility and grossly disrupt communication (Malwitz, 2016, p. 19).

Nevertheless, research findings and their implications for pronunciation pedagogy are one thing, and actual practice is another. Many teachers still avoid suprasegmental phenomena even though it is a commonly accepted claim in pronunciation teaching that they contribute more effectively to successful communication than segmentals. The reasoning behind this tendency is twofold. Teachers might either be unaware of the communicative relevance suprasegmentals have or intentionally ignore them. Gilbert (2008, p. 8) explains that teachers find these topics hard to teach because they are *"complicated and full of nuance."* Their justification also stems from the belief that *"textbooks on the subject tend to be intimidating because they present so many rules."* Teachers should never be guided by their preferences when selecting the pronunciation focus. Their eagerness to address what they find easier to teach should be overcome because teaching is not about what is convenient for teachers to teach but about what is effective for learners to learn.

Interestingly, there are also opinions that neither type of instruction is adequate, especially considering the needs of EFL learners. Just like Szypra-Kozlowska (2015, p. 117) discards the relevance of universal lists of pronunciation priorities, she rejects the two general approaches. Instead, she presents a third alternative option to structure the chosen content non-linearly according to learners' needs and the current level of their communicative competence.

It must also be noted whether the curricular documents analysed in *subchapter 3.3* can assist as fruitful instruments for selecting teaching pronunciation priorities. Compared to the *FEP EE* (MŠMT, 2021, [online]), the *CEFR Companion volume* (Council of Europe, 2020, [online]) displays a gradual progression across individual levels in the segmental section ('sound articulation'), going from a limited range of sounds to all the target language sounds. However, apart from this, there is no additional information on which specific sounds should be mastered. The same goes for the *FEP EE,* but the difference is that, in the former case, it is the aim because the concept of the *CEFR* phonological scale is not meant to be language-specific but universal, i.e. directed at all European languages. From this point of view, the documents, as such, do not seem to be extra beneficial for priority-setting purposes.

At this point, one more thing remains to be observed – teachers are principally guided on what to teach and in which order by the textbooks they use for foreign language instruction. Since the textbook authors have already selected and structured the language content, including

pronunciation, the teacher's role in deciding what pronunciation areas should be covered and in what sequence appears somewhat diminished here. However, the role of the teacher is significant in material selection (Poesová & Uličná, 2019, [online]). If teachers have no such option because the teaching material has been assigned to them, they are responsible for evaluating the pronunciation content to determine its appropriacy for their learners. They should examine the textbook and exclude all the exercises that practise the pronunciation of features that are not relevant for the particular learner group. This filtering process should be implemented primarily in the case of international textbooks directed at all foreign learners of different L1s (Pištora, 2016; Walker, 2014, p. 19). Generic coursebooks do not often adequately emphasise the core pronunciation phenomena necessary for learners of a specific L1, which demands that teachers be capable of choosing supplementary material and tailoring the proposed pronunciation content to suit the real needs of their learners (Poesová & Uličná, ibid.)

3. Principles for Effective Pronunciation Teaching & Learning

The sections of the previous chapter have addressed the following crucial issues: why to teach pronunciation, what goal to aim at, what model to adopt, and what features to establish pronunciation priorities. Based on the reasons provided in *Section 3.1* and the research findings supporting the beneficial effects of explicit pronunciation instruction, the dilemma is not whether to teach but *when, how, how much* or *how often* to teach pronunciation.

After identifying the relevant pronunciation content, teachers face the question of how best they can help their learners develop these areas. In other words, they must decide what methods, procedures, tools, and activities they should employ to make their teaching systematic and effective on the one hand and exciting and engaging on the other. It means that it is imperative that teachers be equipped not only with theoretical knowledge of L2 phonetics and phonology or the ability to predict the potential pronunciation difficulties and prioritize those that hinder intelligibility but also with practical skills and a rich and varied repertoire of activities and means to meet the needs of learners in the class.

Since the topic alone would make do the entire thesis, this chapter aims to summarise only the leading strategies and techniques that facilitate the teaching of pronunciation to L2 learners and help construct the process in the way described above. The chapter also supplements the list with a brief commentary. Some of the principles that guide the contemporary pronunciation methodology are the following:

1. **Integration, not isolation**
2. **Contextualisation & communication**
3. **Authenticity**
4. **Perceptual training**
5. **Innovative methods**
6. **Motivation, feedback and assessment**

Ad 1. **Integration, not isolation**

Teachers often justify the tendency to ignore and skip pronunciation by the lack of time. They feel that pronunciation exercises require a great deal of concentration and take a lot of time, which is already very limited. However, a simple solution to this problem is integrating pronunciation into other teaching areas (Hunold, 2012, p. 199; Rogerson-Revell, 2011, p. 248).

A current approach to pronunciation instruction recognises the natural link between pronunciation and other aspects and skills of language use. Based on this, pronunciation should no longer be isolated and treated as a separate entity, just as isolated pronunciation exercises attached to textbook units containing single, unrelated words or sentences should be the practice of the past. Instead, pronunciation should be taught in tandem with other language components and skills to ensure that pronunciation work is systematic, relevant and effective (Grant, 2014, pp. 6-7; Hirschfeld & Reinke, 2012, p. 132; Nagy, 2004, p. 21; Pennington & Richards, 1986, cited in Nunan, 2000, p. 106)

Teachers are encouraged to embrace integrated pronunciation instruction not only to overcome the constraint of instructional time and content but there are also more benefits to this approach. By making pronunciation an integral part of most lessons, addressing it regularly and consistently, and not relegating it to an unrelated five-minute slot at the end of a class, learners will see it as an integrative part of language learning and not as something done to fill the remaining time or just because there is nothing better to do (Kelly, 2000, p. 14; Tennant, 2007, [online]).[24] Even though incorporating pronunciation practice into the existing language syllabus and textbook materials might seem discouraging and intimidating for teachers (Jones, 2018, p. 6), Jones (ibid., p. 4), Pištora (2016), and Keys (2000, p. 93) argue that it can be done relatively effortlessly. Pronunciation can be worked on at any stage during lesson time, as it is ever-present no matter what type of work is being done. It can be easily included in grammar and vocabulary lessons as well as classes that emphasise listening, speaking and reading skill development. Besides, the integration principle does not rely on preparing any extra materials. The textbook content with recordings, audio transcripts and vocabulary lists provides teachers with rich opportunities for targeted pronunciation instruction and practice; they only need to find appropriate pegs to hang it on.

Ad 2. **Contextualisation & communication**

With the advent of Communicative Language Teaching that fostered fluency over accuracy and communicative and meaningful pronunciation practice, traditional forms of phonetic instruction[25] rooted in behaviourism and the audiolingual approach, such as mechanical imitation drills involving exact frequent repetitions of sounds, minimal pairs,

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[24] From time to time, it is recommended to introduce lessons with short pronunciation activities to motivate learners, warm them up and raise their awareness (Dieling & Hirschfeld, 2000, p. 64; Laroy, 1995, pp. 12-13)

[25] Generally, traditional instructional techniques for teaching pronunciation include drilling, imitation, dictation, noticing, ear training, reading-aloud activities, tongue twisters, articulatory explanations, and phonetic transcription (Goodwin, 2014, p. 146; Rogerson-Revell, 2011, p. 23).

minimal pair sentences and dialogues, lost their credibility. They were rejected primarily on the following grounds: Firstly, they were not in tune with CLT principles due to their stilted, decontextualised and non-communicative nature. Secondly, they were criticized for being tiring, boring, and unmotivating, and thirdly, they proved ineffective as they never yielded successful results. However, despite the criticism and CLT being the prevailing teaching methodology today, much of the pronunciation work in contemporary language classrooms remains based on conventional techniques (Biazon Rocha, 2021, [online]; Fraser, 1999, [online]; Jones, 2002, p. 180; Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015, p. 145).

Nevertheless, some pronunciation experts (Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015; Darcy, 2018, [online]) argue that although CLT dominates the foreign language teaching landscape, combining traditional and communicative approaches to pronunciation instruction seems effective as they complement each other.

Besides multiple repetitions being "*pivotal for memorizing lexical items and their retention in long-term memory*" (Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015, p. 146), imitation drill exercises have two more assets – they develop new muscular habits as well as automaticity of sound production that is much needed for fluent speech (ibid., p. 145; Jones, 2002, p. 180).

Also, drills need to meet specific requirements to be genuinely effective and beneficial to learners:

- Under no circumstances can it be the only type of phonetic activity implemented in the classroom, as the mere drill exercises are insufficient and tend to be boring when overused (Biazon Rocha, 2021, [online]; Szpyra-Kozlowska, ibid.).

- Drilling practice should be kept short because few-minute drilling sessions are more manageable and less tedious (Szpyra-Kozlowska, ibid.).

- The teacher should motivate and raise learners' awareness by explaining why such exercises are part of their pronunciation training (ibid.).

- Various drill types should be employed to maintain interest (discrimination, imitation, substitution, transformation drills) (Kráľová & Kučerka, 2019, p. 473).

- Different forms should be used to guarantee quality repetition and vary classroom pronunciation practice. Gilbert (2008) and Stevick (1982, cited in Nunan, 2000) present some ideas on how to alternate the seemingly boring

technique of repetition – some of the variations include a change in order in which learners are asked to repeat, a change in loudness, tone or pitch of voice. When choral and individual repetition is applied, choral and group practice should always precede the individual because *"choral drilling can help to build confidence, and gives students the chance to practise pronouncing the drilled item relatively anonymously, without being put on the spot"* (Kelly, 2000, p. 16).

- Drills, as such, are usually associated with spoken production. However, it is also essential not to have learners repeat right after the recording or the teacher but to allow them the opportunity to listen to the target sounds and template words various times before imitating them. This way, learners are given time to focus their attention solely on what and how something is being said and internalise the sounds (Biazon Rocha, 2021, [online]; Gilbert, 2008, p. 31; Walker, 2018, p. 11).

- Teachers should ensure their learners fully understand the meaning of what they will listen to and repeat. Therefore, asking learners to repeat familiar material is recommended so they do not get distracted by trying to figure out the meaning (Biazon Rocha, 2021, [online]; Darcy, 2018, [online]).

- To be advantageous to learners, drilling natural, authentic material that can be used outside the classroom in real-life communication is crucial (Fraser, 2000, p. 26 [online]; Fraser, 2001, p. 18 [online]).

- Next, pronunciation practice should no longer be based on heavily decontextualised drills that rest on practising sounds removed from the context. Instead, pronunciation exercises should aim to introduce and practise segmental features more meaningfully in the context of words (Walker, 2014, p. 21). However, target sound practice should never be limited to isolated lexical units. More importantly, target sounds should be discussed at the level of larger language structures, such as phrases and whole sentences (Fraser, 1999, [online]), because *"only then does it clear how crucial a sound or distinction is to intelligibility"* (Goodwin, 2014, p. 142).

- Finally, pronunciation instruction should never be restricted to 'listen and repeat' methodologies if the purpose is to enhance learners' fluency, intelligibility and overall communicative competence. Thus, pronunciation drills

should never be seen as a complete replacement for communicative speaking activities but rather as a step toward more meaningful communicative practice (Jones, 2002, p. 180). As Szpyra-Kozlowska (2015, p. 146) suggests, *"it is essential for drilling to be followed by communicatively oriented activities in which the drilled units are employed in meaningful contexts."* Biazon Rocha (2021, [online]) and Celce-Murcia et al. (2010, p. 48) give examples of activities suitable for communicatively-oriented practice – these are, for instance, storytelling, role-plays, drama scenes, discussion, interviews or problem-solving tasks.

The common problem is that learners may achieve high levels of accuracy in articulating discrete segments or words and reproducing prosodic patterns when practised in isolation in class. Yet, when integrating them into natural communication outside the classroom, there is little transfer from practice to spontaneous speech. That is why communicative exercises having learners produce forms in a larger speech context should be integral to pronunciation work (Celce-Murcia, 1987, cited in Dalton & Seidlhofer, 1994, p. 132; Darcy, 2018, p. 22 [online]; Firth, 1992, cited in Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015, p. 146).

Ad 3. **Authenticity**

According to McGrath (2002, cited in Richards, 2015, p. 609), the aspect of authenticity plays a vital role when learning a new language as *"it gives learners a taste of the real world [and] an opportunity to 'rehearse' in a sheltered environment"*. Also, authenticity should always be at the back of the teacher's mind when it comes to pronunciation teaching. In addition to practising pronunciation within general lessons and sounds within context, learners should be exposed to authentic language and *"practise speech that will be directly useful to them in their real lives"* (Fraser, 1999, [online]). To achieve this, teachers need to work with authentic materials, i.e. written and spoken texts from real-world sources, and select these wisely and carefully (Yoshida, 2014, p. 154).

Even though the situation has improved and recordings accompanying textbooks are becoming increasingly more authentic, they still sound artificial, including samples of simplified and somewhat stilted, unnatural, and overly articulated speech material (Brinton, 2014, p. 237; Nunan, 2000, pp. 108-109). A possible reason why the accompanying listening materials lack complete authenticity may be that they are specially scripted just for educational

purposes. Therefore, to prepare learners for the real world, they need to gain experience with the kind of speech ordinarily used in everyday interactions that is fast, spontaneous, connected, displaying accent and voice variety (Derwing & Munro, 2014, p. 50; Hancock, 2012, [online]). As Ur (1987, cited in Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p. 175) points out, *students who do not receive instruction or exposure to authentic discourse are "going to have a very rude awakening when [they try] to understand native speech in natural communicative situations."* Nowadays, thanks to the internet, teachers have easy access to an enormous amount of authentic spoken material that can be exploited for classroom use. For example, teachers can use them to get learners to familiarise themselves with various voice qualities and accents or as a resource for designing practice materials involving learners in real-life situations they might face outside the classroom (Brinton, ibid.; Goodwin, 2014, p. 145). Also, *"instructors now have the opportunity to extend listening practice by assigning homework and by encouraging learners to listen autonomously "* (Field, 2014, p. 102).

Ad 4. **Perceptual training**

Researchers recognise and thus stress the importance of both articulatory and auditory training, as the conclusions of studies suggest that receptive and productive skills are mutually interdependent. So just as pronunciation training can significantly enhance listening skills, targeted perception work automatically improves listening comprehension and facilitates the development of more target-like production (Brinton, 2014, p. 234; Pennington & Rogerson-Revell, 2019, p. 199; Rogerson-Revell, 2011, pp. 24, 217, 253). From a pedagogical point of view, this means that since perception and production go hand in hand, and the former affects the latter and vice versa, it is wise not to *"divorce the two skills but to use them to complement each other"* (Brown, 2014, p. 227).

The basic principle of pronunciation instruction is that what learners cannot perceive, they cannot correctly (re)produce (Lauterbach & Merzig de Kübel, 1995, p. 45). Since correct perception constitutes a prerequisite to successful production, proper ear training should never be underestimated or ignored. Teachers must foster appropriate focused listening practice within their pronunciation instruction to train and re-tune learners' ears so that they can accurately hear selected L2 sounds. Also, ear training aims to help learners establish new perception patterns that enable them to discriminate and identify phonetic forms aurally. Thus, perceptual training should be based on discrimination and identification tasks (Hirschfeld, 2001, p. 873; Hirschfeld, 2011, p. 14; Hirschfeld, 2016, p. 124).

However, it is insufficient to do discrimination and identification exercises without being able to check learners' success. For this reason, teachers should employ tasks where learners are asked to circle, underline, match, sort, complete the gaps, or repeat what they hear so teachers quickly receive feedback on learners' ability to identify or discriminate the feature. Also, learners may be asked to use simple gestures or move their bodies to show their responses (ibid.).

Another general principle that has already been mentioned is that perception always comes before production. First, learners need to learn to perceive the target sounds before being asked to produce them. Some pronunciation specialists (e.g. Cauneau, 1992) advocate humming or murmuring as a transitional step from perception to production. This way, learners can hear, feel and get a sense of stress, the number of syllables, rhythm and intonation. The final step is to move to production training that implements activities from controlled to guided practice over humming to free communicative exercises (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010).[26]

Ad 5. **Innovative methods**

1) *drama, songs and pronunciation games*

All three methods are highly potent and effective techniques for pronunciation instruction if employed correctly. They share the following features (Hirschfeld & Reinke, 2018; Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015):

- they provide an entertaining and attractive form of pronunciation practice;

- their use has a motivational and engaging effect and makes work on pronunciation more enjoyable;

- they enliven the atmosphere, enrich pronunciation classes and break the tedious and monotonous routine of phonetic drills;

- they facilitate the challenging process of acquiring L2 pronunciation;

- they are not intended to introduce new pronunciation features but to practise and automatise the forms that have been learnt.

Apart from the reasons stated above, using songs is often recommended when teaching and learning pronunciation for other reasons – the use of songs:

- supports active and conscious hearing and listening;

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[26] Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) put together a communicative framework for teaching pronunciation with five steps. For detailed information on the individual steps and their description, see *Appendix 2).*

- helps develop active and conscious pronouncing;

- raise awareness of and helps practise a range of features: articulation, pitch, intonation, word stress and rhythm;

- promotes attention and concentration;

- increases communicative competence;

- reduces speech inhibitions (Hirschfeld & Reinke, 2018, pp. 146-147; own translation).

Dieling and Hirschfeld (2000, p. 169; own translation) suggest a series of steps to follow when incorporating songs into pronunciation instruction:

- learners listen to the song;

- learners read and listen;

- the teacher explains unknown vocabulary if necessary;

- the teacher raises awareness of specific pronunciation features;

- learners listen and repeat the text (line by line);

- learners listen and sing along sotto voce;

- learners read aloud;

- learners sing along or sing without music.

There is no doubt that songs offer plenty of language practice, from vocabulary and grammar to listening and speaking practice. However, music is rarely used (especially when teaching learners of teenage age) in an attempt to develop pronunciation skills. Even though songs and raps are increasingly becoming an integral part of textbooks, there is often a lack of adequate methodological support for teachers and information on learning steps and goals, making integrating music into pronunciation instruction challenging (Morgret, 2016 [online]).

Szpyra-Kozlowska (2015, pp. 180-181) mentions a number of beneficial aspects of drama activities[27] that can improve learners' pronunciation and general language competence. The major advantages for both teachers and learners she writes about have been extracted and arranged in the list below:

- learners become more fluent and competent users of the target language;

- learners also become more creative, imaginative and self-confident;

- drama techniques improve both accuracy and fluency;

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[27] Szpyra-Kozlowska (2015, p. 181) explains what is understood by the employment of drama activities in the classroom. Such activities include role-playing tasks in which learners can, for example, act out a poem, a conversation, interviews, short scenes from films, or dialogues written by learners themselves.

- they help learners to overcome their natural fear of using a foreign language in public;
- they help develop natural and confident speech;
- they provide the teacher with plenty of opportunities to diagnose students' pronunciation problems and devise remedial procedures.

Last but not least, pronunciation games, with their playful and competitive nature, show that pronunciation learning can be an exciting and fun experience. Pronunciation games traditionally employed in pronunciation instruction are Bingo, Memory, Dominos, various board, card and competitive team games (Celce-Murcia et at., 2010). Hancock's four-book set titled *PronPack* (2017) cannot go unmentioned. The series contains activities designed to practise pronunciation features (both segmental and suprasegmental) in an enjoyable and unique way. The second book of the series, *Puzzles,* includes puzzle-like activities such as mazes, sudoku, word searches, jigsaws and crosswords. The subsequent book, *Pairworks,* presents contextualised minimal pair discrimination games or guessing games to be carried out in pairs or small groups.

2) *multisensory reinforcement techniques*

In recent years, the idea of adopting a multisensory/multimodal approach to pronunciation instruction has become very popular within the field of foreign language teaching. People learn in different ways and have different learning styles. Teachers cannot change learners' mental learning processes but can incorporate a large variety of instructional procedures to cater to the needs of learners with different learning strategies and modalities (Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015, pp. 144-145).

It means that for pronunciation training be effective, it should activate various senses of perception and employ diverse types of multisensory reinforcement. By appealing to different modes, the tools, techniques and activities can be divided into 'auditory', 'visual', 'tactile' and 'kinesthetic'. In other words, learners should be encouraged to use more than one of their senses when learning L2 pronunciation. The possibility to hear, see, touch and feel pronunciation features not only facilitates the learning process by addressing individual learning but also adds an element of fun to the lesson (ibid., pp. 144-145, 232).

Since ear training and activities that rely on the learners' ability to listen carefully, that is, appeal to the auditory modality, prevail in pronunciation instruction and have already been

discussed, an overview of techniques reinforcing the remaining and often neglected modalities will be presented (ibid., pp. 144, 164).

Visual learners benefit from different kinds of visual support:

- a sound chart, coloured wall charts, and illustrations displayed in the classroom (Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015);

- a vowel quadrant giving a visual image of the tongue position during vowel production (Yoshida, 2014);

- a phonemic alphabet as a visual representation of sounds (ibid.);

- visualisation of sounds with IPA symbols embedded into pictures (ibid.);

- simplified head cross-sectional diagrams showing the vocal tract and articulators (ibid.);

- computer-generated animations, video recordings of speakers pronouncing sounds, and interactive sagittal section diagrams demonstrating the articulation of sounds (ibid.).

- Visual aid in the form of graphic symbols: there are techniques for marking stress, intonation and the length of vowels that make the concepts visual and thus more accessible and tangible to learners:

  ➤ Stressed syllables can be made visually more salient by being underlined, capitalised, raised higher in contour, written in a different font, by an apostrophe being put in front of them, or by a bigger circle or square being drawn above/below them (while smaller ones are used to represent unstressed syllables) (Kelly, 2000; Scrivener, 2011).

  ➤ Dots are often drawn under short vowels in stressed syllables, while dashes are put under vowels to indicate that they are pronounced long (Kroemer, 2015).

  ➤ Contours can be drawn to reflect intonation patterns or arrows to mark the final intonation (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010).

- Shaping long and flexible materials to visualise intonation contours (Yoshida, 2014);

- teacher's own articulators as the model for producing sounds (ibid.);

- teacher's hands, fingers, fists and arms to visualise various aspects of pronunciation (Biazon Rocha, 2021, [online]);

- dental models to help understand how sounds are formed (Yoshida, 2014);

- small pocket mirrors or front-facing cameras of smartphones to check the position, shape, and movement of learners' own articulators (ibid.).

Kinesthetic learners need activities based on active, physical engagement (Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015). The fundamental principles and examples of techniques that reinforce the kinesthetic learning style are as follows:

- Kinesthetic activities involve body movement, physical/hand gestures, and facial expressions (Brown, 2014).

- Specialists recommend including physical actions such as:

  ➢ clapping hands, raising/gliding arms/hands, opening and closing fists, handshakes, high fives, and punching gestures (Jones, 2018; Murphy, 2017; Yoshida, 2014);

  ➢ snapping fingers, tapping on desktops, stomping feet (Yoshida, 2014);

  ➢ whole body movements: standing up vs sitting down (Jones, 2018), standing vs squatting (Walker, 2014), stepping forward (Grant, 2018, [online];

  ➢ nodding heads, raising eyebrows, and widening eyes (Brown, 2014);

  ➢ stretching elastic rubber bands (Grant, 2018, [online]; Yoshida, 2014).

- Such activities can be profitably exploited for practising and internalising rhythm, word stress, or sentence stress (Brown, 2014; Murphy, 2017), and some for demonstrating intonation patterns (Brinitzer et al., 2016).

- Apart from that, speech-synchronised body movements enable learners to create a physical association with a pronunciation feature (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010), anchor the pronunciation of the word mentally, stimulate memory (Kroemer, 2016, [online]), improve the atmosphere in the classroom and have an energising effect on learners (Brown, 2014).

- Also, well-suited activities for kinesthetic learning are games and acting out of various short texts (e.g. poems, dialogues, theatre or movie scenes) (Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015).

Tactile learners prefer the way of learning that requires them to activate the sense of touch.

- One of the well-known tactile techniques involves learners putting their hands on their throats to feel the difference between voiced and voiceless sounds (ibid.).

- Learners can be asked to place their hands in front of their mouths to feel a puff of air when producing aspirated sounds in the initial position.

3) *the use of various tools and gadgets*

Most of the above-listed techniques do not require any special preparation or equipment. However, some do as they need, e.g. thick rubber bands, dental models or pocket mirrors. Skilled pronunciation teachers are always equipped with a variety of objects they can employ to help their learners understand pronunciation better. These are, for example:

- feathers, paper tissues or thin papers (to demonstrate aspiration) (Yoshida, 2014);

- kazoos (humming instruments to train intonation patterns) (ibid.);

- Cuisenaire rods (visual representation of stress patterns) (Yates & Zielinski, 2009);

- musical instruments (triangles, drums, tambourines, claves for practising rhythm) (Yoshida, 2014);

- balls, scarves (demonstration of short and long vowels) (Brinitzer et al., 2016).

Kroemer (2016, [online]) explains that just like activities involving bodily movement, manipulative activities that employ specific objects "force" the learner's brain not to forget the conducting phonetic tasks when speaking. In other words, it makes learners focus not only on the content/meaning but also on the form/pronunciation during speech.

Ad 6. **Motivation, feedback and assessment**

"The most important requirement for acquiring good pronunciation is that you really want it deep down" (Johansson, 1994, cited in Dieling & Hirschfeld, 2000, p. 63). To put Johansson's words differently, if learners want to improve their pronunciation, they must feel a need to do so. Motivation is generally acknowledged as the key to successful language learning because little can be achieved without it. Even though there are some factors teachers

cannot change (e.g. learners' age or aptitude), motivation is something they can relatively simply influence (Watkins, 2005). At this point, the question of what teachers can do to establish or stimulate learners' concern for working on their pronunciation arises. The following points suggest what can be done in this respect:

- Teachers can help their learners recognise and regularly remind them of the importance of pronunciation for successful communication in terms of intelligibility. It can be done by presenting examples of authentic pronunciation 'accidents' to illustrate the negative impacts of having poor unintelligible speech (for more information on this issue, see *Subchapter 3.1*) (Kenworthy, 1987, p. 9; Walker, 2014).

- Teachers can show that pronunciation matters by attaching sufficient class time and space to pronunciation training. Addressing pronunciation regularly and not skipping pronunciation exercises in the textbook helps develop a sense of pronunciation significance and due care for it in learners (Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015, pp. 141-142).

- At the same time, if teachers consider the needs of the particular learner group in setting goals and establishing priorities, it can help build and retain motivation. The same applies to the material teachers decide to employ. If it meets learners' needs (e.g. deals with relevant pronunciation features) and appeals to their interests, if texts and exercises are based on everyday vocabulary and real-life situations and if various creative activities, games and techniques are involved, it is likely to boost motivation and interest and build a positive relationship with a language too (Hirschfeld, 2016; Watkins, 2005).

- In simple terms, learners will take pronunciation work seriously only if teachers will. Teachers can emphasise the significance of pronunciation work by integrating it regularly into their classes. Even if a frequently applied reactive and remedial approach towards pronunciation has its place in the classroom, incidental correction of pronunciation errors is not enough. Pronunciation work must be consistent, well-planned and systematic because only by following a systematic approach to pronunciation can teachers help their learners to make steady progress (Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015). According to her, *"nothing will convince learners more about the importance of good pronunciation than regular and consistent training, carried*

out according to the earlier prepared syllabus." Walker (2014, [online]) also encourages teachers to adopt a sound and fundamental principle to teach 'little, often, integrated'. Walker's idea of how to treat pronunciation in the classroom seems valid as it tackles several issues – as discussed, integration helps solve the problem of insufficient time, and little and frequent pronunciation 'doses' are better than none or whole lessons constructed around pronunciation.

- However, this is not the only approach recommended to be adopted. For pronunciation instruction to be effective, Szpyra-Kozlowska (2015, p. 144) advocates implementing the so-called 'recursive approach', "*in which the training of the same phonetic issues is repeated.*" The importance of revision has been long established in language learning. Mastering L2 pronunciation is a long process, and it takes time, patience and, most of all, a lot of practice and review (Yoshida, 2014, p. 14). Learners need multiple exposures and ample opportunities to hear, repeat and practise the features they find difficult. Based on this, textbooks should ideally address the core pronunciation foci more than once and revise them in spaced intervals to allow learners to review the topics they have learnt before. (McVeigh, 2018).

- Finally, feedback and evaluation must be touched upon as these teaching tools also contribute to the learners' persuasion that pronunciation needs to be worked upon. The value of explicit and corrective feedback should never be underestimated. It is crucial in making instruction successful, which has been demonstrated by several studies and is emphasised by many experts in the field (e.g. Derwing & Munro, 2014; Zielinski & Yates, 2014). For feedback to be beneficial, it needs to be:

  ➢ *explicit* – learners need to know how successful they are in acquiring L2 pronunciation; they need to understand when their speech is intelligible and when it is not and what segmental or suprasegmental aspects they need to modify (Murphy, 2017; Zielinski & Yates, 2014);

  ➢ *selective* – i.e. geared only towards those aspects of pronunciation that can lead to a breakdown in communication (Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015);

  ➢ *targeted* – at learners' needs and related to the pronunciation points being taught at the time rather than those that are not the primary focus of the

particular lesson or have not been covered yet (Yates & Zielinki, 2009; Zielinski & Yates, 2014);

➢ *systematic and consistent* – as with pronunciation instruction, the feedback learners receive needs to occur on a regular basis and should be provided consistently throughout the learning process (Brinton, 2014);

➢ *judicious* and *sensitive* – i.e. feedback should not overwhelm learners, or undermine their confidence, for instance, by constantly interrupting their flow of speech (Zielinski & Yates, 2014);

➢ *positive*, *supportive*, and *friendly* – it is important to remember that giving feedback on pronunciation is not about criticising or judging learners but about helping them to improve (Derwing & Munro, 2015);

➢ provided for *perception* and *production* tasks (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p. 332; Derwing & Munro, 2014).

Feedback can take different forms – e.g. incidental error correction (immediate or delayed), praise and encouragement or regular testing (Szpyra-Kozlowska, 2015). As for the last-mentioned form, teachers can choose from several ways to assess learners' pronunciation development. To test receptive skills, teachers can employ the procedures referred to in *Ad 4.* (e.g. listening exercises based on identification and discrimination) or written tasks, including transcription or dictations (Hirschfeld, 2001, p. 877). For assessing productive skills, activities commonly applied are reading aloud tasks, individual or choral repetition or tasks based on performances requiring more spontaneous speech, such as presentations, dialogues, interviews, or storytelling) (ibid., Henderson et al., 2015, [online]; Hewings, 2004, p. 18). Hewings (ibid., p. 17) also comments on why pronunciation skills should be tested. According to him, since "*tests can provide a sense of achievement (assuming progress has been made!)*", they can have a great motivational effect.

Walker (2014) mentions that learners' motivation can be prominently increased by giving marks for their effort. However, the survey conducted by Machová et al. (2013, p. 56) shows that English teachers do not grade their learners' oral production from the pronunciation point of view because "*they do not view pronunciation as*

suitable for formal testing." Besides awarding marks for good pronunciation, teachers should always praise their learners wildly for every success and progress, even for the little ones. Even a slight improvement is an improvement, and that is what counts. Again, positive reinforcement motivates and can get learners keen on improving their pronunciation.

4. Textbooks

Since the main aim of the practical part is to analyse, evaluate and compare the textbooks of English and German for the lower secondary school level from the phonetic point of view, a chapter devoted entirely to the subject of textbooks, their role in the educational process, and their analysis forms an indispensable part of the thesis.

4.1 Definition of a textbook

Průcha (1998, p. 13; own translation) perceives a textbook as an 'educational construct' by which he means "*a product specifically constructed for educational purposes.*" As such, he sees a textbook as an integral part of at least three different systems fulfilling thus three distinct functions – i.e. it functions as a didactic text, a didactic means and a component of curricula projects (called 'framework educational programmes' in the Czech Republic). To comment on the relationship between textbooks and framework educational programmes (*FEPs*), *FEPs* are a guide and reference point for developing textbooks. They outline the educational goals and objectives at different stages, and textbooks are designed to align with them. *FEPs* provide a framework for selecting appropriate topics and content to include in textbooks, as well as the level of detail and complexity suitable for the learner's age and developmental level. Therefore, *FEPs* directly influence textbook content and quality and ensure learners receive a high-quality education (more information on *FEPs*, specifically *FEP EE*, see *subchapter 3.3*) (ibid., p. 14).

Textbooks are also defined in more detail in a directive issued by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (2013, [online]; own translation):

> Textbooks are considered to be didactically processed texts and graphic materials that enable the achievement of expected outcomes in educational fields set by framework educational programs and the use of thematic areas of cross-cutting themes to develop the personality of the student as defined by framework educational programs and aim to shape and develop key competencies of the students.

4.2 Functions of a Textbook, Pros & Cons of Using a Textbook

Textbooks often represent "*the most tangible and 'visible' component of pedagogy*" and are considered essential and universal components that complete the educational process (Nunan, 2000, p. 227). Their role is quite influential, especially in the language classroom, and

their importance should not be underestimated (Richards, 2015, p. 594). They fulfil multiple functions and satisfy a variety of needs. Průcha (1998, p. 19) states that *"the function of a textbook refers to the role or expected purpose that this didactic means should fulfil in the real educational process"* and classifies the functions from the perspective of the subjects for whom textbooks are intended – i.e. from the view of teachers and learners. The following section depicts the functions respectively but adds others not included in Průcha's description to offer a more detailed list. The list presented below has been constructed by combining the following sources: Derwing et al., 2012; Harmer, 2007; Haycraft, 1978; Hutchinson & Torres, 1994; Ilieva, 2018; Krumm & Ohms-Duszenko, 2001; O'Neill, 1982; Richards, 2015; Sheldon, 1988; Tajeddin & Alemi, 2018; Watkins, 2005.

Textbooks are critical in a teacher's instructional practices. Neuer (1994, cited in Krumm & Ohms-Duszenko, 2001, p. 1029) believes that no other factor affects foreign language instruction as much as textbooks do. Apart from the facilitation role, they shape or, as Tomlinson (2005, cited in Levis & Sonsaat, 2016) claims, control much of what happens in the classroom. In the context of teaching, textbooks:

- are designed to help meet curriculum standards and requirements;
- determine the goals;
- can serve as a primary instructional resource;
- can be (and often are) treated as a syllabus;
- provide structure, organisation, consistency and cohesion within the lesson as well as across lessons;
- determine the sequence of topics and features;
- can provide a framework for lesson planning;
- can function as a tool for testing and evaluation;
- are key providers of content and input in the form of information, explanations, examples, texts, illustrations, exercises and activities;
- represent a presentation, practice and reinforcement material;
- define the teaching strategy and methods;
- decide about the role of a teacher;
- prescribe social forms;
- offer guidance and support (for less-experienced teachers);
- are efficient tools saving time and effort;
- give ideas on what additional resources to employ;

- can be used as a source of inspiration;

- provide confidence and security;

- can supplement classroom instruction;

- can help teachers to stay up-to-date with current research and best practices in their subject area.

Just as in the context of teaching, textbooks play an essential role in the learning process. For instance, textbooks:

- act as a learning aid – i.e. they are designed to support the learning process by presenting the content logically and sequentially;

- provide learners with a degree of order and security;

- instil in learners a sense of progress and achievement as units and books are completed;

- help visualise complex ideas and understand them more easily;

- help organise learning inside and outside the classroom;

- can serve as a reference tool learners can revisit to clarify concepts, review material, and prepare for tests and exams;

- foster learners' autonomy and thus support independent, self-directed learning;

- motivate by their visual appearance and appealing topics and texts.

Most functions summarised above coincide with the advantages and benefits textbooks offer. Nevertheless, arguments against their use and usefulness have been levelled too. The criticism centres primarily around the following views:

- Textbooks often provide a pre-packaged curriculum that may not be tailored to meet the specific needs and interests of a particular class (Richards, 2015; Watkins, 2005).

- Especially international textbooks may not always be directly applicable or relevant to learners' cultural context and local realities (ibid.).

- They can be too prescriptive and controlling, leaving little room for teachers' autonomy, creativity and personalisation (Tajeddin & Alemi, 2018).

- Relying too heavily on textbooks can lead to a passive approach to teaching, lacking experimentation, exploration and using own initiative (Hutchinson & Torres, 1994).

- The unvarying and monotonous structure of units leads to a loss of engagement, interest and motivation (Harmer, 2007).

-   They can become quickly outdated and can be expensive (Richards, 2019, [online]).

-   In terms of language textbooks, they are sometimes criticised for lacking authentic language and not portraying real-life situations (ibid.; Tajeddin & Alemi, 2018).

-   As for pronunciation, they promote the native speaker's competence as the norm (Richards, 2015). Again, textbooks explicitly designed for an international market are generally intended for a linguistically diverse group of learners and thus fall short in addressing learners' pronunciation needs influenced by their L1 (Hirschfeld, 2011).

All the points seem valid, but that does not mean teachers should be discouraged from using textbooks entirely. As depicted, the advantages still outnumber the disadvantages, and what is more, most defects and limitations textbooks display can be overcome. Textbooks remain valuable tools for facilitating the educational process, and their prevalent use in most foreign language classroom settings does not indicate otherwise. Also, the abundance of available textbooks on the market, with new ones being added regularly, serves as unmistakable evidence of their crucial role in language instruction.

By analysing and reviewing textbooks carefully before selecting them, teachers can avoid dealing with their potential shortcomings. If teachers have no such option and must deal with them, they are advised not to follow textbooks blindly and slavishly but utilise them creatively (Harmer, 2007). In order to use textbooks as a resource for creative teaching, teachers can:

-   use them as a starting point for their lessons, not as a replacement for their expertise, creativity, and knowledge;

-   use them selectively, focusing on the most relevant and engaging sections and skipping over material that may be outdated or not directly suitable to the lesson;

-   supplement the textbook by using additional and authentic materials in digital or paper form;

-   adapt textbook content and tasks to fit their learners' specific needs and interests. A teacher's skill in adapting and customising textbook material is crucial for effective instruction (Richards, 2019, [online]).

4.3 Criteria for evaluation of pronunciation component in foreign language textbooks

Since the heart of this thesis is pronunciation, presenting general criteria for the overall analysis of foreign language textbooks is beyond the scope and unnecessary. After examining some universal proposals for textbook evaluation, it was revealed that pronunciation receives no significant attention. The criteria and questions concerning pronunciation are too broad and general and, thus, insufficient for the thesis purposes. Predefined and universal checklists focusing exclusively on evaluating the pronunciation aspect are rare or difficult to find. The only more comprehensive list found was proposed by Szpyra-Kozlowska (2015). According to her, the following factors should be considered when choosing a coursebook to be used as the basis for pronunciation training:

- number of phonetic activities;
- types of pronunciation activities;
- elements of English phonetics covered by the book;
- arrangement of phonetic material;
- satisfying students' pronunciation needs;
- phonemic transcription (ibid., pp. 198-199).

In other cases, the review of studies revealed that researchers often identify their own sets of criteria and questions to analyse teaching materials from the phonetic point of view. These vary depending on the specific research objectives, the context of the analysis, the theoretical framework, and the data being analysed.

For example, Pištora (2016; own translation) set three assessment questions:

1) Do textbooks provide teachers with diverse exercises and activities for practising pronunciation?
2) Do textbooks prioritise segmental aspects of pronunciation over suprasegmental ones?
3) Do teacher manuals provide methodological support for teaching pronunciation?

Derwing et al. (2012, p. 26) created four research questions for their study:

1) How much of the overall coverage in general skills ESL texts is devoted to pronunciation?

2) How consistent is the pronunciation coverage across various textbook series?

3) How do pronunciation foci and task types vary across textbook series?

4) To what extent do teachers' manuals provide support and background information about pronunciation activities?

Having outlined the standard ways in which textbooks are usually evaluated when dealing with pronunciation, it was decided to follow this practice and to use the criteria outlined in this document as guidelines and a source of inspiration for creating a unique evaluative set that could be universally applied to assess the treatment of pronunciation in English and German textbooks.

PRACTICAL PART

5. The Research Project

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we are going to outline the methodological background of our research analysis focused on the pronunciation component of selected textbooks of English and German language used in the Czech educational context. We hypothesise that both the inadequate linguistic content of foreign language textbooks in the form of complex pronunciation activities combined with communicative functions and its disproportionate distribution can have a detrimental impact on students' performance and the importance they ascribe to this part of language competence. The design of the practical part is led by an assumption that detailed knowledge of teaching materials and their content will help implement best practices that, in turn, will allow language learners to achieve the desired outcomes.

As described in the first part of our thesis, teachers often shape their instructional practices on the content of textbooks, especially in the context of foreign language teaching. Hence, it becomes crucial for textbooks to align with the requirements of foreign language learning. We build upon the premise established in the theoretical section of our thesis that textbooks are strong predictors of lesson content, and teachers commonly base their teaching on the content of textbooks, notably when addressing the instruction of foreign language pronunciation. In the following sections, we are going to specify the research objectives and justify the choice of the research instruments (a textbook analysis, a teacher survey, and a learner survey) and the research sample.

The Research Objectives

The general aim of our work is to investigate the opportunities the selected textbooks offer for pronunciation acquisition, to analyse the representation and placement of pronunciation phenomena in the English and German language textbooks and to make a comparison of this representation in the examined textbooks. We also plan to address the consistency of the language content of English and German language textbooks for the lower-secondary level with the criteria of effective pronunciation teaching discussed in the theoretical part of this thesis. The research areas that we attempt to direct our attention to in the textbook analysis section are the following:

- the number of pronunciation activities in the analysed textbooks;

- the amount of attention individual pronunciation topics receive;

- the nature of instructions provided in the exercises and to the teachers.

The sub-objectives of the research comprise the views of language teachers and language learners on various aspects of pronunciation teaching and learning gathered through the administration of two separate questionnaires.

Selected findings will be presented and discussed in three separate sections – for the textbooks, for the teachers and for the learners – with our running commentary attempting to find possible links and correlation among the data. Where pertinent, the results will be presented in the form of graphs.

The Research Survey Participants

The teachers' questionnaires were distributed in a semi-controlled way. It means that we approached teachers we personally know and requested them to complete the questionnaires, and, additionally, we asked these teachers to forward the questionnaires to any other colleagues they may know who would be interested in and willing to participate in our research. In this way, we wanted to get responses only from real language teachers from the Czech Republic who are formally qualified and teach at the lower-secondary level and not anyone who might come across them should we make them freely available online.

As far as the learners were concerned, our initial plan was to give each language class in our school a questionnaire and ask them to complete it. Since, naturally, some pupils could take both English and German classes, there was a risk of obtaining duplicitous results from the same learners, once from the questionnaire filled in an English lesson and once for the same questionnaire filled in a German lesson. It was not feasible for us to check for this duplicity and carry out our research in one school. To prevent spoiling the results, we distributed the questionnaire to English learners in one school (the school the author of this thesis is currently employed) and German learners in a series of different ones. That allowed us not only to keep the results separate but also to gain more responses than one school would allow.

The Questionnaires Design

The survey research consists of two questionnaires, one for language teachers and the other for language learners. Both questionnaires include both open and closed types of questions. Some of the topics naturally overlap in both questionnaires, but we wanted to receive different perspectives from both groups, and that is why it was not our primary goal to make the questions uniform and identical. The questions for the teachers, apart from the portion dealing with the textbooks, mainly wanted to get their insights about the role of pronunciation in relation to other language skills, their teaching practices, and their general attitudes towards pronunciation teaching. As for the learners, it was more important to see their attitude towards pronunciation, how they perceive it in themselves and others, what the regular practices regarding pronunciation in their lessons are, and what they aspire to in terms of accent goals. Both questionnaire data were collected electronically, in the case of the learners during their language lessons, from March to April 2023.

The practical part presents the empirical analysis of the pronunciation activities and resources offered by the coursebooks created explicitly for the primary school market with the objective of addressing the issues discussed in the theoretical part. Textbooks were selected as the subject of analysis because primary schools in the Czech Republic frequently employ them.

5.2 General characteristics of the analysed textbooks

The foreign language teaching market offers an abundant wealth of materials that schools may freely decide to use in their language lessons. The only requirement is that the textbook has the approval clause issued by the Ministry of Education, which certifies the material's suitability for a given type and level of education. Given the sheer wealth of possibilities that the market offers and the limits of this thesis, we decided to adopt the following criteria for textbook selection.

Firstly, we wanted to analyse textbooks geared at older students because we anticipated they would cover a broader range of topics. Secondly, we have decided to narrow our selection to the textbooks published in series, out of which we further selected those volumes that are meant to be used with age groups and *CEFR* levels that correspond to the lower-secondary school level (i.e., 6th to 9th grade of elementary schools). Thirdly, we opted for those materials that are widely used, popular, readily available and that have been around for a considerable period of time. Finally, since we realise that our research is necessarily going to be descriptive

in nature, we decided to utilise our intimate knowledge of the materials and choose those we have worked with, allowing us also to provide the user's experience in forming our assessment.

Therefore, we selected the *Beste Freunde* and *Project* series for the following research. As both series differ in the number of volumes (4 in the *Beste Freunde* series and 5 in the *Project* series), we further decided to limit our analyses to two volumes from each series. It was decided to analyse *Project* series levels 2 and 5 and *Beste Freunde* series levels 1 and 2 to see if and in what ways pronunciation is presented in these textbooks aimed at the beginning and the end of lower-secondary school levels.
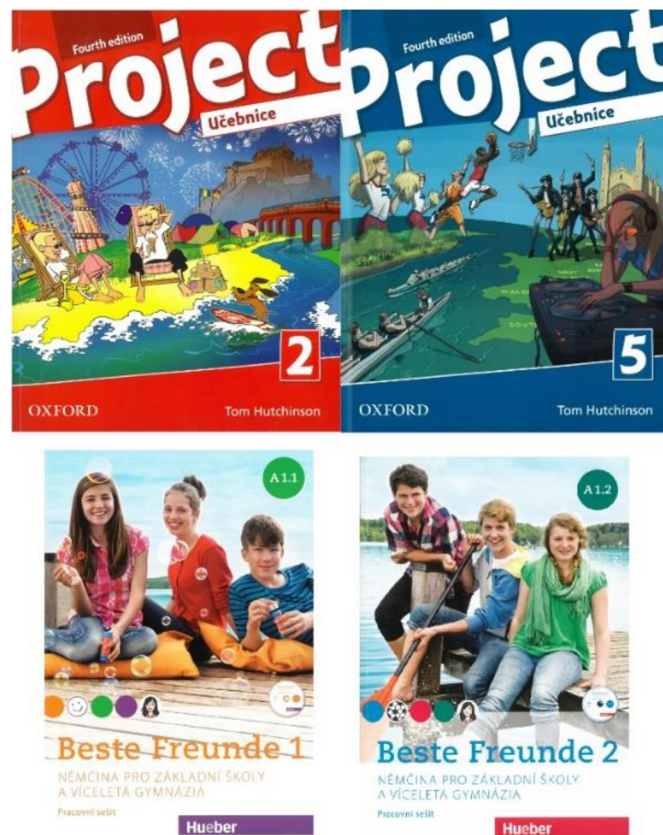
Figure 1 – Front covers of the analysed textbooks

Beste Freunde

We assume the readers will be more familiar with the *Project* series and less so with the German textbook, and thus, we provide a more detailed description of the latter. *Beste Freunde* is a textbook series by a German publishing house Hueber Verlag explicitly designed for adolescent learners of German. It comprises six volumes to guide learners through the A1, A2, and B1 proficiency levels. The first two volumes, *Beste Freunde 1* and *Beste Freunde 2,* tailored to assist learners in achieving the A1 level of proficiency in German, will be analysed as they

are intended for those who start to acquire German at the lower-secondary level. The textbook follows the motto: *"Teenagers learn best from and with each other."* That is why the *Beste Freunde* series incorporates a group of German-speaking teenagers who act as guides throughout the textbook, sharing captivating stories that offer insights into everyday life in Germany. In each module, learners directly engage with the language through the experiences of these protagonists, which adds an element of fun and motivation to the learning process.

The concept of *Beste Freunde* is based on the latest findings in neuro-didactics showing that effective language teaching and the development of a language coursebook depend on two essential factors: direct teacher-student interaction and a wide variety of exercise formats and tasks, combined with a well-balanced mix of different social forms (Grein, 2014, [online]).

The coursebook is structured modularly:

- Each volume consists of three modules.
- Each module starts with an entry page that outlines the module learning objectives and introduces the main protagonist through a text that provides a glimpse of the vocabulary covered in the units.
- Each module comprises three short units, each consisting of four pages. Volume A1.1 includes an extra introductory unit, establishing an initial connection with the new foreign language without focusing on grammar. Simultaneously, it highlights the similarities between German and other European languages, dispelling learners' initial assumption that it is entirely unfamiliar.
- Each unit typically consists of three to four activities designed to create a varied and dynamic learning environment. Each activity includes a new content input introducing vocabulary, grammar, or conversational phrases.
- Vocabulary and grammar are always presented in the coursebook and are integrated with listening and reading exercises. The coursebook provides various tasks to practise new lexical items and structures and includes references to corresponding exercises in the workbook.
- At the end of the module, there are five additional pages. The first two expand on the unit material by incorporating cultural studies and project work. The following double page summarises grammar and phrases covered in the previous three units. The module

concludes with a review page allowing learners to revisit and reinforce the unit content playfully and communicatively.

- At the very end of the coursebook, there is a comprehensive overview of grammar organised by individual parts of speech followed by an alphabetical German-Czech dictionary.

The workbook is designed to complement the coursebook by offering extensive practice material that is closely connected to the tasks in the coursebook via a referencing system. Apart from this system, the workbook exercises are differentiated using pictograms and colour coding. Special symbols are used to indicate, for instance, extra activities, listening exercises, or short writing tasks that learners can subsequently file in their portfolios.

The two areas, grammar and writing training, are especially emphasised in the workbook. Exercises in which students derive grammar rules themselves are highlighted in yellow. The sections providing systematic development of writing skills are marked in blue, and the pronunciation corners at the end of each workbook unit are colour-coded in green. Exercises without any specific markings are consolidation exercises.

Each workbook unit concludes with a vocabulary page summarising the unit's productive vocabulary, which can be listened to on the official website. While traditionally divided into three columns, the content of these columns deviates from the traditional format. The first column lists the unit's essential vocabulary, the second column provides the translation into the native language, and the third column presents contextual sentences for the individual words. Moreover, word families and thematic word groups are organised in boxes, and the page is supplemented with extra information and various learning tips.

After each workbook module, two pages are devoted to developing all four language skills. The final page of each module allows learners to evaluate their understanding and progress in the module. It corresponds to the can-do statements outlined in the *CEFR* and aligns with the learning goals introduced at the beginning of the module in the coursebook.

The workbook appendix encompasses worksheets for pair interactive activities, an overview of German pronunciation phenomena, and the correct answers to the self-evaluation section. The workbook also includes a CD with audio tracks for pronunciation exercises and skill training.

In addition to the workbook, the coursebook is supplemented by other components, such as:

- an audio CD for the coursebook;
- a DVD (film scenes depicting the everyday lives of German-speaking teenagers);
- online support (e.g. online interactive exercises, audio files available for download);
- a teacher's book with practical guidelines and methodological tips for each unit and task, game instructions, numerous copy templates with games and exercises, a test for each unit in two versions, coursebook and workbook audio scripts and answer key.

Project

Project is a five-level beginner's course for young learners first published in 1985 and is currently available in its 4th edition. This latest edition, published in 2014, was chosen for our analysis. The series is published by Oxford University Press and is a well-known commodity among Czech teachers of English as it is one of the most popular textbooks used in Czech elementary schools ever since the 1990s (Vraštilová, 2014, p. 91). Over the years, the series underwent various changes, most noticeably in its visual and graphic form, songs, stories, and comics. However, the approach and pedagogy offer essentially the same structured learning process, which perhaps is also one of the reasons for its popularity since the teachers know what to expect from it. Its author Tom Hutchinson is an experienced teacher, teacher trainer and also the creator of the *Hotline* coursebook series, *English for Life* series, and co-author of *ESP: A Learning-Centred Approach* and *Interface*.

Along with the student book and workbook, each level consists of a teacher's book, class audio CDs, and a DVD with extra activities and supplementary materials. The book is divided into six central units, each of which contains four main lessons. There are also two additional optional lessons for the more proficient students, a section for reviewing and a special project section. The series thus provides enough material for three English lessons a week (the typical pattern in Czech schools). Besides these standard components, the latest edition includes Online Practice and a Student's Book Classroom Presentation Tool, which can be used with the interactive whiteboard if the school wishes to buy it. The publisher states that the whole series covers language proficiency from *CEFR* level A1 (False Beginner) to mid-B1 (Intermediate). In Czech schools, the practice varies; therefore, in some, the series is used starting with Level 1 in the 5th grade (which is the intended order), whereas, in others, it begins

with Level 1 in the 6th grade. In the latter case, the pupils thus finish only the four volumes of the series and level A2.

5.3   Pronunciation activities in the analysed textbooks

For the purposes of this thesis, we first needed to determine which types of exercises and activities are going to be classified as pronunciation oriented. At first, we considered using our own definition regardless of what the textbooks' authors suggest. However, we soon learnt that this would be very time consuming and also, to a certain extent, subjective since the methodologies and approaches used in the textbooks vary, and this would only offer us our assumptions about what pronunciation activity is (or is not) which do not have to overlap with other teachers' views. As we primarily want to know what picture the materials themselves paint, we decided on a much more straightforward approach. Each of the textbooks uses headlines that inform the users what the language focus of each activity is, and we decided to use this self-determination used by the authors of the materials for the classification. Thus, the sections named "Pronunciation" in the *Project* series and "Aussprache" in *Beste Freunde* were the main aim of our analysis.

Having applied these criteria, we were able to conclude that each of the textbooks clearly favours only certain language aspects, and in none of which it is the pronunciation component. The quantitative part of the analysis includes the calculation of activities that deal with pronunciation in each textbook. We first calculated the number of all exercises for all language components in each textbook (*Figures 2* and *4*), after which we determined the percentage of pronunciation activities within the total sum of all activities. What we discovered met our initial assumption that the pronunciation exercises are included disproportionally compared to the rest of the textbook activities. In the case of the *Project* series, they constitute only *7%* in volume 2 and *10%* in volume 5. In *Beste Freunde,* the numbers are a little higher, reaching *14%* in volume 1 and falling to *9%* in volume 2.

Figure 2 shows that Grammar is the clear headliner in *Project 2* Student's Book, followed by the Reading and Vocabulary sections. In *Project 5*, most space is devoted to Reading, closely followed by Listening and Grammar. Only Writing is more scarcely represented than Pronunciation, albeit in *Project 2*, the difference between the two is minimal. *Project 5* then offers six more pronunciation activities than *Project 2*.
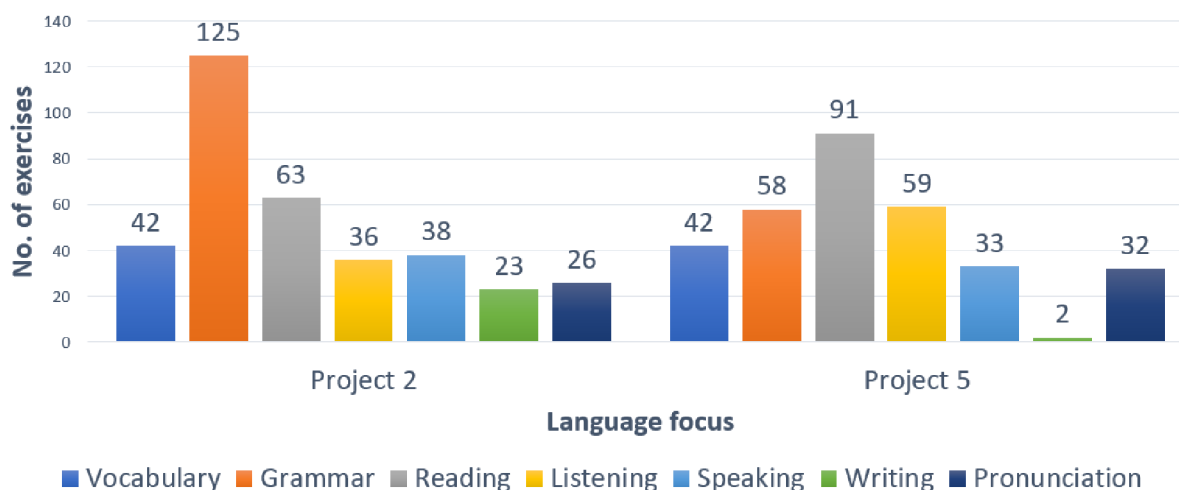
Figure 2 – Project: The number of individual exercises

Furthermore, unlike all the other components, the Pronunciation section in the 4th edition of *Project* is set apart from the rest of the unit and confined to the back of the textbook in a separate section, which may amplify the feeling that it is something not worth focusing on or only when the time allows for it. Even a brief look at its table of contents (*Figure 3*) clearly shows the limited importance given to the pronunciation that is tucked away at the bottom of the page, barely covering one line and very easy to gloss over. All the pronunciation activities are on a two-page spread together with the rest of the optional materials, such as the Your Project section. The headings for each activity do state which unit they should be used in, but they do not indicate how to incorporate it into the main unit material. The only instruction provided to the teacher relating to the sequencing of activities is, e.g. "*We recommend that you use this section after Lesson B*."

The workbook does not offer any stand-alone pronunciation activities, though it includes transcribed pronunciation of the new words in the vocabulary list; neither do the activities available separately online on the website dedicated to the whole series (this offers mainly supplementary grammar and vocabulary tasks).

Unit topic	Grammar	Vocabulary	Communication and skills	Culture, Across the Curriculum, Project
4 Food p44	Countable and uncountable nouns p45 a / an p45 some and any p47 How much / How many? p49 Articles: a / an, some, the p51 a little, a few p51	Food and drink pp44, 46	**Reading** Stone soup p46 **Speaking** Asking for things in a café p45 Acting out a story p47 How many ... do you eat? p49 **Listening** What do people have for lunch? p45 A shopping list p49 Jake's recipe p51 **Writing** What you eat p47 Writing a recipe p51	**Culture** British meals and mealtimes p52 **Across the Curriculum** Geography: food from around the world p53 **Project** Food p55 **Song** Sausages with ice-cream p55
5 The world p56	How questions p56 Comparative adjectives p59 Superlative adjectives p61 as ... as p63	Places p56 The weather p58 Adjectives p59	**Reading** The UK p57 Puzzle p61 **Speaking** Comparing seasons, food, etc. p59 Comparing your life p61 **Listening** The UK p57 Quiz p60 as ... as p63 **Writing** Comparing seasons, food, etc. p59 Comparing people and places p61	**Culture** The weather in Britain p64 **Across the Curriculum** Geography: the USA p65 **Project** My country p67 **Song** Dancing in the Street p67
6 Entertainment p68	going to p69 Adjectives and adverbs p71 have to p73 Making suggestions p75	Types of TV programmes p68 Types of films p72	**Reading** Doctor X p70 **Speaking** What are you going to do? p69 Acting out a story p71 Arranging a meeting p75 **Listening** What are the people going to do? pp69, 75 Why can't Oscar ...? p73 **Writing** The beginning of a story p71	**Culture** The British cinema p76 **Across the Curriculum** Media studies: make your own film p77 **Project** Entertainment p79 **Song** Famous p79
Revision pages	pp18, 30, 42, 54, 66, 78		**Grammar summary**	Workbook p66
Pronunciation	pp80–81		**Wordlist**	Workbook p74
Reading	pp82–87			

Figure 3 – Project 2 (4ᵗʰ edition) – Table of contents

Unlike the *Project* series, which has all the pronunciation in a special section of the Student's Book, the *Beste Freunde* series offers all the pronunciation activities within the workbooks (*Figure 4*). Unsurprisingly, Grammar is again the clear winner when it comes to the number of exercises. However, the rest of the focus is more evenly distributed among the other language components, with Listening and Speaking being the marginalised ones. The Pronunciation is integrated alongside the rest of the activities, constituting an integral part of each unit in the workbook. This approach creates the impression that pronunciation should be worked on and actively addressed rather than skipped when convenient. It was hardly unexpected for us to witness the dominance of grammar exercises in both textbooks, and we infer from it the primacy given to grammar whenever talking about foreign language learning.
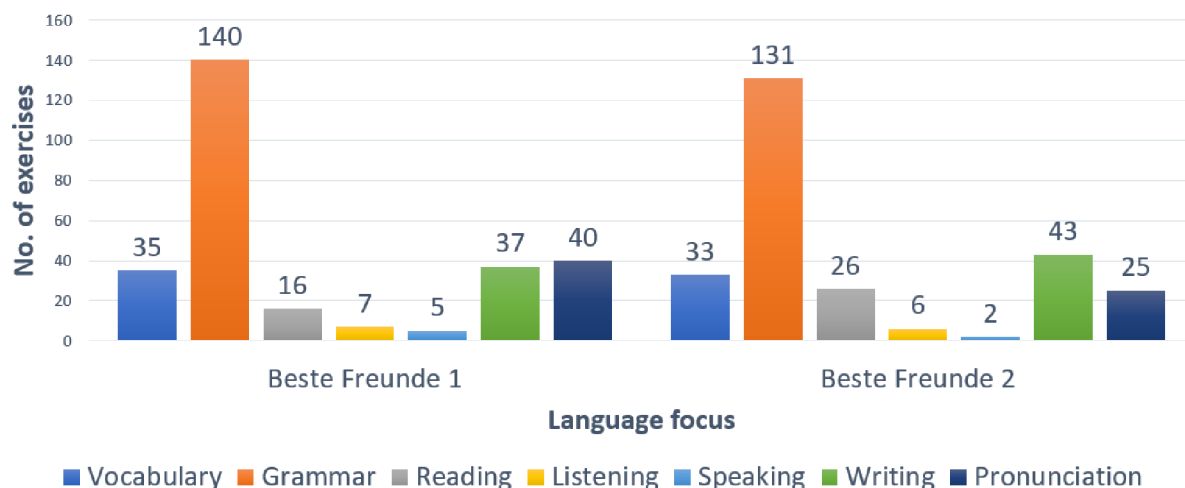
Figure 4 – Beste Freunde: The number of individual exercises

Additionally, *Beste Freunde* provides online pronunciation tasks on its dedicated website – 12 for *Beste Freunde 1* and 10 for *Beste Freunde 2*. Unlike in the *Project* series, here we can see a decreasing trend in the number of pronunciation activities between the individual levels, suggesting a shift from focusing on pronunciation as learners get older.

Let us now present our findings about the focus of pronunciation activities. As discussed in *Chapter 3.6*, both the segmental and suprasegmental aspects of pronunciation should be dealt with in order to achieve the desired goals of pronunciation teaching, i.e., comfortable intelligibility and comprehensibility. Although it is not necessary to focus on both all the time and different levels may require a different degree of attention, it nevertheless creates a significant impression if one is clearly favoured over the other and dominates in the teaching materials. With that assertion in mind, we decided to analyse the pronunciation activities from this perspective as well.

In *Project 2,* most activities practise the segmental features and only three focus on the suprasegmental issues (*Figure 5*). This disproportionate representation is, at least to a certain extent, remedied in *Project 5,* where more activities deal with the suprasegmentals, with some stand-alone exercises even working with the transcription symbols (something which is totally absent from *Project 2*).
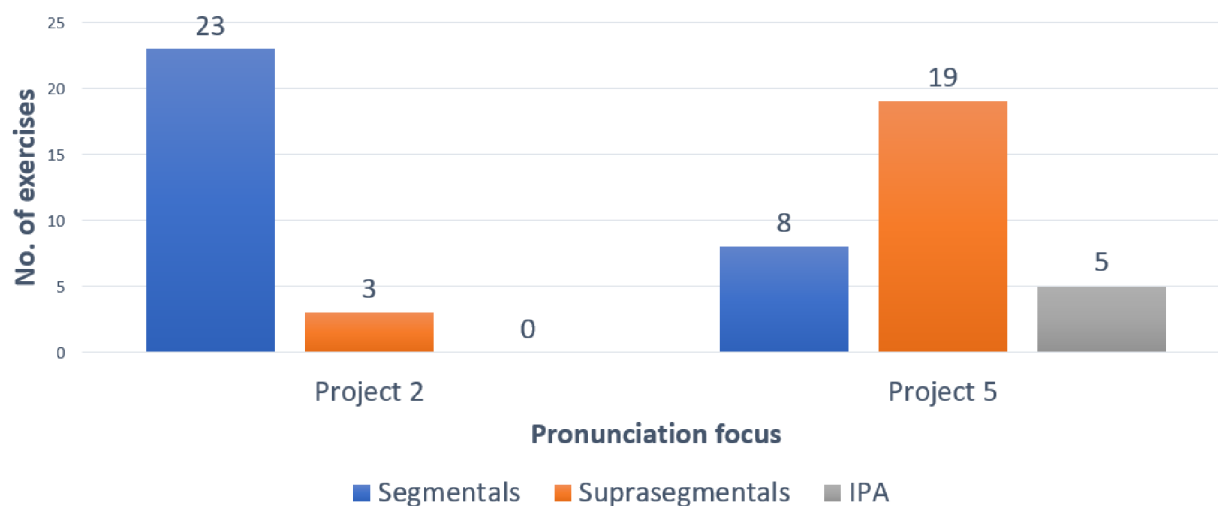
Figure 5 – Project: Pronunciation focus

In *Beste Freunde,* we were able to compare the activities from the workbooks (*Figure 6*) with the supplementary online exercises (*Figure 7*). In the workbooks, we can see that both dimensions of pronunciation are evenly focused on. In the case of *Beste Freunde 1,* this balanced representation is even more underlined by the fact that most of the units include both segmental and suprasegmental issues. This approach is slightly abandoned in *Beste Freunde* 2; however, one can assume that after two years of balanced inclusion in each unit, the impression of the superiority of one over the other would not be that strong.
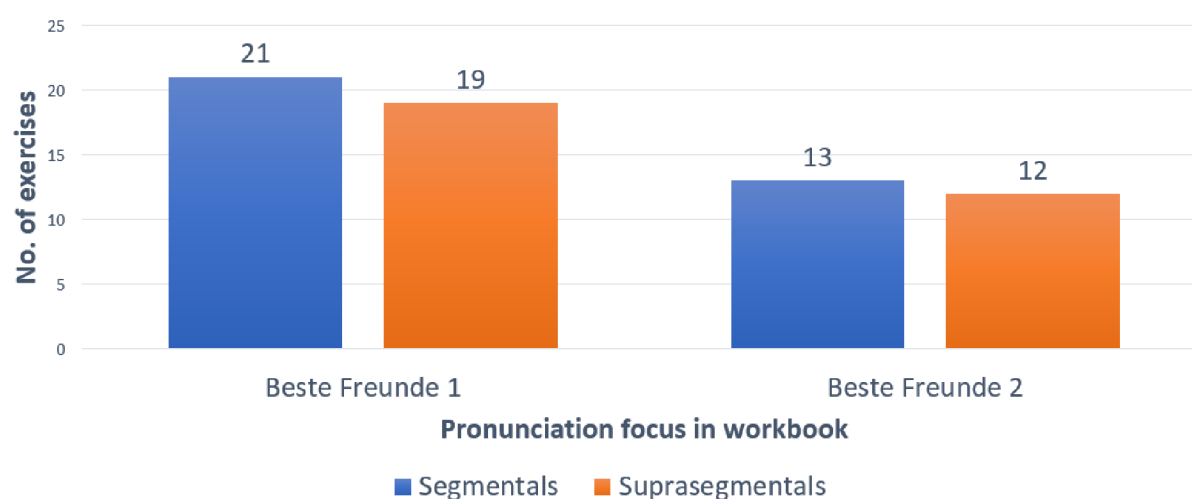
Figure 6 – Beste Freunde workbooks: Pronunciation focus

In supplementary online exercises, the segmentals clearly dominate, which though admittedly not ideal, is fully understandable.
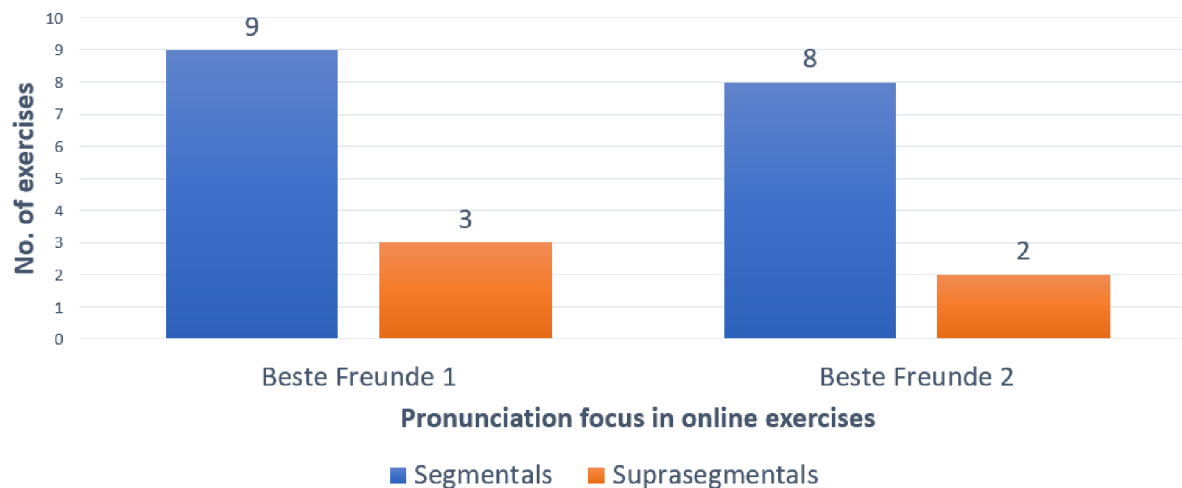
Figure 7 – Beste Freunde online exercises: Pronunciation focus

Why the *Project* series (especially Volume 2) exerts such favouritism of segmentals is not entirely clear to us. Even their selection does not follow any clear pattern. It does, for example, pay attention to the pronunciation of -ed and -es endings, but at the same time, it does not provide any opportunity to practise -ing ending pronunciation (which is a frequent problem for Czech students) even though the grammatical structure that this suffix is needed in is the subject matter of one of the units. In another activity, the /r/ phoneme is supposed to be drilled (again, something that is not usually problematic for Czech students) but only in isolated words and in the form of linking, proving to be much more vital in connected speech. This rather intriguing result could have been generated by the idea that the younger pupils should start with the segmental areas and work their way up to the melody of the language as they progress through the textbook series. While this approach is possible, we do not see it as the most fruitful one.

However, the two series dramatically differ in the concept of the pronunciation activities offered. Without wanting to sound too harsh, we cannot find a better word for the *Project* activities other than lacklustre and, due to its isolation at the back of the book, also secluded. *Figure 8* shows the typical series of activities in *Project 2*. They predominantly focus on sound discrimination and lack any contextualisation with the rest of the unit material. The exercises in *Figure 8* are meant for Unit 2. Unit 2, however, does not offer any reasoning for the discrimination between long and short i-vowel. On the contrary, the whole unit practises present progressive tense, and therefore it would be more suitable if the focus was on the -ing suffix pronunciation or the strong and weak form of the verb "to be". Yet this is not dealt with anywhere in the whole volume. The second principal component of Unit 2 is words describing

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animals, but in these, only two – 'sheep' and 'eagle' – contain a long i-vowel. It is, therefore, no surprise that teachers can fairly reasonably deduce that this very exercise is not promoting anything that the unit worked on, and thus, they can ignore the pronunciation activities altogether.

Figure 8 – Project 2 (4th edition) Unit 2 pronunciation activities

Similarly, *Figure 9* shows a typical suprasegmental activity included in *Project 5*, this time for Unit 6. Although the unit revolves around the formation of reported speech and indirect questions, the pronunciation tasks seem to ignore that utterly. Moreover, the whole unit consists of a number of suitable dialogues and longer texts that linking could be practised on. Still, for some reason, the pronunciation tasks do not use any of that, making the whole set of activities again devoid of the much-needed contextualisation, let alone communicative meaning.

Figure 9 – Project 5 (4th edition) Unit 6 pronunciation activities

Let us now explore similar types of activities in *Beste Freunde*. In Unit 2 of *Beste Freunde 1,* we can also find a sound discrimination activity (*Figure 10*). This time, however, it uses the vocabulary previously used in the unit, and additionally, it also offers instruction on how to produce the different sounds. It also typographically highlights the sounds by bolding them and then uses the same words in a song through which the pupils may practise them. As the pronunciation tasks are integrated directly into the unit, use expressions previously introduced in the unit and provide albeit abbreviated formal instructions, we believe they are more in sync with the guidelines of effective pronunciation teaching as outlined in the theoretical part of this thesis.

19a e – i: **Hör zu und sprich nach. Achte auf kurze (ẹ / ị) und lange (e̱ / i̱) Vokale.**
6 e – i: Poslouchej a opakuj. Dávej pozor na krátké (ẹ/ ị) a dlouhé (e̱ / i̱) samohlásky.

| e → | Sẹssel | we̱r | klẹttern | e̱r |
| i → | nịcht | i̱hr | schwịmmen | Musi̱k |

Krátké e se vyslovuje jako české e, dlouhé e se blíží k výslovnosti í.

b **Sind die Vokale kurz (ẹ / ị) oder lang (e̱ / i̱)? Hör zu und markiere.**
7 Vyslovujeme samohlásky krátce (ẹ / ị), nebo dlouze (e̱ / i̱)? Poslouchej a označ.

| e → | wenn | gern | woher | der |
| i → | singen | wir | spielen | bis |

Musik
Ich singe gern.
Du singst auch.
Er spielt Gitarre.
Sie spielt Saxofon.
Wir machen zusammen Musik.
Toll!

c **Hör noch einmal und sprich nach.**
8 Poslouchej ještě jednou a opakuj.

Figure 10 – Beste Freunde 1 Unit 2 pronunciation activities
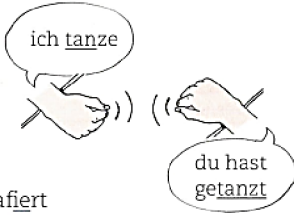
To exemplify the type of suprasegmental activities, we chose Unit 15 in *Beste Freunde 2* (*Figure 11*), which practises the word and sentence stress in connection to the formation of "das Perfekt" tense in German. Logically, the whole unit focuses on this tense from various perspectives, and the pronunciation builds not only on the grammar points and vocabulary introduced previously but also, through doing so, provides the pupils with more time and opportunity to solidify their knowledge of the structure. Additionally, it shows the importance of stress placement not only within individual words but also within sentences, which can considerably alter the meaning of any utterance. Sadly enough, it is frequently glossed over as something the pupils will naturally pick up. The typography again enhances the pupils' focus by underlining the stressed syllables. As a matter of fact, *Project 5* also uses typography in the exercises practising word stress. However, it asks the learners to divide words into columns
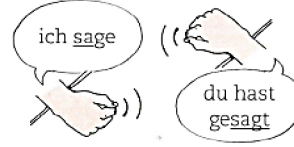
with different dotted patterns, and the vocabulary itself does not offer any hint of where the stress should be placed.

Figure 11 – Beste Freunde 2 Unit 15 pronunciation activities

Another important aspect we wanted to focus on is the kind of support offered to the pupils and, more importantly, the teachers when it comes to pronunciation issues. In particular, we explored the Teacher's Books and to what extent the materials work with the phonetic transcription.

The impact that textbooks as the principal source of instruction have on teachers and the extent to which they dictate the methodology was discussed in the theoretical part. Consequently, if teachers rely heavily on their teaching materials and the materials are skewed by the dominance of certain skills, this may prejudice the whole teaching process and lead to insufficient attention or inappropriate utilisation of presented materials and activities. Then, the picture painted by the Teacher's Books may play a significant role in treating the offered material, although teachers are free to use it in any way they see fit. Not all teachers, however, are experienced, not all teachers have undergone sufficient formal training, and not all teachers are equally comfortable teaching all the skills. In these cases, they closely follow what their materials offer regardless of their usefulness. If textbooks do not provide much, then it is more likely that some aspects will get insufficient or inefficient treatment. The frequent culprit of this tends to be, we believe, pronunciation. Although the *Project* series does not include a lot of meaningful opportunities for pronunciation practice, we can still praise it for containing step-by-step instructions for each pronunciation task. These are brief but easy to follow, even

pointing out potential problems the pupils may have. On the other hand, *Beste Freunde* does not offer much to the teachers in this respect. Admittedly, the pronunciation instructions are included in the exercises themselves (as seen in *Figure 10*). Unfortunately, these do not have any methodological help or guidelines. The only notes on this topic can be found at the beginning of the Teacher's Book, offering very general information and clearly stating the importance of repetition for its pronunciation methodology:

> The pronunciation sections at the end of each workbook are highlighted in green. They take into account both the training of individual vowels and intonation (sentence/word stress, intonation of sentence patterns) and can be used flexibly by the teacher. The main principle in pronunciation exercises is listening and repetition with marking the pronunciation phenomenon. Simple visualisations make it easier for students to learn pronunciation rules imitatively. Short texts, such as rhythmic poems, encourage playful repetition. Where necessary, pronunciation and spelling are linked. Pronunciation sections are connected to interactive pronunciation exercises on CD-ROM.

In the *Project* series, transcription symbols are introduced at the back of Level 1 and then, although used in vocabulary lists, are not included ever again, and pupils are not reminded of them in any systematic way. One can only be doubtful if, in this case, once is enough and whether the pupils would not benefit more if the symbols together with illustrative words were present constantly in all parts of the series, for example, at the back of the workbook or close to the vocabulary lists that use them allowing them to be referenced if necessary. In *Beste Freunde,* each level has the "Aussprachetabelle" which includes all the phonetic symbols, corresponding graphemes, and illustrative words. Where necessary, clear short instructions accompany the exercises offering the pronunciation of individual symbols.

Let us now go back to an interesting finding we made when analysing the *Project* series. As stated earlier, we chose the latest 4th edition for our research. Nevertheless, we were also familiar with the 3rd edition. As a result, we could not ignore the rather significant changes these two editions have undergone in handling pronunciation issues. The first noticeable difference is in the placement of the pronunciation activities. In the 3rd edition, they are an integral part of the individual units, whereas, in the 4th edition, one finds them at the back of the book. The total number of activities in *Project 2* has been significantly reduced in the 4th edition (26 in total) from a fairly generous number of 56 activities in the 3rd edition. That is connected with our next

finding that the 4ᵗʰ edition eviscerated the activities to largely segmental issues, but in the 3ʳᵈ edition, their portfolio is much more balanced and also includes the following topics: intonation in yes/no questions, syllables, syllable stress, stress and rhythm, weak and strong forms, sentence stress, spelling and sound and also phonetic alphabet. All these are missing from the latest edition.

Project 5 offers even more differences. In the 4ᵗʰ edition, the pronunciation activities are pushed to the back of the textbook, whereas in the 3ʳᵈ edition, they are in the individual units, and moreover, some exercises can even be found in the workbook. In the latest edition, there are a total of 32 pronunciation activities available, whereas the previous 3ʳᵈ edition features 46 of them within the Student's Book and an additional 7 in the workbook. The 3ʳᵈ edition also includes all the pronunciation topics covered in the 4ᵗʰ edition and, apart from that, practises the following: diphthongs, short and long vowels, corrective stress, past participle endings, and sentence stress with the passive.

The only subject which seems to be more or less identical in both editions is the instructions for teachers. One can only speculate why such downgrading changes have occurred. Unfortunately, the accompanying resources do not offer any hints at what might have been the reasons for such a significant decrease in the number and scope of pronunciation activities. The number of pages in both editions is virtually identical; thus, the space issues do not seem to be the answer. Also, the other skills do not appear to be greatly altered, requiring more space and time throughout the course. Therefore, it is a little mystery for us why this downgrade of pronunciation has occurred. We understand that the textbooks' publisher needs to generate constant revenue, and it is a universal practice among all publishing houses that general language textbooks are reissued in new editions periodically. Usually, the changes in new editions affect the celebrities included, graphic design or the scope of topics. Rarely, however, do we see that one skill or language component is handed so differently in the new edition unless the whole concept of the textbook is not substantially altered. It will be interesting to browse through any future editions and discover whether this trend will last or if the publisher will come back to the previous, in our opinion, more balanced approach.

This concludes the textbook analysis section. It was not our aim to discuss every single exercise but rather to offer an overall picture of the main approaches towards pronunciation in both series. Therefore we believe that we can now turn to the complementary parts of our research, whose aim is to explore what teachers and learners think about pronunciation.

5.4   Pronunciation views – the teachers' questionnaire

As stated previously, any textbook analysis is predominantly descriptive in nature. Although we have hopefully attempted to accompany it with our own conclusions stemming from the findings, it needs to be acknowledged that presenting only the data from the teaching materials might be slightly one-sided. That is why we decided to include two questionnaires in our research – one for the teachers of English and German, the other for the pupils – to obtain further data about the role of pronunciation in language classrooms from the protagonists of language education. No textbook is the sole source for the educational process, and it is always up to the teacher and, to a certain extent, the learners and their attitudes what ultimately comes out of it. Hence the following pages will include selected findings from the questionnaires asking about the attitudes toward pronunciation teaching and learning (the complete questionnaires, as presented to the respondents, are to be found in the *Appendices*).

Both questionnaires were distributed electronically and were completed for English and German languages separately. Some parts of the questionnaires allowed respondents to freely comment on their answers and provide additional information as they saw fit. Where appropriate for our research, we will illustrate the findings with some of the comments from these sections. Altogether, we were able to gather responses from 16 teachers of German and 13 teachers of English, all formally qualified, the majority of whom have more than five years of teaching experience (63% of German, 77% of English teachers, see *Figures 12* and *13*).
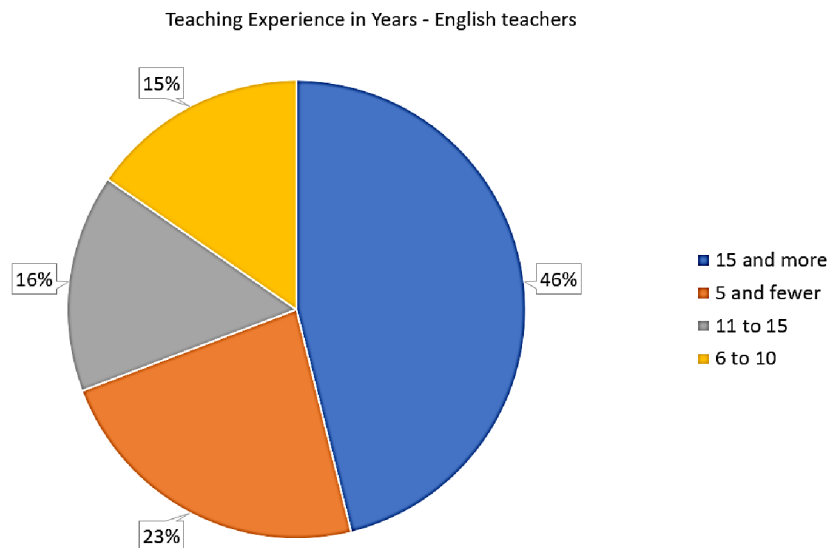
Teaching Experience in Years - German teachers

- 15 and more
- 5 and fewer
- 11 to 15
- 6 to 10
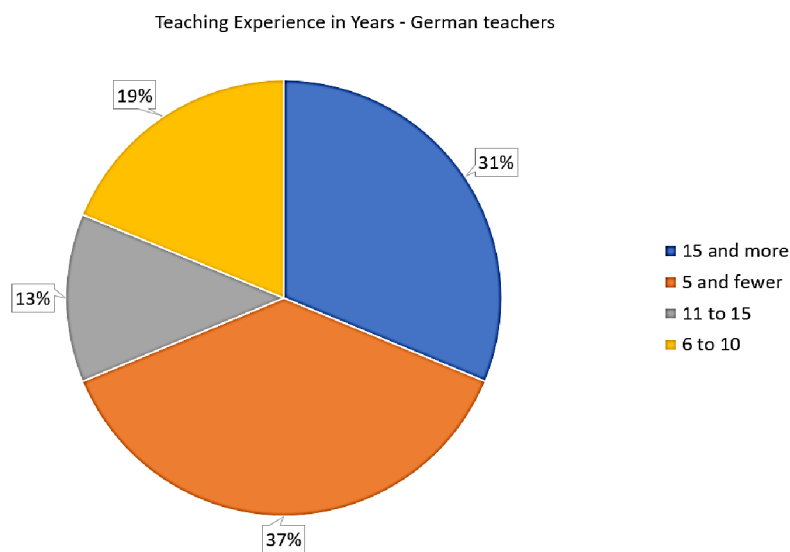
Figure 12 – The length of teaching experience in German teachers

Teaching Experience in Years - English teachers

- 15 and more
- 5 and fewer
- 11 to 15
- 6 to 10

46% 23% 16% 15%

Figure 13 – The length of teaching experience in English teachers

Naturally, the data that were most relevant to our research concerned the language teachers' evaluation of the pronunciation components of the textbooks. To see whether there are going to be any significant disparities in responses, *Figures 14* and *15* show the results separately for each language. It is worth noting here that the majority of English teachers (7 out of 13) use the *Project* series. None of the other textbooks mentioned by the rest of the respondents in this group is used by more than one teacher, and the results, therefore, may be very informative for our research. The situation among the German teachers is more diverse, with still *Beste Freunde* series also being used by the majority of respondents (6 out of 16). The other German textbooks used by more than one respondent were *Klett Maximal Interaktiv* and *Deutsch mit Max*. We see this as further validation of our textbook selection.

The author of this thesis hypothesised that the results will differ depending on the language. Already the first question indicates differences in the evaluation of the resources as the English teachers do not think their textbooks offer enough pronunciation activities or are not sure whether they do. The German teachers, on the contrary, overwhelmingly agree with the presupposition that they do. This result might be connected to the placement of the pronunciation activities in the materials. All German teachers stated that their textbooks include pronunciation within the individual units, and most of them are clearly integrated with the rest of the unit material. On the other hand, the English teachers use textbooks that separate pronunciation from the units (typically *Project* 4th edition), making it easily ignorable and/or omissible. This approach may then lead to the uneasiness about the number of pronunciation activities that our results from the English teachers show because they do not come in such

frequent contact with these activities unless they specifically look for them in their separate sections at the back of the textbooks.
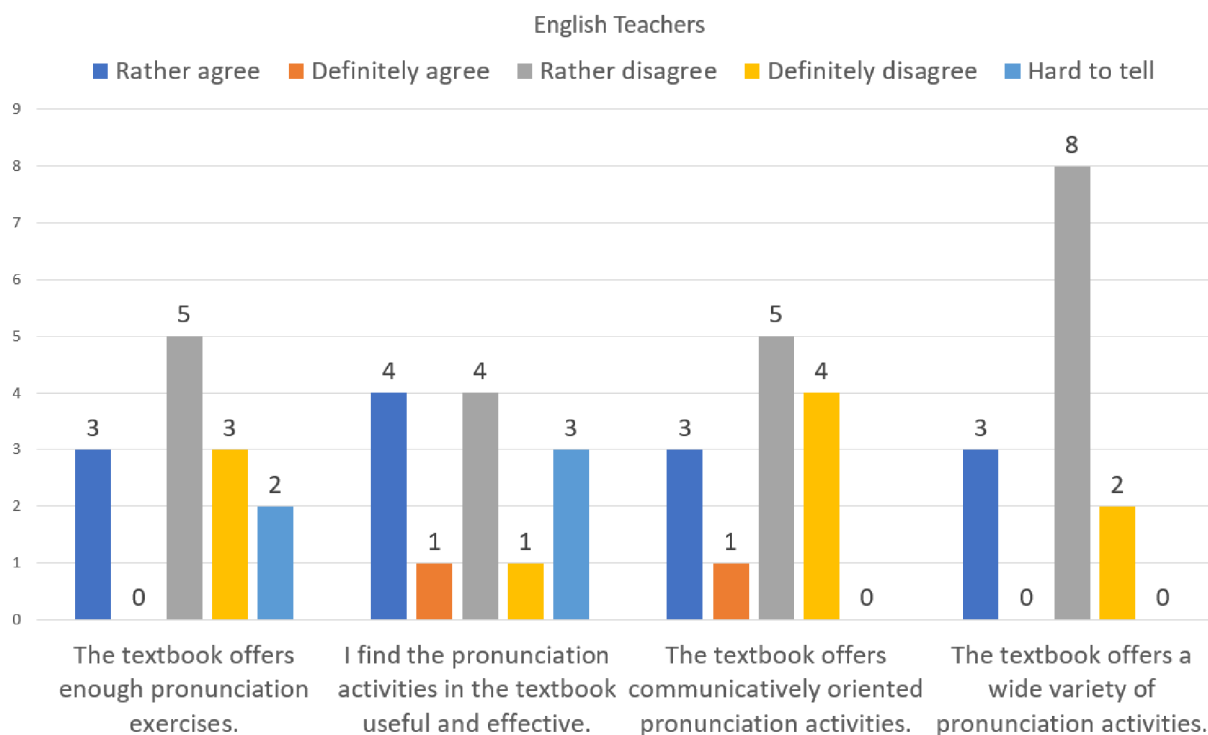

Figure 14 – Textbook evaluation by English teachers

The German teachers also seem to be more satisfied with the effectiveness of the activities than the English teachers. Among the German teachers, the majority rather or definitely agree with their usefulness and effectiveness, and there are no teachers that would strongly disagree with that view. However, among the English teachers, the amount of agreement/disagreement is equal, with only three respondents not sure. Admittedly, the number of those who are not sure is much higher in the German group. On the whole, we can see that the evaluation of the effectiveness is more nuanced, neither completely satisfied nor unhappy. One must bear in mind that each lesson is different, even if we teach the same grade, level and age group. Many factors influence the outcome of the teaching process, making any universal conclusions about the effectiveness of any activity virtually impossible. It will always largely depend on the teacher, the learners, the atmosphere in the group, the desired goals, etc., and therefore the data should not surprise us; on the contrary, we can see them as rather balanced.

Another point tried to probe the question of whether the teachers see the pronunciation activities as communicatively oriented. The clear majority of the English teachers do not agree with this statement, whereas the responses of the German teachers show an even distribution

between agreement and disagreement. This is again something we can assign to the frequent isolation of the activities in the English materials. When a task is separated from the unit and does not clearly build on the material presented in it, it may be challenging to utilise it for communicative purposes. Even more so, like in the case of the *Project* series 4th edition, when the majority of exercises focus on mere repetition, discrimination of two sounds, or work only with individual words and expressions, staying away from dialogues and/or longer stretches of language that require the correct pronunciation for meaningful completion. Even the simple sound discrimination exercise can be used communicatively. For instance, the learners may be asked to follow a certain path based on which of the two sounds they hear, going left when they hear the short one and right when they hear the long one and seeing whether they arrive at the same destination at the end of the activity. If they do not, they may realise that the length of vowels may change the meaning of words, lead to miscommunication, and they internalise the need to preserve this contrast. If the exercise, unfortunately, only asks them to say whether one word has a shorter or longer vowel with nothing else, the communicative importance will be unsurprisingly largely lost to them.
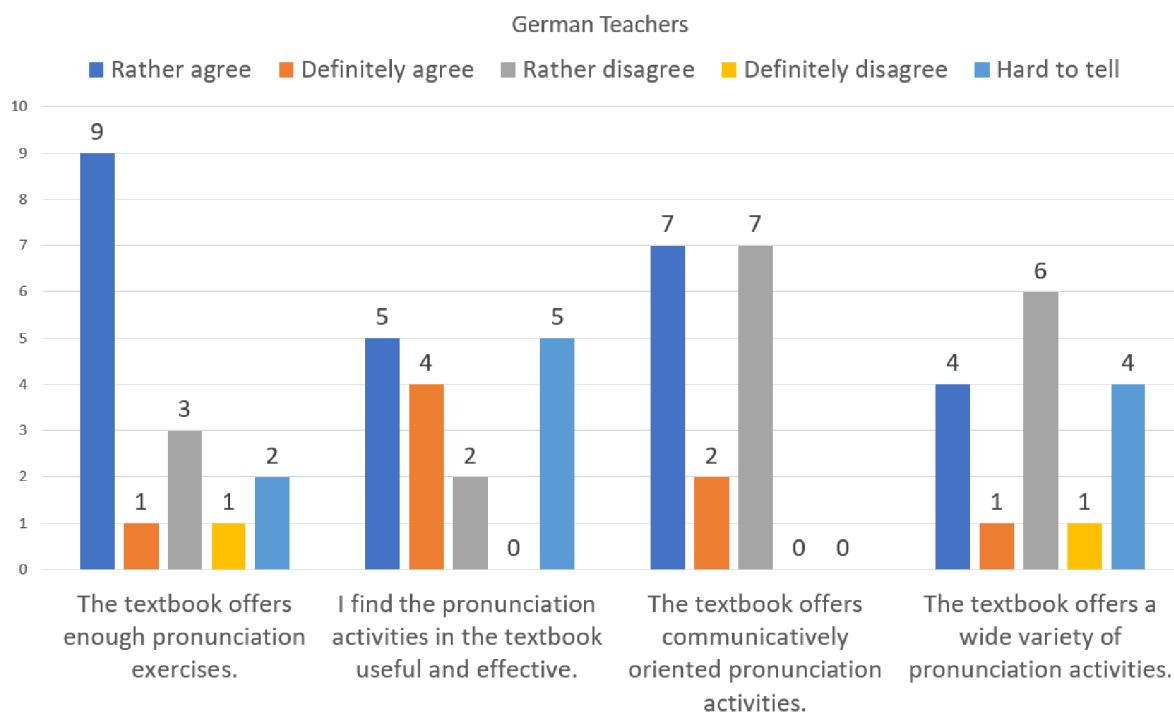
Figure 15 – Textbook evaluation by German teachers

The last graph of *Figures 14* and *15* assesses whether the textbooks offer a variety of pronunciation activities. Confirming our earlier analyses, the English teachers unambiguously disagree. The German teachers are yet again more evenly split between those who agree and

disagree with a significant number of those who are not sure. If the materials do not offer enough activities or their range is limited, it is up to the teachers then to come up with alternatives. We wanted to know whether the teachers are aware of activities other than those in the textbooks, and we can be pleased to state that they do. Most teachers mentioned quite a lot of activities they know of and regularly use. Among the most frequent were stress mazes, various kinesthetic activities, poems, songs, shadowing techniques, using props for visualisation, making recordings/videos and tongue twisters.

Before proceeding to the next part, let us include some responses that the teachers used when asked for an overall assessment of pronunciation in their textbooks, which may further clarify their opinions and the data obtained. We will not include any additional comments of our own since we believe that our positions should be clear from the rest of the text. The following quotes, though provided by individual survey participants, do, however, represent the more frequently mentioned points.

English teachers:

- "Given the receding trend of emphasis on pronunciation, I find these textbooks more than adequate. The pronunciation lessons do not interrupt the flow of the lesson, are not compulsory, and are presented in small chunks so that students are not discouraged."

- "I am not very satisfied because the textbook contains only imitation exercises, which are not enough. The speaker speaks slowly on purpose, so the pupils don't understand common communication anyway."

- "I appreciate that there is a section on pronunciation in the Project, but I would have appreciated it if the emphasis on pronunciation was as important as vocabulary, i.e., the textbook provided more exercises."

German teachers:

- "Insufficient. Outdated methods – repetition, insufficiently explained phenomena, lack of clarity."

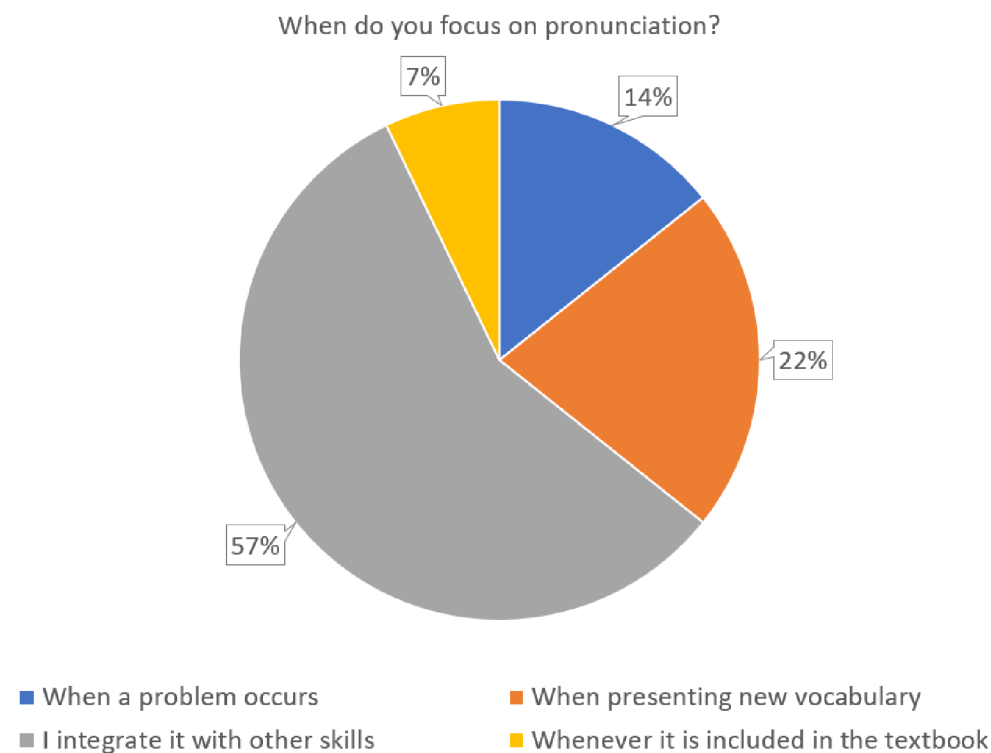- "Exercises are ordered in a weird way."

- "The pronunciation exercises in the textbook are well suited for Czech pupils whose mother tongue is not far from German; nevertheless, it is necessary to pay attention to some pronunciation aspects – and the textbook deals with them well."

English teachers

15%

85%

■ Yes ■ No

German teachers

19%

81%

■ Yes ■ No
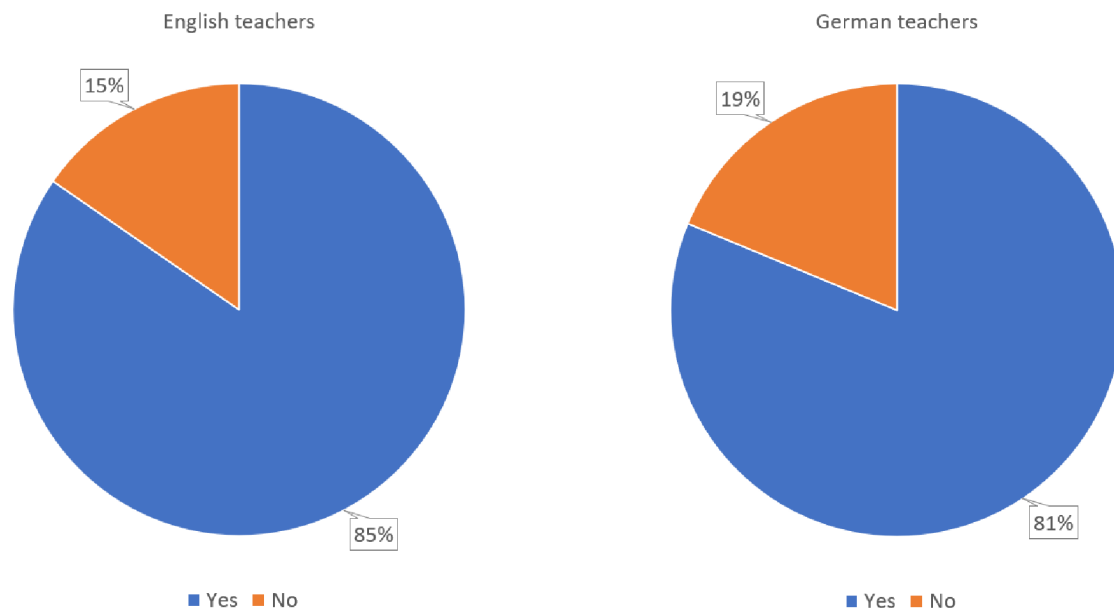
Figures 16 and *17* – The importance of pronunciation teaching

Let us now explore the respondents' general views on pronunciation teaching more closely, starting with the importance they assign to pronunciation as related to other language components (*Figures 16* and *17*). The responses show that most of the teachers deem pronunciation equal to grammar and vocabulary, and only a small portion, almost identical, see it differently. This is certainly a positive finding, perhaps indicating that the "Cinderella" period in the minds of practitioners is gone. Whether the teaching materials convey the same impressions is a different story and, as we have seen already, is still nowhere close to ideal, certainly not in the analysed English textbooks. These results suggest that the link between the number of pronunciation exercises in textbooks and the importance of pronunciation in teachers' minds does not constitute a rigid correlation.

When we enquired about when/in what situations the teachers deal with pronunciation, we got responses claiming they mostly integrate it with other skills (*Figure 18*).

When do you focus on pronunciation?

7%   14%
22%
57%

- When a problem occurs
- When presenting new vocabulary
- I integrate it with other skills
- Whenever it is included in the textbook

Figure 18 – When teachers focus on pronunciation

When the teachers were asked to estimate how much time they spend on pronunciation activities, most teachers admitted that provided they even focus on pronunciation, it is usually only a small portion of the lesson (*Figure 19*). These results could be seen as bleak, but it is fair to suggest that their time estimates do not have to be fully accurate unless teachers keep detailed minute-by-minute lesson plans. At the same time, the mere length of time is not by itself indicative of its productive use and effectiveness of the activity carried out. These results may be biased, given the self-reported nature of the question and the lack of context about the rest of the lesson.

While considering this topic, we realised that we also might have included a question about sequencing pronunciation activities. That way, we would have shed more light on the timing issue since placing an activity at the beginning or towards the end can indicate its overall weight within the lesson. Whether an exercise is used as a lesson opener, warm-up, in the calming phase or in the middle of the lesson may be more relevant than its minute count. Should we have a chance to expand on our research in the future, we will certainly take this observation into account and focus on it more.

How much time do you devote to pronunciation when you practise it?

- fewer than 5 minutes
- 5 to 10 minutes
- 10 to 15 minutes
- as much time as needed

30% | 52% | 11% | 7%
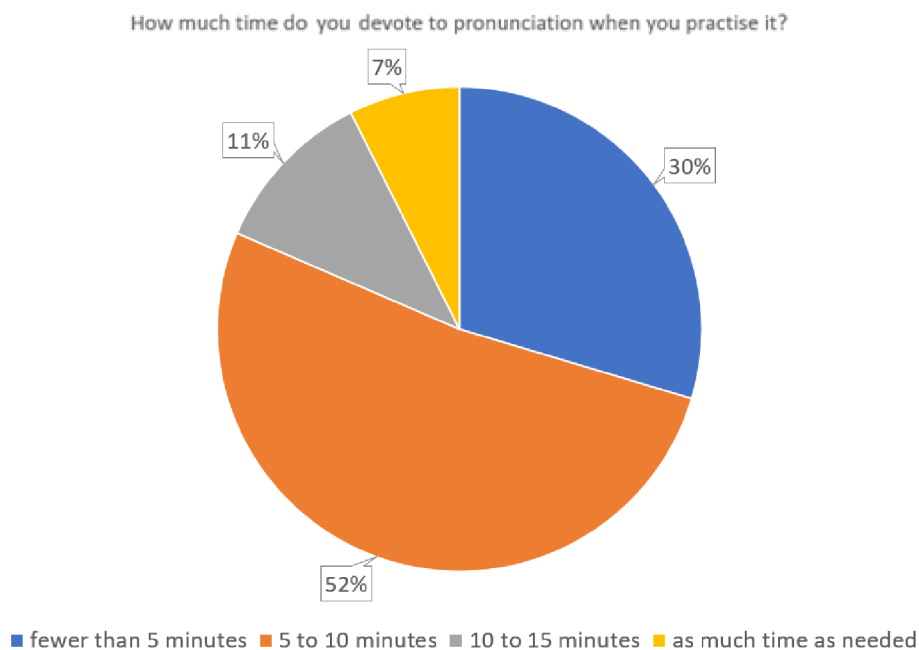
Figure 19 – The typical amount of time spent on pronunciation

The next batch of questions explored what the respondents think about the role of accent and nativeness principle. The German teachers evidently consider native speakers as inherently better pronunciation teachers than non-native ones (*Figure 21*). The English teachers are not as clearly divided, although almost half of them share the favourable view of native speakers (*Figure 20*). These assumptions have been seen in multiple studies and are certainly worth further discussion.

Firstly, we should distinguish between a pronunciation teacher and a pronunciation model. Native speakers already possess the target pronunciation and can largely be seen as good models for their learners, provided that their own accents are more or less standard. However, the superiority of native speakers (the infamous native speaker fallacy) in teaching is a different question, definitively in the case of English. English, like previously Latin and French, has become the lingua franca of our world, and native speakers constitute only a small portion of those using it on an everyday basis. The vast majority of English communication happens among non-native speakers of English. Schools must therefore prepare their students to operate in this context and not limit them to one, albeit influential, group of language users. Being able to understand and be understood should be crucial here. One's nativeness does not say anything about their professional competence and pedagogical skills. It happens all too often that native speakers (frequently not really qualified teachers) rely solely on this fact, and their lessons are void of any effective teaching and/or learning because one is not born a teacher but has to

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become one. Even the nativeness itself does not guarantee the utmost language proficiency, and assuming that all native speakers would reach the C2 *CEFR* level is simply delusional. Having said that, hiring language teachers based on their mother tongue and discriminating against non-native speakers, in our opinion, is wrong as it disregards professionalism. Going back to the obtained data, we believe that in the Czech context, the belief, and we will not shy away from labelling it "the feeling of inferiority" when it comes to accentedness, is still strong and might have influenced the responses, especially when we connect them with the following issue.
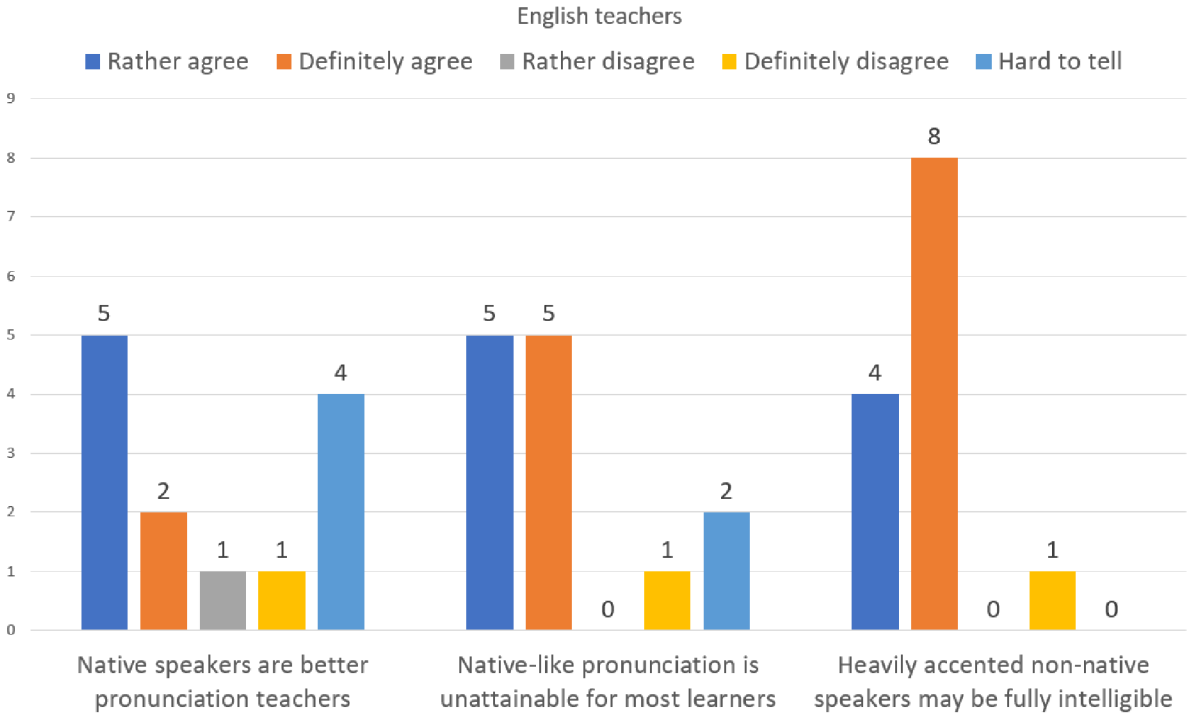
Figure 20 – The accent views among English teachers

Both groups of teachers clearly see nativeness as something unattainable by the majority of their learners. Yet a lot of them see native speakers as better pronunciation teachers, thus effectively limiting the number of people who can teach it or, even worse, regarding pronunciation as something that non-native teachers should not really bother with. When we look at the last question in this series, whether a heavily accented speaker may be fully intelligible, we may see that here their responses clearly contradict themselves. On the one hand, nativeness is allegedly a prerequisite for better teaching; on the other, it is not achievable for most and accented speech is not an obstacle to intelligibility. That leads us to the assumption that the respondents confuse the pronunciation model with the pronunciation teacher, but at the same time, they are aware of the fact that having a foreign accent is nothing wrong and is part

of your identity. This conclusion is further solidified by the comments teachers offered when describing the pronunciation goals they set for their learners.

English teachers, e.g.:

- "The golden mean – clear pronunciation."

- "Clear communication. Just to get by."

- "A pronunciation that is not a barrier to communication, either with native speakers or with non-native speakers."

- "To sound more English than 'Czenglish'."

German teachers, e.g.:

- "Pronunciation at least at a level that does not impede understanding."

- "Native speakers must understand them."

- "So that the pupils can understand."
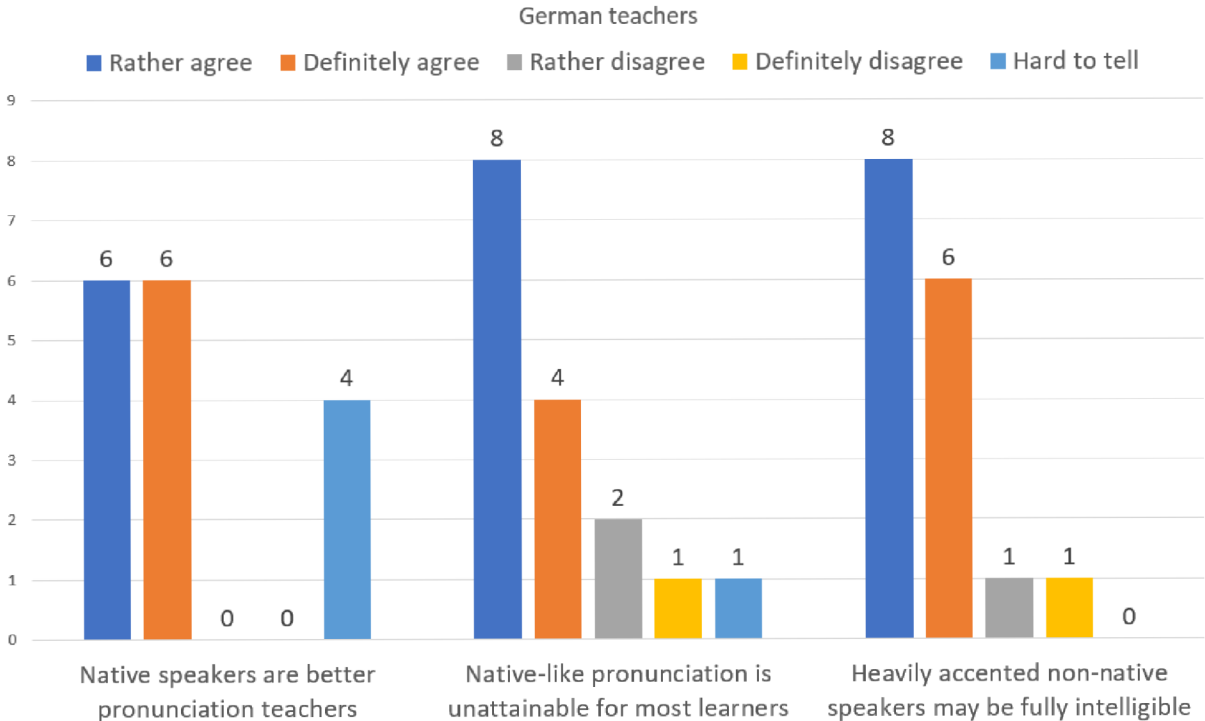
Figure 21 – The accent views among German teachers

The last substantial issue from the teachers' questionnaire we would like to highlight is what areas of pronunciation the respondents most frequently work on. *Figures 22* and *23* give us a largely uniform picture of the situation. Most teachers claim to address both segmental and suprasegmental issues equally, and the second largest group of responses alleges that the main focus is on those areas in which the learners have shown some problems.
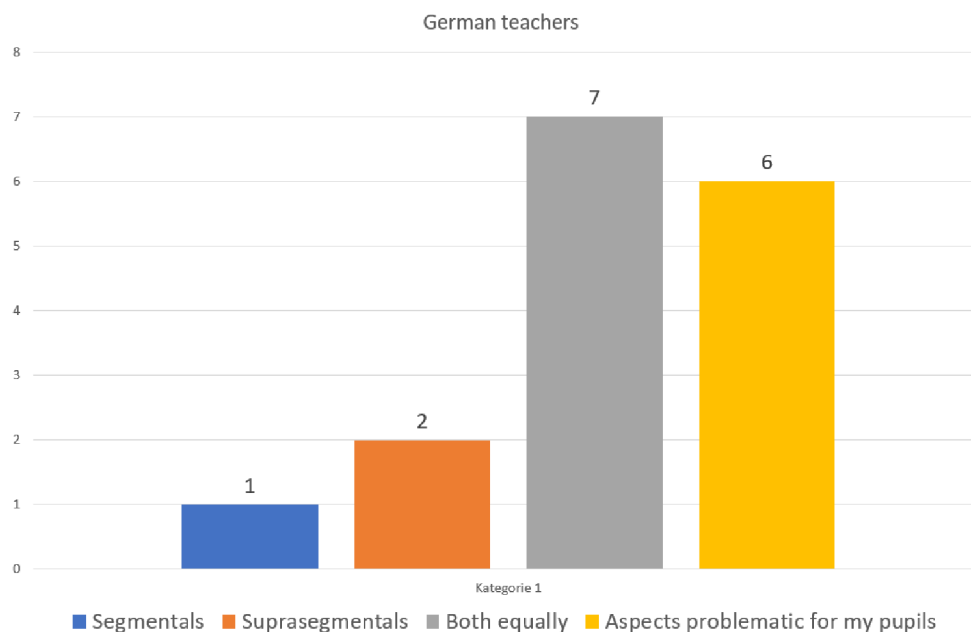
Figure 22 – The focus of pronunciation teaching in German

On the face of it, the situation seems pretty straightforward. Still, when we link it with the responses asking about the main source of pronunciation activities, we get a different outcome, at least in the case of the English teachers. In this section, most teachers, both English and German, confirm that their main source is their textbook. Previously in our analysis, we showed that the *Project* series does not offer a balance representation of pronunciation areas, thus questioning how it is possible to square these two claims. In the case of the German teachers, where at least *Beste Freunde* seems more balanced, we may question how someone can employ their textbook as the primary source of activities and at the same time assert they predominantly deal with the issues problematic for their learners. That is not to say that the respondents willfully tried to provide misleading answers. It shows more towards our inability to clearly predict such contradictions and construct this part of our questionnaire so that we receive more valid data. One possibility would be to ensure that all respondents are aware of the difference between the segmental/suprasegmental areas. We deduce that this was not often the case from the part in which the teachers were asked to list the most problematic areas their students produce. Almost all the responses mention segmental problems (e.g., in English velar

nasal, dental fricatives, word-final voicing; in German Umlaute) even though the teachers previously claimed to work mainly on suprasegmental issues, or both equally. It is also possible that these results have been confounded by the fact that the majority of respondents (87%) affirmed that they do not plan pronunciation teaching in advance or only sporadically, and they tend to adopt a more lackadaisical approach.
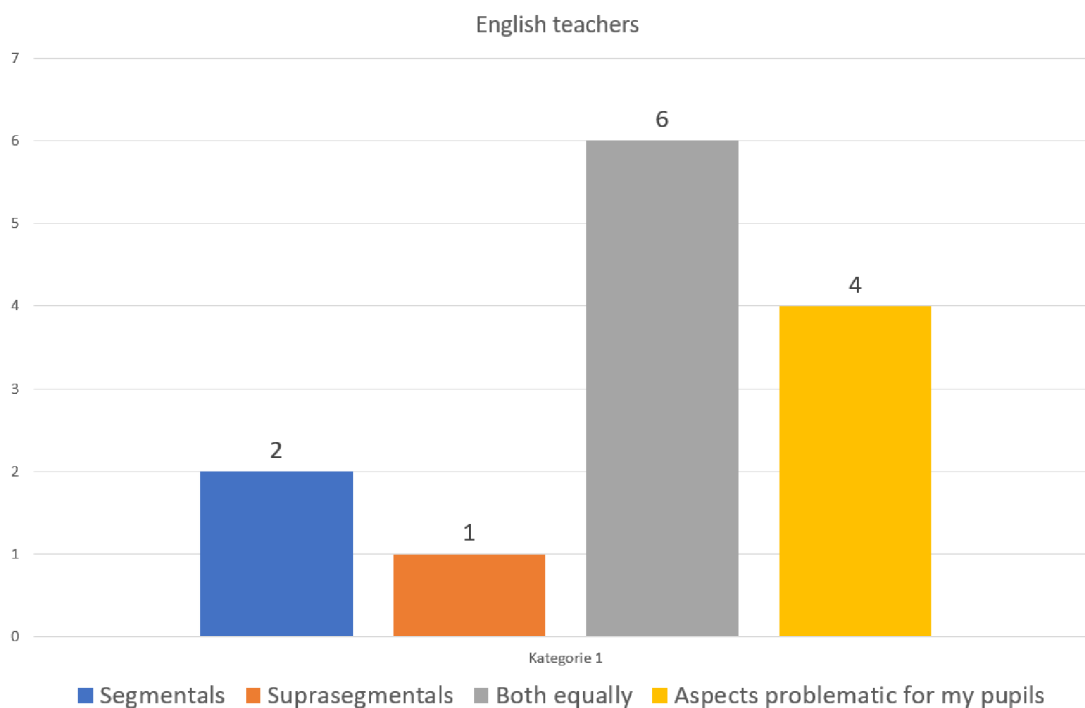

Figure 23 – The focus of pronunciation teaching in English

5.5   Pronunciation views – the learners' questionnaire

This section will examine findings from the research survey carried out among language learners who were asked to opine on their attitudes towards various pronunciation issues.

Figure 24 shows the number of respondents across the two languages and individual grades. All questionnaires for learners were sent electronically, and language teachers were asked to invite their learners to participate, providing them with a link to the online form. The questionnaire for English language classes was completed by the learners in the school the author of this thesis works for, and that is why we would like to briefly describe the profile of the school at the end of this section. The responses of German learners come from three other elementary schools in the Hradec Králové region; the reasons for this division are discussed in the introduction to the practical part of this paper.
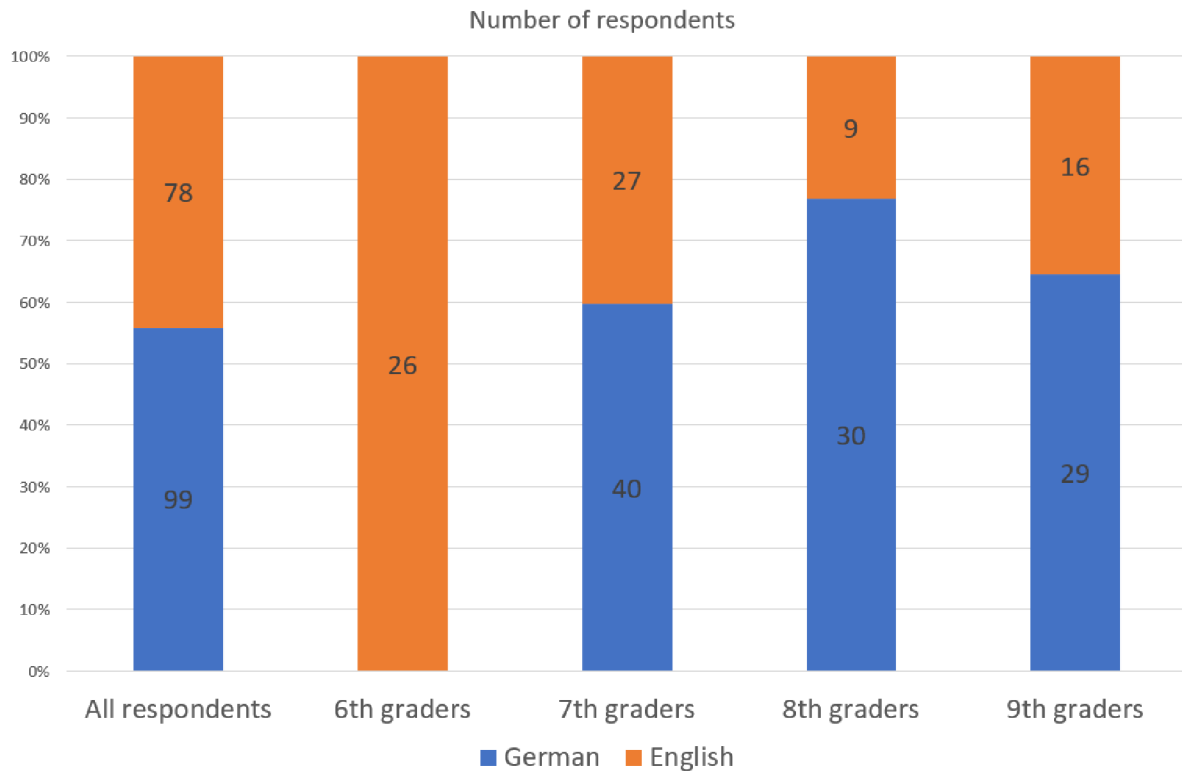
Figure 24 – Number of respondents according to the language & grade

With the learners, it was not our aim to test whether the results will differ based on the language the learners are studying. The decision to ask about the learners' opinions about only one language stemmed from the desire to make the questionnaire brief, not repetitive and its filling-in as time-efficient as possible. That is why we are going to present the majority of the results of both language groups together and use the learners' comments to distinguish some of its parts only where appropriate and insightful. However, in *Figure 25*, we thought the distinction might be relevant and indicative of any possible meaningful divergence between the two groups. It shows that both groups clearly see pronunciation as important (more than 50% for each language), and only a handful of responses were of the contrary opinion or saw it in neutral terms. Since the results are largely similar, we believe this justifies our decision to discuss the rest of them together. Perhaps more telling conclusions can be obtained from the learners' comments when asked what motivates them to work on their pronunciation. Among the most frequently mentioned were:

- "Grades"

- "My future"

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- "My future job"

- "I want to visit the USA."

- "Travelling"

- "I want to be understood."

- "The planned school trip to England."

- "I would like to visit Germany by myself and be able to communicate there."

Oddly enough, several respondents from various grades mentioned that a different language teacher or different activities could motivate them more to improve their pronunciation.
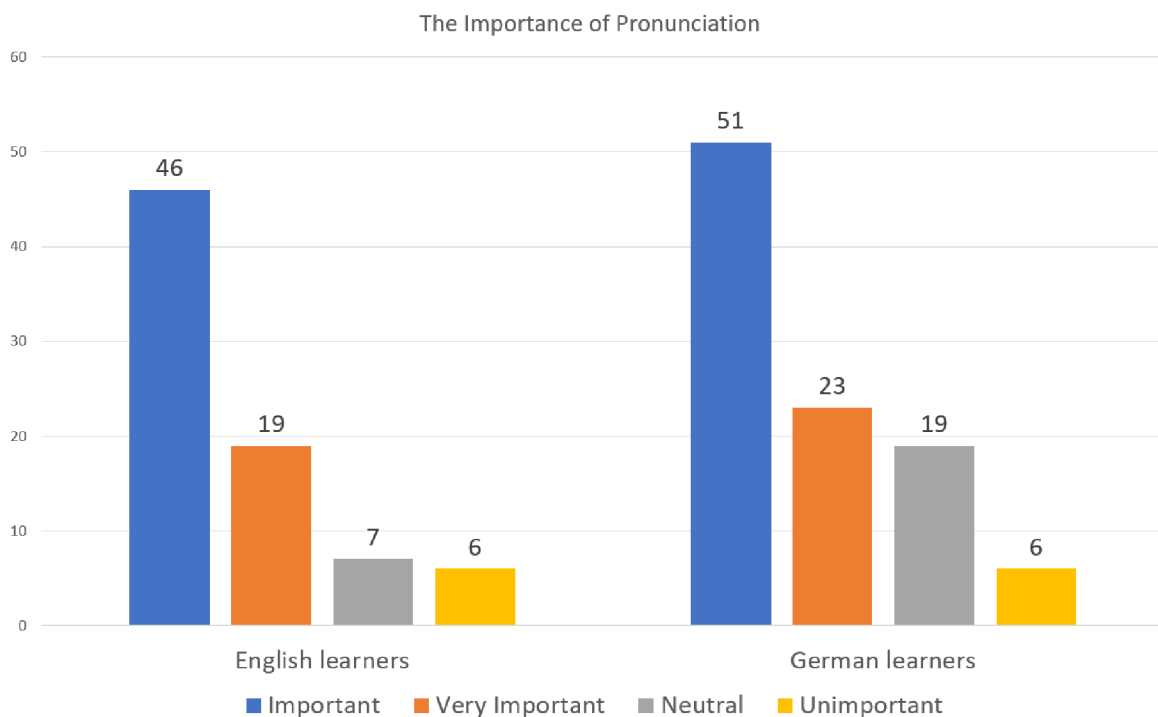

Figure 25 – The importance of pronunciation

Subsequently, our objective was to find out how the learners evaluate not only their pronunciation but also the pronunciation of their teachers. Should the results be overwhelmingly negative, they would certainly impact the rest of the responses and put them into a rather different context. *Figures 26* and *27* show that although most of the learners are predictably slightly more critical towards themselves and only see their pronunciation as average, in the case of their teachers, 91% of respondents deem their pronunciation good or even excellent. Following our previous discussion of native speakers as better pronunciation

teachers, we believe these results confirm that non-native speakers are not negatively perceived by their pupils in this matter.
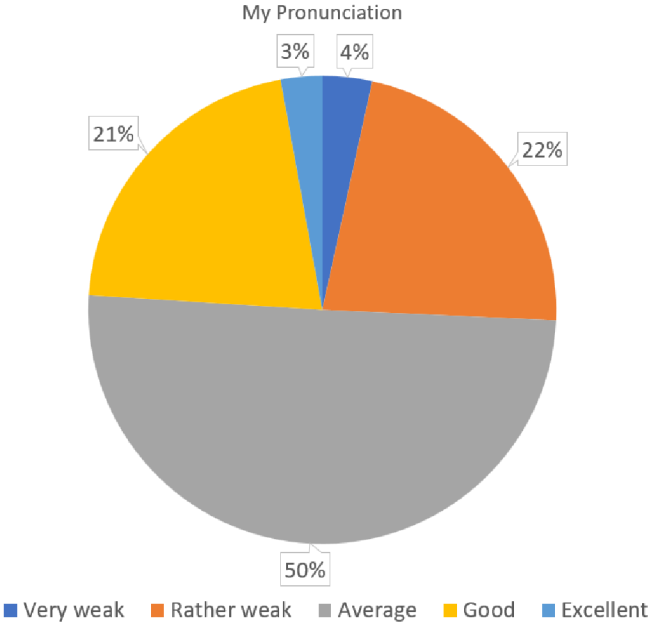

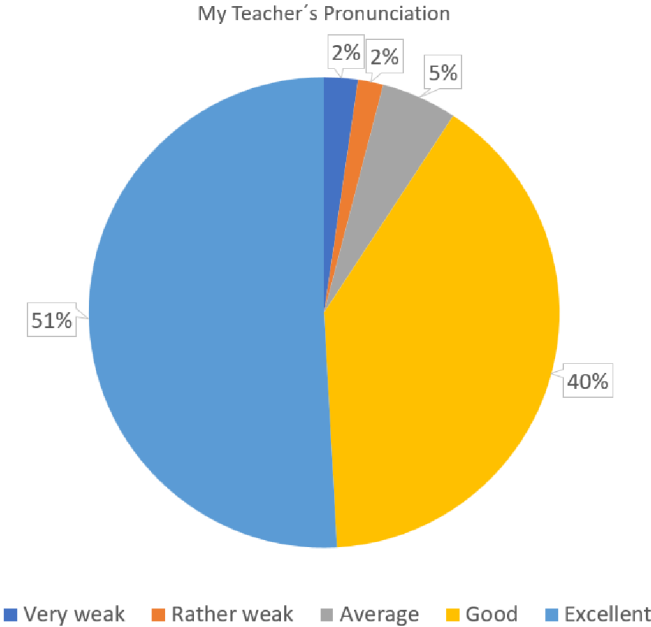*Figure 26* – Pronunciation evaluation 1

Figure 27 – Pronunciation evaluation 2

The fact that most pupils see their pronunciation as average also gives more weight to the next point, where we asked about their goals in pronunciation learning. We were happy to find out that the majority aspires to intelligibility rather than nativeness (*Figure 28*), which also

corresponds with findings from other studies (e.g., Pištora, 2015, in the case of university students). Among those that desire to sound native-like, the American and British accents were most frequently mentioned as the ones they would like to adopt, and the accent of Germany in the case of the German language. About the same number of responses also stated that they either have no particular model they would like to imitate or that the model is their own teacher. One response we found rather charming particularly stated that the person wants to adopt the accent of "*my teacher – my mummy.*"

My Pronunciation Goal
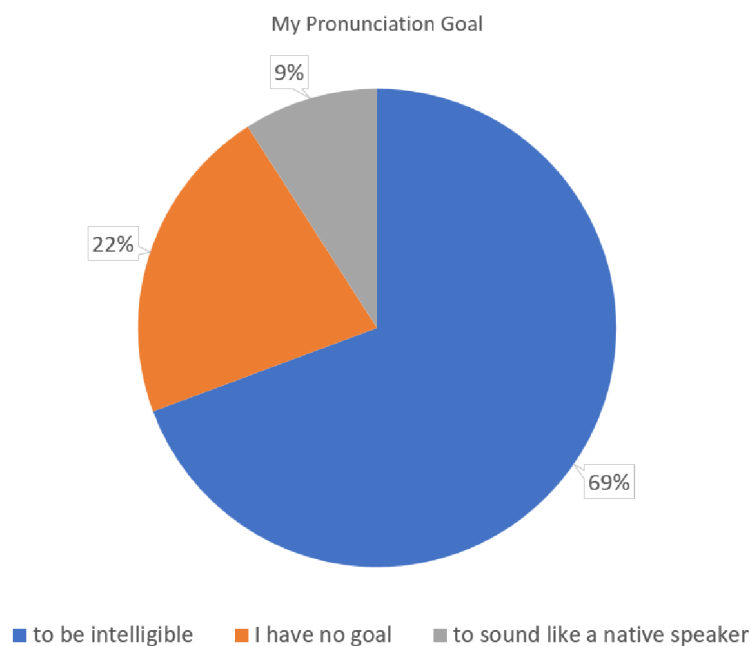
Figure 28 – Learners' pronunciation goals

Next, we focused on the popularity of pronunciation activities among the learners. We found out that only 18% of them actually enjoy them, with 29% indicating a negative attitude and 46% a neutral stance. The follow-up question allowed for free responses and asked for expressions that learners most frequently associate with pronunciation. The often-repeated answers included: conversation, speaking, reading, vocabulary, examples of individual sounds, and also, unfortunately, boredom and, rather disappointingly, repetition. The "listen and repeat" was also the most frequent pronunciation activity that the learners mentioned when asked for typical exercises they do. This obviously comes from the popularity of this activity in the textbooks and the fact that it can be used easily with the whole class and does not require any preparation or equipment. The second most frequently mentioned activity was reading aloud closely followed by ad hoc correction when a mistake occurs (usually in the form of "repeat after me"). Quite surprisingly for us, then, about a third of the learners see such activities as

enjoyable. Though we are not fully convinced about their effectiveness, the learners may appreciate their predictability and the fact that they are frequently done in groups in a chorus way allowing the more timid personalities to hide away from the limelight.
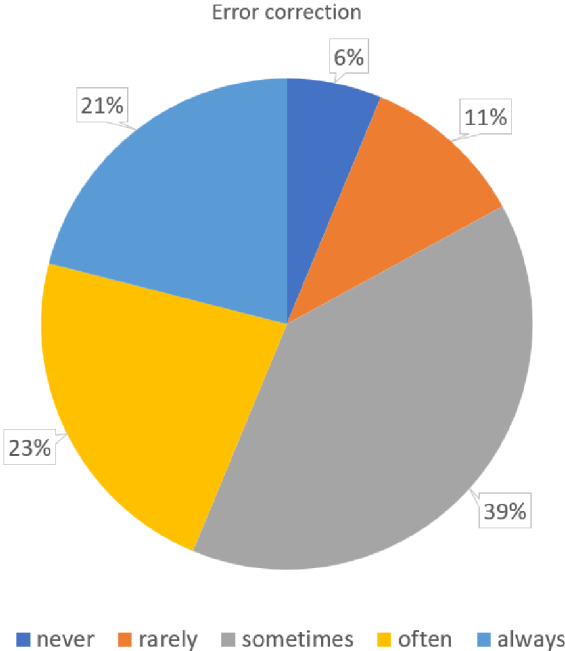
Error correction

Figure 29 – Frequency of error correction

In the following section, we asked about the error correction practices (*Figure 29*) and found out that, in most cases, it is performed on a regular basis. Also, the learners were mostly happy with the frequency or had no strong opinions about it. In 59% of responses, it was alleged that the teachers never use pronunciation to obtain grades, and only 2% of the learners stated it is a frequent practice in their lessons, with no case of a "bad grade" ever being received. An enormous majority declined when asked if they would like to be formally evaluated on their pronunciation.

All in all, the gathered data indicate that learners do not see pronunciation as unimportant or trivial, and they are willing to practise it even though we previously saw that teachers tend not to address pronunciation in a systematic way. When they do address it, it usually occupies only a small part of the whole lesson.

Profile of the school

"On the top of the hill" is how the residents of Hradec Králové refer to the school, which is located in the centre of the Nový Hradec Králové district. Since 2005, the school has been listed in the 'Register of Schools and Educational Establishments of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports as Základní škola a Mateřská škola Nový Hradec Králové, Pešinova 146'. It is a public primary school with nine grades divided into primary and lower-secondary school levels. In addition to the kindergarten, an after-school club and the school's own kitchen with a cafeteria are part of the school. The school has a capacity of 330 pupils. Currently, the school is attended by 230 pupils educated in 16 classrooms. All classrooms are equipped with computers and interactive whiteboards because of the ever-increasing demands on digital technology.

The school has two multimedia classrooms – one is larger and contains desktop PCs that can be ejected and inserted into desks specially made for these purposes. Due to this fact, it is also possible to use it as a traditional classroom, where pupils have room to work without the presence of computers. The second computer classroom is smaller and contains laptops. While PC classrooms are generally suitable for teaching foreign languages, they cannot be used to their fullest potential in this school. As is often the case with technical devices, some have trouble catching a network connection, or their keyboard does not work.

English is the first foreign language pupils start to learn compulsorily in the first grade. They may, however, start learning English in kindergarten as part of an interest group led by a qualified teacher who uses playful methods and WattsEnglish materials. English communication skills can be further developed in a compulsory optional subject, Conversation in English.

English lessons at the lower-secondary level are divided among four qualified teachers. Two of them are also second foreign language instructors, and the other two teach English at the primary school level, one of them always being an English teacher in the first grade because of her rich kindergarten teaching experience. A substantial advantage is that the three English teachers share one teacher's room and, as a result, help each other and pass on teaching experience. Although the author of the thesis has her place in another room, she tries to be in touch with more experienced female colleagues and discuss thematic plans, curriculum layouts, or pupils' results with them. She most often works with a colleague who teaches parallel groups.

The collaboration works very well; the author, who is a trainee teacher, receives consistent support, advice, and explanations from her colleagues.

If the lesson and room schedule allow, English lessons are taught in a playroom, a language or a multimedia classroom. The playroom is a cosy classroom where the first and second-graders are mostly educated. The entire room is carpeted, the walls are colourful, and small chairs are placed around the perimeter. As for the equipment, there is an interactive TV, a whiteboard, a flipchart and other teaching tools. There is also a small bookcase with English titles, most of which are Usborne books. The classroom is appropriately adapted for conversation as there are no desks; movement activities can also be better realised, and generally, pupils work better and more effectively in this classroom. Pupils themselves claim that they enjoy working here.

The language classroom has two rows of desks, posters with English grammar and a map of the UK. It is a light-filled classroom, with one big drawback being that the windows face a busy street.

The school also offers activities beyond regular English instruction. These are package trips to Great Britain and special Christmas lessons with a native speaker or English theatre. These activities were pulled back during the so-called 'covid times', but the thesis author firmly believes they will return. The establishment of an English library is also in the pipeline.

At the end of the sixth grade, pupils must choose a second foreign language, which they will learn in the following three years. There are German and Spanish on offer. In the past, pupils could choose between German and Russian, but there was little interest in the latter. After a colleague of mine completed her education, Spanish began to be offered.

The school has only one German teacher, the author of this work. For the fifth year, the textbook series *Beste Freunde* has been used for German lessons, which the former teacher introduced. The pupils do not take the textbooks home; they are left at the school, just like the English textbooks. The reason for this is twofold: firstly, the textbooks were expensive (especially the English ones), and secondly, the pupils used to forget their textbooks very often and also had heavy school bags due to the number of textbooks they had to carry. German (and Spanish) classes are divided in the way they contain a small number of learners which has several advantages, such as increased interaction among learners, individualised attention or greater learner engagement.

So far, no German-related extracurricular activities have occurred during the author's tenure at this school. However, a three-day trip to Austria and participation in the "Deutsch an der Uni" project are planned for the next school year.

6. Recommendations

In the final chapter of the practical part, we would like to offer a few recommendations concerning the textbooks, especially for those cases in which the teachers realise it is perhaps not the most suitable one for them and their learners, but they do not have the power to change it, sometimes because of budgetary reasons or because they are not part of the decision-making process, and are simply stuck with it. We fully understand that teaching with a textbook brings many advantages. For example, it is efficient, saves time, provides guidelines and also a much-needed order. However, the textbook should not be viewed as the be-all and end-all that needs to be followed, no matter what our own feelings about its content are. Rather we should treat them more like cookbooks from which the most suitable dishes are chosen based on the diet and taste of teachers and learners who are supposed to consume them. Even in such a scenario where the cookbook does not offer the most tasteful recipes, several adjustments can be made, turning the textbooks from less suitable to acceptable, if not perfect, teaching material.

Even if not perfect, every textbook will contain some useful material to work with. Our first recommendation, therefore, is to identify such material and build our lessons around this, in other words, to plan our pronunciation teaching. The usable sections for pronunciation will typically be dialogues, certain grammatical structures, longer texts or tapescripts of recordings. This material that learners already worked with can be easily used for pronunciation purposes as well. A dialogue whose primary purpose was to practise a grammar point may be reused again for practising intonation patterns, or it can serve to identify words with different stress patterns. A set of sentences illustrating how a question is formed in English present simple tense may be utilised to work on reduced pronunciation of functional words, which in turn may be used to show the importance of sentence stress. There is no need to come up with new material or equipment, the only operation the teacher has to do is think ahead and plan well, and as a result, the learners will not only practise the intended points again by the material reuse, but they will also connect them with pronunciation.

Although most of the textbooks employ phonetic symbols, at least in the vocabulary sections, they hardly ever seem to actually allow the learners to work with them even though the curricular documents expect their passive knowledge. While working with the symbols is certainly not a norm, we would like to suggest teaching students at least to recognize the most useful ones. Since most of them are based on the Roman alphabet, it should not be such a problem. For example, the symbol for the schwa sound, which is so important in English, is

so distinctive that learners would pick it up very quickly. Then, if this phoneme proves to be problematic, the teacher does not even have to do much to point that out and can simply write the symbol on the whiteboard or show it on the phonemic chart without disturbing an activity in which fluency takes precedence over accuracy.

Most foreign language textbooks in the Czech Republic target an international audience. They may be presented as Czech editions with translated lists of vocabulary or accompanying materials in Czech. Still, largely their content is not based on the needs of Czech learners of English or German. In the case of pronunciation, we, therefore, often see that textbooks then devote valuable space to exercises that practise points the Czech learners have no real problems with. Our recommendation, therefore, is to skip those exercises or, better yet, fill in those slots with something that our learners can actually benefit from. Teachers should remember one key point: their textbook is not their curriculum; they should follow the curriculum where the textbook allows for it and find ways to cover it even if it is not helpful. Our learners should study subjects, not textbooks. After all, the textbook should be your resource, not your boss.

It is clear from all the previous pages that the author of this thesis presumes that pronunciation should be treated equally to other language skills. Nevertheless, it should be wrong to suggest that it is identical to the other language components. Unlike most others whose mastery depends on cognitive abilities, it also includes elements of visual, auditory, and physical abilities. This is true not only for young kids but also for older learners. The practice of pronunciation should, therefore, not be only about understanding the issue (cognitive ability) but also hearing it (auditory ability), being able to see the movements (visual ability) and carrying them out (physical ability). The overt focus on all of those aspects should be part of pronunciation activities, e.g., tongue and lip posture can be drawn attention to when describing individual sounds; the tones may be visualised to show their direction; the reduction of sound duration in connected speech may be indicated by different font sizes in writing, etc. The more elements we can combine in our pronunciation activities, the more successful we will be in their acquisition.

No matter what your textbook is, before using it, you should sit down and clearly state what your goal in pronunciation teaching is. In our opinion, completing all the prescribed exercises is not the right one. From previous chapters, it is clear that comfortable intelligibility in an international context is a much more suitable one, and we should evaluate our textbook within this framework. The question is not only whether it has enough pronunciation activities

promoting it but also whether it offers enough varied material for the international aspect of it. Are all the recordings done only by native speakers? Are all of them of the same accent? Does it promote a feeling of inferiority in speaking if one is not a native speaker? All of these are issues that need to be addressed and acted upon. It is customary in Math that basic numerical operations such as addition, subtraction, multiplication and division are practised on various materials that learners will eventually encounter in normal life. We were all once asked to count how much money we needed for our shopping list, how much cake would be left if we ate ten pieces, or when the delayed train would arrive when we knew the amount of the delay. However, most textbook recordings our learners hear in language lessons are of native speakers with impeccable diction. It is no wonder then that the first time they go on holiday in Italy, where there are not many English or German native speakers, they have problems understanding their waitresses, taxi drivers or hotel staff. The recommendation thus is to assess this aspect of our textbooks, and if we arrive at the conclusion that they are too one-sided, we need to find ways to compensate for it. If we do not, then we are not really preparing our learners for the reality in which they will be using a foreign language.

Our final suggestion, which is rather universal and not really restricted to pronunciation, is to involve your students in the process and teach them how to use their textbooks best. Allow yourself time to explain to your students what you like and do not like about their textbook and show them it is not the only available source of information or knowledge. Especially in today's fast-paced world, the school should be more focused on helping the learners to evaluate the materials they are presented with and not pretending that what they are given is the only possible flawless source. They will need to compare, analyse, and evaluate the usefulness of information sources for the rest of their lives, so why not start with their textbooks? Let us not be afraid of their feedback about what they like or do not like about the materials we present to them. Sometimes we will be surprised by what they may find useful and interesting. We should teach the students how to contrast information usefulness. We can start by explaining to them what our goals are, allow them to evaluate whether the exercises actually do meet those needs, and invite them to think of ways how to overcome the shortcomings of the materials or ask them to bring their own supplements whether it is a song, video, comic or a joke they saw on TikTok. Learners tend to be an excellent source of additional materials that we teachers would never dream of and are usually very keen to show us what they know of. We believe that everyone will ultimately benefit from active participation in the learning process, and if you show the

learners why they should care, they frequently will. Let us see the pupils as our partners and the whole teaching/learning process as our mutual endeavour.

Conclusion

The generally accepted goal of language learning is to achieve overall language proficiency. Such proficiency consists of a series of components and competences that include various pronunciation features. Even in our digital age, textbooks still play a significant role in education, and their quality certainly can exert a great deal of influence on the outcome of the whole educational process. It has been asserted that in the case of pronunciation, foreign language textbooks exhibit an exceeding amount of underrepresentation or even, as some dare say, marginalisation. This leads to that component of language learning being frequently neglected, ignored or worked upon only in a very haphazard manner.

The initial aim of this diploma thesis was to analyse the role of pronunciation in the selected English and German multilevel coursebooks in the context of other language skills and components and use the findings as a springboard to broader conclusions about the state of pronunciation in foreign language teaching in general. For that to happen, the author decided not to limit her focus only to textbooks but also to include perspectives of language teachers and language learners. The research design of the practical part thus consisted of three elements – a textbook analysis, a questionnaire survey among teachers and also among language learners. Two sets of foreign language coursebooks were inspected – the *Project* series for English and the *Beste Freunde* series for German – and responses for the questionnaire-based surveys were gathered from 29 qualified language teachers and 177 language learners, which we believe allowed us to have made a number of general conclusions with a considerable degree of certainty.

The textbook analysis indeed revealed that the total number of pronunciation activities in both textbook series is outnumbered by grammar and vocabulary exercises, which imposes more responsibility on teachers in addressing the pronunciation component of language learning. Therefore, the final chapter of this diploma thesis attempted to outline some of the possible approaches teachers can adopt in this area.

Our research suggests that teacher manuals work on the assumption that they will be used by qualified teachers, and as a result, they do not provide, in our opinion, an adequate amount of instructions, which may prove detrimental to the outcome of pronunciation activities and can result in negligence of effective pronunciation teaching practices.

The present thesis also found that in the analysed coursebooks, activities on segmental features tend to outnumber those devoted to prosodic features, more so in the case of the English

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textbook series. The theoretical part of our thesis conclusively summarised the latest research in this area in support of suprasegmental features. This finding suggests that textbooks should offer more pronunciation activities aimed at the suprasegmental features and favour those with a clear communicative focus.

In order to obtain the views of language teachers and learners, two questionnaires were utilised that provided us with data illuminating the actual classroom practices regarding pronunciation and the extent to which they are influenced by textbooks. The majority of both the teachers and the learners declared their positive attitudes towards pronunciation. Their overall views about pronunciation teaching/learning goals also appeared to be congruent, and both opted for intelligibility over nativeness. Deficiencies were observed in the range of pronunciation activities and areas of focus which we largely attribute to the influence of the textbooks.

Although we aimed to design this study in the best possible way, we nevertheless need to admit that it also has certain limitations, which we tried to discuss when presenting the obtained data. We are aware of the fact that we were able to analyse only a fragment of available course materials and that there are other research tools we could have further used to evaluate the data from the textbooks and also from the surveys carried out among the teachers and the learners. For example, any future prospective study may focus on teachers' real knowledge base instead of the self-reporting that our study adopted. However, we never proclaimed that our research would provide definitive and comprehensive results. That would be beyond the scope of a diploma thesis. Despite its limitations, we believe that the research provided us with valuable insight into the current state of pronunciation teaching at a lower-secondary school level in the Czech Republic and will help us employ more informed and effective teaching practices in our own future educational pursuits.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Phonological control scale (Council of Europe, 2020, pp. 134-135 [online])

	Phonological control		
	Overall phonological control	**Sound articulation**	**Prosodic features**
C2	Can employ the full range of phonological features in the target language with a high level of control – including prosodic features such as word and sentence stress, rhythm and intonation – so that the finer points of their message are clear and precise. Intelligibility and effective conveyance and enhancement of meaning are not affected in any way by features of accent that may be retained from other language(s).	Can articulate virtually all the sounds of the target language with clarity and precision.	Can exploit prosodic features (e.g. stress, rhythm and intonation) appropriately and effectively in order to convey finer shades of meaning (e.g. to differentiate and emphasise).
C1	Can employ the full range of phonological features in the target language with sufficient control to ensure intelligibility throughout. Can articulate virtually all the sounds of the target language; some features of accent(s) retained from other language(s) may be noticeable, but they do not affect intelligibility.	Can articulate virtually all the sounds of the target language with a high degree of control. They can usually self-correct if they noticeably mispronounce a sound.	Can produce smooth, intelligible spoken discourse with only occasional lapses in control of stress, rhythm and/or intonation, which do not affect intelligibility or effectiveness. Can vary intonation and place stress correctly in order to express precisely what they mean to say.
B2	Can generally use appropriate intonation, place stress correctly and articulate individual sounds clearly; accent tends to be influenced by the other language(s) they speak, but has little or no effect on intelligibility.	Can articulate a high proportion of the sounds in the target language clearly in extended stretches of production; is intelligible throughout, despite a few systematic mispronunciations. Can generalise from their repertoire to predict the phonological features of most unfamiliar words (e.g. word stress) with reasonable accuracy (e.g. while reading).	Can employ prosodic features (e.g. stress, intonation, rhythm) to support the message they intend to convey, though with some influence from the other languages they speak.
B1	Pronunciation is generally intelligible; intonation and stress at both utterance and word levels do not prevent understanding of the message. Accent is usually influenced by the other language(s) they speak.	Is generally intelligible throughout, despite regular mispronunciation of individual sounds and words they are less familiar with.	Can convey their message in an intelligible way in spite of a strong influence on stress, intonation and/or rhythm from the other language(s) they speak.
A2	Pronunciation is generally clear enough to be understood, but conversational partners will need to ask for repetition from time to time. A strong influence from the other language(s) they speak on stress, rhythm and intonation may affect intelligibility, requiring collaboration from interlocutors. Nevertheless, pronunciation of familiar words is clear.	Pronunciation is generally intelligible when communicating in simple everyday situations, provided the interlocutor makes an effort to understand specific sounds. Systematic mispronunciation of phonemes does not hinder intelligibility, provided the interlocutor makes an effort to recognise and adjust to the influence of the speaker's language background on pronunciation.	Can use the prosodic features of everyday words and phrases intelligibly, in spite of a strong influence on stress, intonation and/or rhythm from the other language(s) they speak. Prosodic features (e.g. word stress) are adequate for familiar everyday words and simple utterances.
A1	Pronunciation of a very limited repertoire of learnt words and phrases can be understood with some effort by interlocutors used to dealing with speakers of the language group. Can reproduce correctly a limited range of sounds as well as stress for simple, familiar words and phrases.	Can reproduce sounds in the target language if carefully guided. Can articulate a limited number of sounds, so that speech is only intelligible if the interlocutor provides support (e.g. by repeating correctly and by eliciting repetition of new sounds).	Can use the prosodic features of a limited repertoire of simple words and phrases intelligibly, in spite of a very strong influence on stress, rhythm and/or intonation from the other language(s) they speak; their interlocutor needs to be collaborative.

Appendix 2 – A communicative framework for teaching pronunciation by Celce-Murcia et al. (2010, p. 45)

1	**DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS** – *oral and written illustrations of how the feature is produced and when it occurs within spoken discourse*
2	**LISTENING DISCRIMINATION** – *focused listening practice with feedback on learners' ability to correctly discriminate the feature*
3	**CONTROLLED PRACTICE** – *oral reading of minimal-pair sentences, short dialogues, etc., with special attention paid to the highlighted feature in order to raise learner consciousness*
4	**GUIDED PRACTICE** – *structured communication exercises, such as information-gap activities or cued dialogues, that enable the learner to monitor for the specified feature*
5	**COMMUNICATIVE PRACTICE** – *less structured, fluency-building activities (e.g., role play, problem solving) that require the learner to attend to both form and content of utterances*

Appendix 3 – the teachers' questionnaire[28]

Dotazník pro české učitele učící na druhém stupni ZŠ anglický/německý jazyk

Přístupy, názory a praktiky

A) Úvodní část

Věk:

- Méně něž 30
- Méně než 40
- Méně než 55
- Nad 55

Délka učitelské praxe:

- 5 let nebo méně
- 6 až 10 let
- 11 až 15 let
- Více než 15 let

Kvalifikace:

- formálně kvalifikován/a pro výuku angličtiny/němčiny
- formálně nekvalifikován/a pro výuku angličtiny/němčiny
- v procesu získání kvalifikace pro výuky angličtiny/němčiny

Název učebnice, kterou máte v současné době k dispozici pro výuku angličtiny/němčiny:

B) Názory a přesvědčení učitelů

Přijde Vám důležité učit výslovnost?

a) Rozhodně ne
b) Spíše ne
c) Těžko říct
d) Spíše ano
e) Rozhodně ano

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[28] A total of four versions of questionnaires were created – for English teachers and German teachers and for English learners and German learners. For space reasons, not all versions are attached. Since both teacher versions as well as both learner versions were almost identical, they were put together as one. Where the versions differed, a slash (/) is used to highlight the specific difference.

(Pokud Vaše odpověď byla d) nebo e)) Myslíte si, že učit výslovnost je:

a) Méně důležité než učit slovní zásobu a gramatiku
b) Stejně důležité jako učit slovní zásobu a gramatiku
c) Více důležité než učit slovní zásobu a gramatiku

Rodilí mluvčí učí výslovnost lépe.

a) Rozhodně nesouhlasím
b) Spíše nesouhlasím
c) Těžko říct
d) Spíše souhlasím
e) Rozhodně souhlasím

Výslovnost na úrovni rodilého mluvčího je pro většinu žáků nedosažitelná.

a) Rozhodně nesouhlasím
b) Spíše nesouhlasím
c) Těžko říct
d) Spíše souhlasím
e) Rozhodně souhlasím

I nerodilí mluvčí s výrazným přízvukem mateřštiny mohou být plně srozumitelní.

a) Rozhodně nesouhlasím
b) Spíše nesouhlasím
c) Těžko říct
d) Spíše souhlasím
e) Rozhodně souhlasím

Jaký výslovnostní cíl jste stanovil/a pro své žáky?

C) Praktiky učitelů

Učíte výslovnost rád/a?

a) Rozhodně ne
b) Spíše ne
c) Nevím
d) Spíše ano
e) Rozhodně ano

(Pokud Vaše odpověď byla a), b) nebo c)) Vyberte důvod(y) (lze vybrat více možností):

a) Nemám na to čas.
b) Nevěřím si.
c) Nevím jak.
d) Kurikulární dokumenty neposkytují dostatečné informace o výuce, cílech a hodnocení.
e) Výslovnost v učebnici nevystupuje jako důležitá oblast zasluhující si větší pozornost.
f) Nejsem rodilý mluvčí, takže mám pochybnosti o kvalitě své vlastní výslovnosti.
g) Výslovnost je nejvíce problematický aspekt cizího jazyka k učení a naučení.
h) Výuka výslovnosti je ztrátou času a energie, protože přináší neuspokojivé výsledky.
i) Mé žáky to nebaví.
j) Věřím, že žáci se naučí správné výslovnosti přirozenou cestou za pomoci toho, že jí budou dostatečně vystavováni.
k) Jiné:

Prosím, uveďte výslovnostní cvičení / aktivity, která znáte (včetně pomůcek, nástrojů nebo jiných vychytávek usnadňujících výuku/nácvik výslovnosti).

Co z toho, co jste vyjmenoval/a používáte ve své výuce?

Vaše výuka výslovnosti primárně vychází z:

a) Vašich zkušeností jako učitele
b) Vašich zkušeností jako žáka učícího se angličtinu/němčinu
c) Vašich dovedností a znalostí získaných během studia
d) Vaší intuice
e) Výsledků podložených výzkumy
f) Jiné:

Vyberte, co nejlépe vystihuje Váš přístup k výuce výslovnosti.

a) Na výuku výslovnosti se připravuji systematicky a organizovaně.
b) Výuku výslovnosti si nepřipravuji a neplánuji dopředu – řídím se potřebami svých žáků.
c) Můj přístup určuje učebnice.
d) Jiné:

Kdy se zabýváte výslovností?

a) Když se objeví problém
b) Kdykoli to chce učebnice
c) Když prezentujete novou slovní zásobu
d) Začleňujete ji do dalších dovedností
e) Když potřebujete vyplnit čas
f) Na začátku hodiny, kde Vám slouží jako rozehřívací aktivita
g) Jiné:

Kolik času věnujete výslovnosti, když se jí zabýváte?

a) Méně než 5 minut
b) 5 – 10 minut
c) 10 – 15 minut
d) Jiné:

Věnujete někdy celou vyučovací hodinu výhradně nácviku výslovnostních dovedností?

a) Nikdy
b) Zřídka
c) Někdy
d) Často
e) Vždy

Jak často učíte výslovnost?

a) Každou hodinu
b) 1x týdně
c) 1x měsíčně
d) Jiné:

Vyberte tvrzení, které je pro Vás pravdivé.

a) Učím převážně suprasegmentální aspekty výslovnosti.
b) Učím převážně segmentální aspekty výslovnosti.
c) Učím oba aspekty (segmentální a suprasegmentální) stejnou měrou.
d) Učím to, co stojí v učebnici.
e) Učím aspekty, které jsou problematické pro mé žáky.

Pokud učíte převážně segmentální aspekty výslovnosti, vysvětlete, prosím, proč.

Jaké výslovnosti aspekty jsou pro Vaše žáky nejvíce problematické?

Jak často využíváte ve své výuce písničky pro nácvik výslovnostních dovedností?

a) Nikdy
b) Zřídka
c) Někdy
d) Často
e) Velmi často

Jakým způsobem poskytujete svým žákům zpětnou vazbu na jejich chyby, úsilí a pokrok? (lze vybrat více možností)

a) Opravujete každou výslovnostní chybu.
b) Opravujete výslovnostní chyby, ale pouze tehdy, když žáci nejsou srozumitelní.
c) Testujete jejich výslovnostní dovednosti (ne nutně za použití známek).
d) Hodnotíte jejich výslovnost tak, že jim dáváte dobré známky.
e) Hodnotíte jejich výslovnost tak, že jim dáváte špatné známky.
f) Jiné:

D) Výukové materiály se zaměřením na učebnice

Jaké materiály používáte k výuce výslovnosti? (lze vybrat více možností)

a) Učebnici
b) Pracovní sešit
c) Učebnici/pracovní sešit, ale obsah si upravujete
d) Doplňkové již hotové materiály
e) Materiály, které jste si vytvořil/a
f) Žádné
g) Jiné:

Prosím, vysvětlete svoji odpověď.

Pokud používáte doplňující předem zhotovené materiály, prosím, objasněte, co tím přesně myslíte.

Procvičování výslovnosti je zahrnuto (lze vybrat více možností):

a) V učebnici
b) V pracovním sešitě
c) V dalších materiálech doplňujících učebnici
d) Nejsem si jistý/á

Procvičování výslovnosti je umístěno (lze vybrat více možností):

a) Na konci učebnice
b) Na konci pracovního sešitu
c) Na konci lekce v učebnici
d) Na konci lekce v pracovním sešitě
e) Je začleněno do dalších výukových oblastí (e.g. slovní zásoba, gramatika)
f) Nejsem si jistý/á
g) Jiné:

Učebnice poskytuje dostatek cvičení pro nácvik výslovnosti.

a) Rozhodně nesouhlasím
b) Spíše nesouhlasím
c) Těžko říct
d) Spíše souhlasím
e) Rozhodně souhlasím

Výslovnostní aktivity v učebnici mi přijdou užitečná a efektivní.

a) Rozhodně nesouhlasím
b) Spíše nesouhlasím
c) Těžko říct
d) Spíše souhlasím
e) Rozhodně souhlasím

Učebnice poskytuje výslovností aktivity, která jsou zaměřená na komunikaci?

a) Rozhodně nesouhlasím
b) Spíše nesouhlasím
c) Těžko říct
d) Spíše souhlasím
e) Rozhodně souhlasím

Učebnice nabízí rozmanitost výslovnostních cvičení.

a) Rozhodně nesouhlasím
b) Spíše nesouhlasím
c) Těžko říct
d) Spíše souhlasím
e) Rozhodně souhlasím

Uveďte nějaká výslovnostní cvičení/aktivity použité v učebnici.

Vyhovuje učebnice potřebám českých žáků v oblasti výslovnosti?

a) Rozhodně ne
b) Spíše ne
c) Těžko říct
d) Spíše ano
e) Rozhodně ano

Poskytují nahrávky Vašim žákům možnost slyšet výslovnost různých rodilých i nerodilých mluvčích?

a) Rozhodně ne
b) Spíše ne
c) Těžko říct
d) Spíše ano
e) Rozhodně ano

Doplňujete nahrávky ze své učebnice o jiné zdroje mluveného materiálu, které jsou více autentické a poskytují žákům větší rozmanitost z hlediska akcentů?

f) Nikdy
g) Zřídka
h) Někdy
i) Často
j) Velmi často

Jaký je Váš názor na výslovnostní složku, kterou poskytuje Vaše učebnice? (e.g. Co se Vám líbí? Co oceňujete? Co se Vám nelíbí? Co Vám chybí?)

Imitační cvičení (listen & repeat exercises) jsou běžná v učebnicích cizích jazyků. Podle Vaší učebnice žáci jsou žádáni, aby opakovali především:

a) Hlásky
b) Slova
c) Fráze/slovní spojení
d) Věty
e) Dialogy

Appendix 4 – the learners' questionnaire

Dotazník pro české žáky druhého stupně ZŠ učící se angličtinu/němčinu

Hodnocení výslovnosti a její výuky

Postoje, názory, zkušenosti a preference

Do jaké třídy chodíš?   6. – 7. – 8. – 9.

A) Názory & preference

Přijde ti výslovnost důležitá?

- a) Velmi nedůležitá
- b) Nedůležitá
- c) Neutrální
- d) Důležitá
- e) Velmi důležitá

Pokud ti přijde výslovnost velmi důležitá nebo důležitá, myslíš si, že je:

- a) Méně důležitá než slovíčka a gramatika
- b) Stejně důležitá jako slovíčka a gramatika
- c) Více důležitá než slovíčka a gramatika

Ohodnoť výslovnost svého učitele angličtiny/němčiny:

- a) Velmi slabá
- b) Spíše slabá
- c) Průměrná
- d) Dobrá
- e) Vynikající

Ohodnoť svoji anglickou/německou výslovnost:

- a) Velmi slabá
- b) Spíše slabá
- c) Průměrná
- d) Dobrá
- e) Vynikající

Jsi spokojen/á se svou anglickou/německou výslovností?

   a) Velmi nespokojen/á
   b) Nespokojen/á
   c) Ani nespokojen/á ani spokojen/á
   d) Spokojen/á
   e) Velmi spokojen/á

Mým výslovnostním cílem je:

   a) Znít jako rodilý mluvčí
   b) Aby mi bylo dostatečně rozumět
   c) Nemám žádný cíl

V případě, že je tvým cílem znít jako rodilý mluvčí, chtěl/a bys znít jako:

   a) Brit/Němec
   b) Američan/Rakušan
   c) Nevím
   d) Jiné:

V případě, že je tvým cílem být dostatečně srozumitelný/á, prosím vyber, jaký přízvuk je pro

tebe modelem:

   a) Britský přízvuk/Německý přízvuk
   b) Americký přízvuk /Rakouský přízvuk
   c) Přízvuk mého učitele angličtiny/němčiny
   d) Nevím
   e) Nemyslím si, že je nutné mít nějaký přízvuk jako model
   f) Jiné:

B) Zhodnocení procvičování výslovnosti

Procvičuješ rád/ráda výslovnost ve škole?

   a) Vůbec
   b) Moc ne
   c) Neutrálně
   d) Hodně
   e) Velmi
   f) Nemám tušení

Napiš svoji první myšlenku, která se ti vybaví, když se řekne 'trénink výslovnosti'.

Procvičování výslovnosti ve škole je (lze vybrat více možností):

a) Zábavné
b) Zajímavé
c) Užitečné
d) Zpestřující
e) Nudné
f) Únavné
g) Trapné
h) Zbytečné
i) Jiné:

Jaká výslovnostní cvičení/aktivity děláte běžně v rámci hodin angličtiny/němčiny?

Jak moc tě tato cvičení/aktivity baví?

a) Vůbec
b) Moc ne
c) Neutrálně
d) Hodně
e) Velmi
f) Nemám tušení

Jak moc tě baví cvičení 'listen & repeat' (poslouchej a opakuj)?

a) Vůbec
b) Moc ne
c) Neutrálně
d) Hodně
e) Velmi

Přijdou ti 'listen & repeat' cvičení užitečná?

a) Vůbec
b) Moc ne
c) Neutrálně
d) Hodně
e) Velmi

C) Feedback & Motivace

Jak často opravuje učitel tvoje výslovnostní chyby?

    a) Nikdy
    b) Zřídka
    c) Někdy
    d) Často
    e) Vždy

Jsi spokojen/á s tím, jak často tvůj učitel opravuje výslovnostní chyby?

    a) Velmi nespokojen/á
    b) Nespokojen/á
    c) Ani nespokojen/á ani spokojen/á
    d) Spokojen/á
    e) Velmi spokojen/á

Známkuje tvůj učitel výslovnost?

    a) Nikdy
    b) Zřídka
    c) Někdy
    d) Často
    e) Vždy

Dostal/a si někdy horší známku z výslovnosti než dvojku?

    a) Ano, více než jednou
    b) Ano, jen jednou
    c) Ne, nikdy, a to i přesto, že můj učitel výslovnost známkuje
    d) Ne, nikdy, protože můj učitel výslovnost nikdy neznámkuje
    e) Nevzpomínám si

Pokud tvůj učitel nikdy neznámkuje výslovnost, chtěl/a bys, aby ji známkoval?

    a) Rozhodně ne
    b) Raději ne
    c) Těžko říct
    d) Spíše ano
    e) Rozhodně ano

Jak moc si namotivovaný/á k tomu, abys pracoval/a na zdokonalení své výslovnosti?

    a) Vůbec
    b) Moc ne
    c) Neutrálně
    d) Hodně
    e) Velmi

Pokud jsi hodně nebo velmi hodně motivovaný/á, kdo nebo co tě motivuje?

Pokud nejsi moc nebo vůbec motivovaný/á, co by tě dokázalo namotivovat?

Kolik času se věnuješ angličtině/němčině mimo školu?

a) Cca 30 minut každý den
b) Cca 15 minut každý den
c) Jednou týdně
d) Méně než jednou týdně
e) Žádný čas jí mimo školu nevěnuju
f) Jiné:

Pokud se angličtině/němčině věnuješ mimo školu, prosím, napiš konkrétně, co přesně děláš, aby ses v ní zlepšil/a.