UNIVERZITA PALACKÉHO V OLOMOUCI

Pedagogická fakulta

Katedra anglického jazyka

MARKÉTA NOVÁKOVÁ

IV. ročník – prezenční studium

Obor: anglický jazyk – německý jazyk

WAYS OF IMPROVING PUPILS´ PRONUNCIATION

AT LOWER-INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

Diplomová práce

Vedoucí práce: Mgr. Zuzana Bartsch-Veselá, Ph.D.

OLOMOUC 2010

Prohlášení

Prohlašuji, že jsem diplomovou práci vypracovala samostatně a použila jen uvedených pramenů a literatury.

V Olomouci dne 11. 4. 2010

………………………….

vlastnoruční podpis

Acknowledgements

Contents

Abstract

This diploma project deals with pronunciation and the errors made in pronunciation. The research carried out in the practical part of the diploma project is devoted to the errors made in the pronunciation of English consonants and vowels. The results of this research show that the errors made by the tested group of pupils correspond to the errors commonly made by Czech learners. On account of these findings, a list of pronunciation activities is presented at the end of the diploma project. Furthermore, the evaluation of some pronunciation exercises used in English lessons is made, too.

Introduction

       This diploma project deals with the topic of pronunciation. First of all, its aim is to show the role which pronunciation plays in communication. Then, it concentrates on the aspects and especially on the factors of pronunciation. The diploma project is devoted to the individual factors and presents how much each of them can influence the teaching/learning process. As next, the concept of intelligibility and its importance for a comfortable communication is explained. The further aim of this diploma project is to give an answer to the question whether it is necessary to teach pronunciation or the learners are able to acquire the correct pronunciation just due to listening to the teacher or tape recordings. Last but not least, the errors in pronunciation and the role of English spelling are discussed. The practical part then is devoted to the errors made in individual sounds by the pupils. A research on this topic is carried out. Further, a list of possible activities and exercises for improving the pronunciation are suggested. Finally, some of the activities used in the lesson are described.

I. THEORETICAL PART

1. What is pronunciation?

First, the whole system where pronunciation belongs will be discussed in this Chapter. Later the significance of pronunciation and its role in our communication will be the focus of attention.

1.1 Pronunciation within language

To begin with, pronunciation is a part of a big unit and this unit is called *language*. Richards & Platt & Weber define language as a system of human communication which uses a structured arrangement of sounds (or their written representation) to form larger units, e.g. morphemes, words, sentences (1985, p. 153). Two different aspects of language can be distinguished – *language as a system* and *language as a skill*.

1.1.1 *Language as a system*

From this point of view conscious, it means cognitive, learning is brought into focus, accuracy is emphasized and the knowledge of language is important. Language is seen as linguistic codes and rules which mastery leads to linguistic competence. Scrivener (1994) points out that this refers to knowledge how to create grammatically correct sentences and to communicate effectively. It means that when we analyze a sentence we consider the three main fields: grammar, vocabulary (lexis) and pronunciation (phonology).

1.1.2 *Language as a skill*

From this point of view unconscious language acquisition is focused. Language is used in order to communicate, thus fluency is emphasized and the aim is the communicative competence. It means that the speaker should be able to communicate competently. In order to achieve this, the language skills are used. They are divided into receptive skills - reading and listening and productive skills – speaking and writing (Scrivener, 1994).

1.2 Importance of pronunciation and its goals

In this study, emphasis is put on the language as a system. As mentioned above, there are three main fields. One of them will be discussed deeper and that is pronunciation.

What is actually pronunciation? One of the possible answers is that pronunciation is the way a certain sound or sounds are produced. It stresses more the way how sounds are perceived by the hearer than the way they are made (Richards & Platt & Weber, 1985, p. 232). The importance of pronunciation lies in its significant role which it plays within communication. Every society, both human and non-human, is based on communication between its members. Two basic types of communication are being distinguished – verbal and non-verbal. All creatures in the world communicate but only human creatures use the verbal form – speech. Speech simply mediates the written form of a language because: "No community has ever been found to lack spoken language, but only a minority of languages have ever been written down" (David Crystal cited in Schütz, 2010). People have based their communication on the spoken language in such extend that it might happen they would not come to an understanding on the non-verbal level any more.

According to Dalton and Seidlhofer (1994) pronunciation is a production of a significant sound in two senses. First, sound is significant because it is used as a part of a code of a particular language. Therefore, pronunciation is the production and reception of sounds of speech. And second, sound is significant because it combines with other factors to make communication possible. These are so called acts of speaking.

Another fact that makes pronunciation important is that it is a part of our identity. As Dalton and Seidlhofer (1994, p. 3) claim: "...by almost everything we do, we simultaneously express ourselves and relate to others, either consciously or unconsciously." The height of our voice, intonation, the change of the pitch and the way we speak generally, all these peculiarities in our speech specify our personality.

Eventually, the pronunciation goals will be discussed. What actually should learners aim to when acquiring pronunciation? Some time ago, as Kenworthy (1987)

says, the goal should be native-like pronunciation. However, most people now believe that this is an inappropriate goal for most learners and there emerges no benefit from acquiring a native-like pronunciation. "For the majority of learners a far more reasonable goal is to be *comfortably intelligible.*" (Kenworthy, 1987, p. 3) (to read more see Chapter 4).

It also depends on certain people´s desire. If a learner wants to become a teacher of English then it is clear they want to acquire as perfect pronunciation as possible. On the other hand, if someone uses English just on rare occasions then they are satisfied if they are ´somehow understood´. Of course, also the perceivers of our utterance should be taken into account. They might understand us even with a pretty bad pronunciation but we should think of how pleasant it is for them to listen to us!

I believe that we always should think of those who will listen to us. If we talk to someone and that person asks again and again for repetition then there is something wrong probably. People we talk to should certainly not become irritated when talking to us. And this should be the main goal of all English teachers.

2. Aspects of pronunciation

One thing commonly said about English pronunciation is that it is really tricky to learn since the spelling of words is totally different from how they are spoken and every letter in English has a pretty wide range of possibilities how to be pronounced when being in combination with other letters. There are also certain aspects included in the concept of pronunciation: **sounds, stress, rhythm** and **intonation** (Ur, 1991).

2.1 Sounds

As Kenworthy (1987) mentions there are two types of sounds – *vowels* and *consonants*. These are called *phonemes* in phonology and phonetics. They are represented by *morphemes* (letters) in their written form. Every morpheme can be transcribed, which means to be written in the way it sounds. To do that we use so called **phonemic chart** (this will be discussed more in Subchapter 6.2). Sounds are combined in different ways to create syllables and syllables create words. Of course, sounds are linked together because when we speak it is not natural to pause between each word, but move smoothly from one word to the next. This phenomenon is known as *linkage of sounds* (Kenworthy 1987) (see Subchapter 4.3).

2.2 Stress

The next aspect of pronunciation is stress. Actually, there are two types of stress – *word stress* and *sentence stress.* There are certain differences between them.

2.2.1 Word stress

Word stress is pronunciation of a syllable with more force than the surrounding syllables (Richards, Platt, Weber 1985, p. 275). Actually, this kind of stress is used in two- and more-syllable words. Kenworthy (1987) claims that the stressed syllable is said a bit louder or the vowel is hold a little longer and the consonant is pronounced clearly. Ur (1991) changes this view a bit when she says that the stressed syllable is

not said louder but "it is more often a matter of a raised or lowered tone level, with a slight slowing-down".

Ur (1991) also suggests that the stress can be indicated in writing, e.g. by writing the stressed syllable in capital letters (´CAmel´) or by putting a short line above and before the stressed syllable in phonemic transcription.

2.2.2 Sentence stress

This kind of stress is used when emphasis is put on a certain word in a sentence, thus is showed its importance in the utterance. More prominence is given to a particular word (Kenworthy, 1987) because it is a new piece of information which has not been mentioned yet. When shifting stress the meaning can be changed because the changes depend upon what we want to say.

To sum up, stress is a variable and unpredictable aspect of English pronunciation. To its easier acquisition might help certain rules concerning co-occurrence of stress and endings in words. But it is not the task of this diploma project to cover this question.

2.3 Rhythm

Ur (1991) claims, that rhythm is characterized by tone-units which carry one central stressed syllable. What is more, Kenworthy (1987) compares English speech to music for both have a beat - rhythm. Actually, there are strong and weak beats. She also says that the strong beats have a tendency to fall on nouns, adjectives and adverbs whereas the weak beats on prepositions, articles and pronouns. What might be confusing for foreign learners is the fact that very often "the rhythm of a word can be identical to the rhythm of a phrase" (Wong, 1993, p. 45) and this is a very common source of problem.

2.4 Intonation

Intonation can be compared to music, too. Like in music when are people speaking they can change the pitch of their voice according to what they want to say.

There are two basic melodies which can be used – *falling* and *raising* (Kenworthy, 1987). The importance of intonation lies in its ability "to make the ´tune´ of an utterance" and that it makes "a difference to meaning" (Ur, 1991, p. 49). As Ur (1991, p. 49) also states "a native speaker usually has a little difficulty in hearing intonation changes in his or her own language; others, however, may not find it so easy".

To sum it up, a short characteristic of all of the aspects of pronunciation was outlined. According to Ur (1991) sounds are probably the most obvious and clearly defined aspect of pronunciation. However, this does not mean that attention should not be paid to the other aspects and they should not be learned or taught. On the contrary, "a learner may enunciate the sounds perfectly and still sound foreign because of unacceptable stress and intonation" (Ur, 1991, p. 47). Nunan (1991, p. 103) also points out that rhythm, stress and intonation, the so called supra-segmental features, "... are more important for comprehensible production than the individual sounds". Moreover, Dalton and Seidlhofer (1994, p. 75) highlight that "... intonation is a crucial element of verbal interaction... ". This idea supports partly even Kenworthy (1987, p. 11) with her statement that "sentence stress and intonation work together to help speakers send the precise message they want to send".

3. Factors which influence pronunciation learning

As the title already indicates there are many factors which influence the foreign language learning process. Starting with the age of the learners, their motivation and willingness to learn the language or not, continuing with their phonetic ability and ending with the importance of the role of the teacher. In the coming Chapter I will mention some of the factors and try to explain their significance in the teaching process.

3.1 Age

There are many opinions on how age of the learners affects their ability to pick up a foreign language. In my opinion, there are nearly as many theories as researchers. Children are usually being compared with adults. The first question which arises is *whether younger children learn languages better and quicker than older ones or adults*. There are many teachers or other people experienced in teaching who would claim that children are better learners. However, there is no definite answer to this question and certain points have to be kept in mind. Ur (1991) mentions that children living in a foreign environment acquire can the language apparently easily and quickly. In such conditions those children are exposed to the particular language in a big amount every day and they are simply ´forced´ to use the language in order to become a member of the society. On the other hand, the situation is totally different when the idea, that children learn better, is applied to a formal classroom. In such an environment, there is only one teacher, many learners and they are in contact just few hours per week. What is more, "young children have not as yet developed the cognitive skills and self-discipline that enable them to make the most of limited teacher-mediated information" as Ur (1991, p. 287) adds. Furthermore, Ur (1991) can see children´s disadvantage in not enough developed learning skills and strategies and little capacity for logical thought. Another argument not speaking in children´s side which highlights Clark (1990) may be that children are still developing the system of their mother tongue and their communication skills.

This of course means that what the children cannot say in their own language they cannot even say in a foreign language.

As far as the question is concerned whether children or adults learn languages more quickly, Clark (1990) comes up with in my opinion an interesting theory. He claims that in fact children learn their mother tongue very slowly. He calculates the amount of hours children are exposed to their first language during first four years of their lives and the rate of mastery they get. He guesses at around 10,000 hours and compares this with adults. "Given the average proficiency rate of an adult after only 1,000 hours of foreign language learning, the differences are staggering" Clark (1990). In addition, "much classroom learning is extensive rather than intensive making this achievement even more remarkable" (Clark, 1990, p. 7). So this assumption could be closed in Clark´s words saying that "it would be truly amazing if children did learn foreign languages more quickly than older children/adults. The truth, however, is almost certainly the reverse" (1990, p.7).

There is another assumption that ***foreign language learning should be started as soon as possible*** because there is a ´critical period´ as Ur (1991, p. 287) mentions (sometimes referred to as ´sensitive period´, too) which limits the mastery level of pronunciation in a foreign language. On the same page, she also interprets the claim of some researchers that this ´sensitive period´ means that "... biological changes take place in the brain after a certain age... ", it is said to be between 10 and 13 years. At this time people lose certain abilities and Ur (1991) adds that if they get over this period they will have considerably more difficulty acquiring a good pronunciation and that is why foreign language learning should start in schools early. Actually, there has not been reached any sufficient conclusion by researchers. Some also believe that there is no such a period.

However, Ur (1991) assumes that the ability to pick up pronunciation seems to diminish with the age because of psychological reasons. And the reason is "a need to preserve one´s identity as expressed in the way one speaks" (Ur, 1991, p. 57). Another possible explanation presents Clark (1990, p. 8) who outlines that "with very young children, the motor movements of the mouth used to produce the sounds of

their first language have not become fixed through habit, whereas....by the age of five, if not earlier, the majority of such movements will certainly have become fixed".

At any rate, the question of starting early or not is a highly discussed topic. Unfortunately, the researchers have not come to a satisfactory result yet. Kenworthy describes the Oyama study (1976 in Kenworthy, 1987, p. 4) of Italian learners of English in the USA, which results, and also the results of many other studies, "support the hypothesis that age determines the accuracy of a learner´s pronunciation". On the other hand, there are number of other studies, such as the one of Hoefnagel-Höhle (1975 in Kenworthy, 1987, p. 5) which concludes that "... youth confers no immediate advantage in learning to pronounce foreign sound". It is evident from this that there are many various opinions, interpretations and possibilities. Dalton & Seidlhofer conclude that probably no age is ideal for learning of all language aspects but add at the same time that "is has been established that due to certain psycho-sociological factors, our resistance to modifying our pronunciation increases as we get older" (1994, p. 8). To sum up, Kenworthy presents two things we could agree on: firstly, there is no evidence "for a simple and straightforward link between age and the ability to pronounce a new language" (1987, p. 6) and secondly, age is not the crucial and only factor which affects this process.

3.2 Mother tongue

Our native language (mother tongue) plays a very important role when learning a foreign language because it influences this process to a large extent. This effect of one language on the learning of another is called *language transfer* and actually, two types of language transfer may occur: *positive* and *negative transfer*. The positive transfer makes learning easier (Richards & Platt & Weber, 1985, p. 160) but this one is not important at this moment. The attention will be paid to the negative one for this diploma project is interested in the problems which may occur when learning a foreign language.

Negative transfer (also called ***interference***) makes the learning more difficult because the patterns of our native language are applied to the foreign language and therefore errors are made (Richards & Platt & Weber, 1985, p. 160).

That is also what O´Connor (2000) speaks about. He points out that the problem with picking up the sounds of a foreign language is that "our native language won´t let us". He explains that everybody has a certain number of boxes for specific sounds in their language filed in the brain. Nevertheless, every language has a different number of such boxes. When one wants to learn another language they have to build new boxes and learn how to use them. He gives as an example three sounds of English: *fin, **th**in* and ***s**in*.

f	th	s

A speaker with English as mother tongue knows these three sounds and is able to produce them without a considerable problem. On the other hand, in many other languages just two of these sounds *f* and *s* occur.

f	th	s

f	s

If a foreign listener hears a *th*-sound s/he faces a dilemma because s/he does not know where to put this *th*-sound. His/her habit forces him/her to put this sound either in *f*-box or *s*-box which s/he only knows and which are already formed. In other words, s/he hears the *th*-sound as "either a funny *f* or a funny *s,* no doubt, s/he has nowhere else to put it" (O´Connor, 2000, p. 2). And this is the same thing which happens when speaking. O´Connor adds that the only possibility how to create the new boxes and thus be able to identify and produce the foreign sounds correctly is a hard work. We have to listen to the foreign language regularly and "establish new

ways of hearing, new ways of using our speed organs, new speech habits" (O´Connor, 2000, p. 3).

Who deals with the question of interference a lot are Swan and Smith in their book *´Learner English´* (1994). They claim that this topic has been discussed a lot recently and as ever, there are two different opinions. According to the first one, the majority of learners make the same mistakes regardless of their mother tongue. On the contrary, the other one holds our native language responsible for characteristic mistakes we make.

Another author confirming the role of interference is Kenworthy who mentions that the more different the languages are, "the more difficulties the learner will have in pronouncing English" (1987, p. 4). However, she adds that this should not frighten one off and regard this as a barrier. What is more, the role of other factors should not be denied.

3.3 Amount of exposure

Another significant factor is the amount of exposure to English. Kenworthy (1987) suggests that there might be a tendency to think about it as a matter of living or not living in an English-speaking country. But this would be a too narrow view. Of course, if one stays or lives in an English-speaking environment, is exposed to the language constantly and is actually forced to use the language in everyday life, then it is a big advantage for them. However, even this is not a guarantee of acquiring of a perfect native-like pronunciation. There are many people who spent a big part of their lives in an English-speaking country and their foreign accent is still audible when they are talking and conversely many people have never spent longer time in such a country and their pronunciation is excellent. As Kenworthy outlines, various studies (e.g. Purcell & Suter, 1980 in Kenworthy, 1987, p. 6), which compared the pronunciation of such groups of people, have come up with a conclusion that amount of exposure "is not a necessary factor for the development of pronunciation skills". Nevertheless, when applied to classroom conditions, the number of lessons thus the time of exposure should be as high as possible.

3.4 Phonetic ability

Sometimes, if one does not have a ´good ear´ for languages, they can spend the whole life in an English-speaking country and they will not acquire a good pronunciation. When speaking in more linguistic terms, that is because they do not possess a so called ***phonetic coding ability*** (or ***auditory discrimination ability***). It is the ability to hear and recognize the different sounds in a language. In particular, the ability to recognize the different phonemes, and the different stress and intonation pattern (Richards & Platt & Weber, 1985, p. 22). According to Shekan (1999 cited in Reynolds, 2010), phonetic coding ability plays a significant role in foreign language acquisition because it determines to which extent the learner will be able to take advantage of their gained linguistic knowledge, both oral and written.

Kenworthy (1987) explains this ability as being a better or a worse discriminator. She also asks a question whether in this aspect different learners would benefit from different types of tasks and training or not. She mentions that one study has showed that better discriminators benefit from pronunciation drills whereas to ´poor discriminators´ are they almost of no use. She concludes that teachers cannot influence this factor much and the only thing they can do is to "provide a variety of tasks so that something will suit the needs and abilities of each learner" (Kenworthy, 1987, p. 7).

3.5 Attitude

Another factor, maybe one of the most important ones, in foreign language learning is our attitude. According to Kenworthy (1987) is attitude connected with our identity. Our identity within the community we live in. When we move to a different part of our country where another accent is spoken and we like the place and want to stay there, sooner or later, we start to use this accent. It is the feeling of ´solidarity´ which forces us to take over the speaking habits of the people around us. The feeling of ´solidarity´ is something unconscious and actually, we cannot influence it much. Unconsciously, we want to diminish the differences and want to become a member of the particular community. It is the same in the case of talking with a person with a

different accent. We adopt the way the other person speaks because we want to show that we like the conversation and we want to continue. Again, we want to reduce the differences between us (Kenworthy, 1987).

When this works within one language can it be applied to a foreign language? It is highly probable. Kenworthy (1987) confirms that many studies have shown that learners tend to acquire a better pronunciation (accent) if they have positive feelings towards the speakers of the certain language and the language itself. It means that when the teacher forms and supports in their pupils (students) the interest in the particular land, using e.g. realia, its sights, customs and peculiarities, then they stand a higher chance to be successful.

3.6 Motivation

Forming interest in something is of course closely connected with motivation. And I would make so bold as to suggest that motivation is the most significant factor in foreign language learning and in the learning process at all. Generally, when someone wants something, for example they desire to acquire a good pronunciation, then the process of learning is much easier. This is the effect of so called *intrinsic motivation.* This kind of motivation comes from people, from their personality, their wants and needs. Conversely, if one is not motivated and is not interested in whether they learn the pronunciation or not then the learning is an unpleasant task which is "never-ending".

The importance of motivation becomes apparent when teaching children. Adults usually learn a foreign language because they want it; they have a purpose for it. It might be needed for the job or they are going abroad and want to be able to order a meal. On the other hand, children rarely have such needs (Clark, 1990). When at school they do not have the possibility of choice, it is an obligation, thus learning a foreign language is unimportant and boring for them. What is more, adults "are more disciplined...and they learn, as they get older, to be patient and put up with temporary frustrations in hope...of rewards" (Ur, 1991, p. 287). In contrast, children do not have developed these abilities yet. For these reasons children have to be motivated as

much as possible. It is the *extrinsic motivation* in this case. This kind of motivation comes from outside, usually from other people-teachers. Their tool may be activities used in a lesson. So as to fulfil the purpose they should be funny, challenging and variable.

The six main factors which influence pronunciation learning were described in this Chapter. It is hard to say which one/s of them is/are the most important one/s. Even the linguists are engaged in long debates and carry out studies in hope they will find the answer. From my point of view, I would place motivation and mother tongue (native language) on the first positions. The native language because I believe that interference plays really a very important role and we are affected by it to a large extent. And motivation because as everybody knows motivation must be present at everything we do otherwise we are not successful and new inventions and ideas would have never seen the light of day.

4. Intelligibility

At the beginning of this Chapter I would like to quote Kenworthy who says that "very few teachers today would claim that a pronunciation that is indistinguishable from that of a native speaker is necessary or even desirable for their learners" (1987, p. 13). This quoting makes me to think about what then we should lead our learners to. What should be our aim in the lessons of English? To what extent good pronunciation should be required from our learners?

4.1 Native-like pronunciation versus intelligibility

All these questions direct me at the term of intelligibility. Intelligibility is defined as the degree to which a message can be understood (Richards & Platt & Weber, 1985, p. 144). We are intelligible if our utterances are always understood by listeners without too much effort. People almost always learn languages because they want to communicate with other people. And they want to communicate effectively; they want the conversation to be fluent and pleasant both for the speaker and for the listener. If this is not reached then they are unintelligible and they failed to communicate effectively. The result of all these ´clues´ is that intelligibility is the goal number one of pronunciation (Harmer, 2001).

One of the possible questions also asked at the beginning might have sounded: Which pronunciation do learners want to acquire? It might happen that some students want to acquire as much native-like pronunciation as possible because they feel that otherwise the communication would not be good enough or they just have the feeling that they get nearer the native speakers, their community and they wish to be "...accepted...as an ´honorary member´" (Dalton & Seidlhofer, 1994, p. 7). If so they should not be prevented from doing so on any account. However, accent is part of one´s own identity and a matter of self-image and because of this foreign speakers often want to preserve their own accent (Harmer, 2001). Of course, there are reasons for and against gaining a native-like pronunciation. Moreover, the native language accent is usually so strong that it is often a hard work to change it. Age is an important factor too, but this was already discussed in Subchapter 3.1.

Another problem a teacher might face is which English should serve as a model. It is generally known that there are many different kinds of English spoken throughout the world and it is a difficult task to decide which one should be the model. O´Connor (2000) emphasizes that the geographical differences and the aim with which English is used have to be taken into consideration. He gives as example areas such as India or West Africa where English is spoken for ´general communication purposes´ and it would be nonsense to teach learners living there another variation. On the other hand, if you are in an area where there is no such need then you "must take as your model some form of native English pronunciation, and which form you choose does not very much matter" (2000, p. 5). The most sensible decision may be to choose Received Pronunciation (RP for short), also referred to as ´BBC English´, which is the type of British Standard English pronunciation which has been regarded as the prestige variety and which shows no regional variation (Richards & Platt & Weber, 1985, p. 240).

4.2 When are we (un)intelligible?

Again there are many factors which influence how far we are intelligible or not. It might happen that the foreign speaker changes unconsciously one sound in a word and the listener does not understand it anymore. Or it might happen that the speech is still intelligible because the change was not so big or the listener simply grasped what the speaker wanted to say. Kenworthy (1987) compares this to parents and their child. She gives an example of a small child who cannot pronounce the /r/ sound correctly and substitutes it with a /w/-like sound which is easier to pronounce. Then the child may say: ´I see a wabbit.´ but its parents know the child can see a rabbit because /w/ counts as /r/ by their child (Kenworthy, 1987, p. 13). As it is obvious intelligibility is often connected with ´background information´ like whether one already knows the speaker and the way s/he speaks, if s/he has some speech defect (such as stutter or lisp etc.) or what one knows about the situation and so on. "When there is a great deal of this type of information available, the listener´s task is easier." (Kenworthy, 1987, p. 16)

The example of the child shows that not only the speaker´s but also the listener´s abilities are important factors affecting intelligibility. I would like to add some more factors to those connected with ´background information´ already mentioned in the previous paragraph. What counts is the knowledge of the foreign accent, the ability to predict parts of the message according to the context and work with clues when listening (Kenworthy, 1987).

What is more, a conversation is disrupted when it is full of "self-correction, hesitations, and grammatical restructurings" (Kenworthy, 1987, p. 14). These may be a sign of a lack of self-confidence, which, however, does not alter the fact that the speech is unintelligible and difficult to follow for the listener.

Another factor which influences intelligibility is the speed of speech. Sometimes, we might have the feeling that the person we are talking to is speaking too fast and we do not understand them. But, as Kenworthy (1987) emphasizes, the reason is not the high speed, and even if the speaker slowed down we would not understand them, but the fact that we are not able to catch the most important parts of the utterance. A significant fact is whether we speak with the certain person face to face or we just listen to a tape or we are on the phone. It is obvious from the article from Akihiro (2010), where he and his colleagues share the results of their study, that intelligibility is higher when speaking face to face than when just listening to an utterance without the possibility to see the speaker and the movements of their lips as well.

4.3 Sources of unintelligibility

When looking back to the definition of intelligibility it says that the intelligibility of speech is affected, apart from other things, by factors including accent and intonation, the location of pauses in the utterance and the grammatical complexity of sentences (Richards & Platt & Weber, 1985, p. 144). I would like to describe some of the problems which might emerge in the following paragraphs.

First, one of the most common problems is ***sound substitution***. This phenomenon is pretty frequent especially in connection with the *th*-sound which is pronounced either as $/ \eth /$ or $/ \theta /$ in English and does not occur in many languages. The problem is that

the speaker does not know how to pronounce this sound (as explained earlier in Subchapter 3.2) therefore they substitute the */th/*-sound with e.g. the */s/*-sound Tthus they say ´s*ick*´ instead of ´*th*ick´. The listener then has to try to guess from the context whether the speaker wanted to say ´My friend is sick´ or ´My friend is thick´ (i.e. stupid) (Kenworthy, 1987). However, if the differences in grammar (sentence construction) between languages are considered then Jeffrey A. Rocha (2010) tells the truth when he points out in his article that these differences "can add or detract from one´s ability to achieve comprehension from context".

Second, a problem which may arise is **sound deletion**. This means that a sound (consonant) or more sounds (consonants) is/are not pronounced. This happens at the beginning or at the end but sometimes even in the middle of a word. To demonstrate, the word ´hold´ is pronounced without the final ´d´ thus it sounds like ´hole´ (Kenworthy, 1987).

Third, **sound insertion**, adding a sound, may occur. In this case, the speaker usually adds a short vowel sound reminding / *ə* /. Many foreign speakers add this sound in front of words such as ´speak´ or ´spoon´ and these words sound then like two-syllable words ´a-speak´ or ´a-spoon´ (Kenworthy, 1987).

All the examples described so far concerned only the field of individual sounds. But speech is a stream of sounds without clear borders. Dalton & Seidlhofer (1994) compare speech to handwriting of an adult who also does not write the same as s/he had been taught to at a primary school. What English speakers often do is that they "insert an extra sound in order to" make the transition between two words smoother (Dalton & Seidlhofer, 1994, p. 30). They use so called **links between words**. For example a speaker says ´*go in*´, s/he adds */w/* and then it sounds like ´*go win*´ or ´*they are*´ sounds like ´*they jare*´.

A link can be a consonant put between two words, when one word is ending and the other one starting with a vowel. Some accents of English, such as RP (see 4.1), spell but do not pronounce the / r / in words when this comes after a vowel, e.g. ´*far*´, ´*bear*´, ´*better or worse*´. However, when speaking English speakers use unconsciously this / r / even though they think they do not. We call it **linking ´r´**. Nevertheless, there is another kind of ´*r*´, among linguists known as **intrusive ´r´**,

which is not present in the spelling but it is pronounced. An example might be: *´Law-r-and order´*. Both these *´r´* are used in order to make the pronunciation smoother, natural and without gaps between words.

Speakers of English have also the tendency to "stick" the final consonant of a word to the following word if this starts with a vowel. When doing this *´famous homophonous pairs´* (Dalton & Seidlhofer, 1994, p. 31) emerge, e.g. *´I scream / ice cream´*, *´an aim / a name´*, *´new display / nudist play´* etc.

It has been dealt with so called segmental features so far. Further, the supra-segmental features will be described: stress, rhythm and intonation (see Chapter 2) and the role they play in intelligibility will be discussed. As these are more difficult to learn, they also cause a bigger problem. Kenworthy (1987) emphasizes that English native speakers pay much attention to the **stress** pattern of their language. What´s more, she points out that many studies have shown that "...often when a native speaker mishears a word, it is because the foreigner has put the stress in the wrong place, not because he or she mispronounced the sounds of the word" (p. 18). As an example she uses the word *´comfortable´* which was pronounced with the stress being on the second syllable so the listener heard *´come for a table´*.

As far as the **rhythm** is concerned English also has a specific rhythm which the native speakers expect to hear. It is needed that stressed and unstressed syllables take turns regularly. In other words, it is as if you were expecting to dance waltz but your partner would start tango (Kenworthy, 1987).

Lastly, there is the **intonation** whose incorrect usage can lead to misunderstanding as well. The inappropriate intonation does not cause wrong identification of words but the problem might arise if a speaker does not vary the pitch or melody and the speech sounds monotonous. Then the listener gets the impression that the speaker is not interested in what is being talked about. Thus people can make judgements about one´s character or attitudes which are not true.

In this Chapter, it was found out what intelligibility is and which factors can affect the comprehensibility of the utterances in rather a negative way. To summarize, native speakers with sufficient background knowledge have hardly ever problems to recognize the right words which were pronounced badly. They are experienced enough in which words are most likely to co-occur together and in which context. Conversely, foreign speakers usually have not developed an adequate knowledge of such collocations and language aspects and that is the reason why they are uncertain in their judgements about the relevance of what they are hearing. Furthermore, the attention has to be paid to the fact that there are not only linguistic but also psychological factors which influence our perception. Among such factors can be a noisy environment or any kind of excitement. All these conditions are more noticeable for not native speakers.

5. Teaching pronunciation

As it was mentioned in the last lines of the previous Chapter, there are many factors which influence our perception. Among these are not only linguistic but also other factors, such as noise or different kinds of excitement (whether happiness or sadness), and these cause much more difficulties for non-native speakers. This brings me to the thought that if the non-native speakers are prepared enough in the linguistic respect they can cope better with the other factors which we cannot influence. With respect to this the learners should have sufficient training both in perception and in production of the sounds of the foreign language. Of course, the question whether it is important to teach pronunciation might arise.

5.1 Is it necessary to teach pronunciation?

When asking this question the word to TEACH is stressed. Many teachers do not pay attention to pronunciation and they do not teach it at all because they think that their learners acquire it without specific teaching too (Harmer, 2001). Although it is true that the learners have an acceptable command of pronunciation even without teaching it, but, on the other hand, there is evidence that some training and correction improve not only the pronunciation (Ur, 1991) but also the learners´ speaking and intelligibility. And intelligibility is the prime goal of pronunciation (see Subchapter 4.1). Similarly, Ur expresses the opinion that teaching pronunciation is probably not as essential as, for example teaching grammar or vocabulary, but "this does not mean it should not be done at all" (1991, p. 55). She suggests to do short tasks aimed at problematic aspects.

What is more, the unpredictable word stress in English is one more difficulty speaking in favour of teaching pronunciation. Regarding the stress, Kenworthy (1987) points out that if the foreign speaker produces a word using a wrong sentence pattern then it is highly probable that the native speaker will not grasp the word, even if the majority of the sounds have been pronounced correctly. The reason for this is that the native speaker cannot match what s/he can hear with what s/he has in her/his ´mental dictionary´. As to the role of stress, Wong (1993) also highlights that

correct pronunciation does not only include sounds but intonation, rhythm and the already mentioned stress are significant elements, too. Thus, any learner aiming at communicating in English properly needs to master all of these aspects.

Furthermore, as having insufficient knowledge of the foreign language learners are not able to find out what is important for them. Thus they need some explanation provided by a person competent in the certain area. Of course, there are naturally gifted learners who can ´pick up´ a pronunciation on their own or just by listening to the language but the majority of the learners need a teacher who would ´show them the way´. Actually, learning the pronunciation of a language is a complex task which needs to be structured. Seeing that, there should be a teacher who would do this job for the learners. With regard to this fact, the question, which teachers are competent and which not, can emerge. Teachers of languages should have adequate knowledge of the language they are teaching and practical or linguistic proficiency is not enough. Since as Dalton and Seidlhofer highlight "if it were, then anybody able to speak a particular language would be qualified to teach it". In addition, they add that "... pedagogic competence does not necessarily follow from linguistic competence" (1994, p. 67).

As mentioned before, it is the teacher´s job to plan out and lead the teaching process. Learning a foreign language means building new sets of habits. It is important to know, that before learners can produce the sounds they have to hear them; they have to learn to perceive them (Dalton & Seidlhofer, 1994). In other words, if the learners cannot distinguish between sounds, they cannot produce them correctly. As an example, we can use the *th*-sound. This sound exists in English but maybe does not exist in the learner´s native language. It means that the learner does not know this sound at all – both how it sounds and how it is ´made´ in the mouth. Thus it would be difficult for the learner to start straight with producing this sound. So the learner has to learn to recognize the sound first and then they can try to learn how to pronounce it. Harmer suggests that "the key to successful pronunciation teaching...is rather to have them (the learners) listen and notice how English is spoken" (2001, p. 185). We call it ´ear-training´ which can also be defined as systematic practice in listening to sounds in order to improve one´s ability to recognize and distinguish different sounds (Wells & Colson, 1994). However, an

essential condition is that the learners do not just listen to the tapes. The best model would probably be a native speaker but this is not always feasible. Thus, the nearest person the learners can imitate is their teacher, which means that the teacher´s pronunciation should be as fluent and accurate as possible (English Language Services, 1968). What is more, if the teacher and her/his students have identical native language then s/he knows its phonetic and phonological characteristics and can understand and anticipate the learning difficulties better. Thus s/he also stands a better chance to avoid the negative interference of the native language which causes a break-down in communication and acquiring of inappropriate speech habits (Urbanová, 1986).

5.2 Common European Framework

The answer to this question can be found in the ***Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*** (CEF) which provides the objectives, content and methods of assessing and teaching. These can be applied to all languages in Europe. The European Framework describes the six reference levels (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2) which are widely accepted and enable the learners of English to assess their individual language proficiency (Common European Framework, 2001).

In chapter 5: The user/learner´s competences the *communicative language competences* are described. Among these belong also the *linguistic competences*. Within the linguistic competences the *lexical*, *grammatical*, *semantic*, *phonological*, *Orthographic* and *Orthoepic* competence are distinguished. According to the Framework (2001), the phonological competence involves a knowledge of, and skill in the perception and production of, apart from other things, the sound-units (*phonemes*) of the language and their realisation in particular contexts (*allophones*), the phonetic features which distinguish phonemes (e.g. voicing, rounding, nasality, plosion) and sentence phonetics (such as sentences stress and rhythm, intonation, phonetic reduction etc.). The description of particular reference levels tells that at the A2 level (the level which pupils should reach at the end of the primary school): "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." (Common European Framework, 2001, p. 117).

In the next chapter, some methodological options for modern language learning and teaching concerning pronunciation are suggested. It says that learners should be expected / required to develop their ability to pronounce a language for example:

- simply by exposure to authentic spoken utterances

- by chorused imitation of the teacher, audio-recorded native speakers, video-recorded native speakers

- by reading aloud phonetically weighted textual material

- by ear-training and phonetic drilling

- with the use of phonetically transcribed texts

(CEF, 2001, p. 153)

Another guideline describing the learner´s competences is ***Rámcový vzdělávací program pro základní vzdělávání*** (RVP). It says that the learner "can pronounce and read phonetically correctly adequately to her/his vocabulary and is able to distinguish between the written and spoken form of a word" (RVP, 2006, p. 26).

To conclude, as it is apparent, even the Common European Framework and Rámcový vzdělávací program define the phonological competences of learners at primary schools and suggest ways how pronunciation should be practised and taught. As far as I am concerned, I am on the side of those who believe that learning and teaching pronunciation is worth doing. I totally agree with Dalton and Seidlhofer (1994) and their note that it is important to teach learners perceive sounds first, and then to start producing them. As an example, I would like to present the case of the Finnish. As far as the Finnish speakers are concerned, they do not distinguish

between the sounds / *s* / and / *ʃ* /. This of course may cause problems when learning English because they might pronounce the word *sense* as / *ʃens* / and *shirt* as / *sɜːt* /. Although the teacher could try to pronounce such words as accurately as possible, but there would be no point in it because the Finnish learners simply cannot hear the difference between them. This would certainly lead to communication misunderstandings and the speakers could not be treated as intelligible. However, if the teacher tells their students right at the beginning that / *s* / and / *ʃ* / are two different sounds and they would do enough listening tasks directed at distinguishing between them then the students would pay more attention to it and their pronunciation would be much more intelligible. Consequently, as Nunan (1991) highlights, pronunciation is a neglected skill and if teachers do not devote at least some time to it in their lessons many unnecessary errors might arise.

6. Errors in pronunciation

In the previous Chapter, the topic of errors in pronunciation was already slightly mentioned. Of course, there are more reasons why foreign learners make them. Ur (1991) gives us three possible sources of errors. Firstly, a particular sound does not exist in the speaker´s native language and therefore they tend to substitute it with something they know (see Subchapter 3.2). Secondly, the particular sound exists in the native language, but "not as a separate phoneme", which means that "the learner does not perceive it as a distinct sound that makes a difference to meaning" (Ur, 1991, p. 52) (see Chapter 5). And thirdly, the learners produce the sounds right, but their intonation, stress or rhythm are wrong.

However, there is one more source which causes problems, no less important, and that is the English spelling.

6.1 Sounds and spelling

As Ur (1991) mentions there is a clear correspondence between sounds and symbols (letters) in most languages. Thus the pronunciation of a word can be predicted from its spelling to a certain extent. Nevertheless the pronunciation of English words is diametrically opposite from how they are written. This characterises best the following statement that "written English and spoken English are obviously very different things" (O´Connor, 2000, p. 9). A problem might arise when learners are used to the fact that in their native language one letter stands for one sound only. However, this is not the case of English. In this aspect, English is not strictly regular and one letter may stand for several sounds. We can demonstrate this on the example of the letter ´*a*´. In the word:

*ba*nana it stands for / ə /

*ba*ther it stands for / eɪ /

m*a*n it stands for / æ /

m*a*ny it stands for / e /   (O´Connor, 2000, p. 7)

As it is apparent, the letter ´*a*´ stands for four different sounds and these are not all the possibilities yet. The most common problem with foreign speakers is when they come across a new word in a text and they have to read it aloud. In such case, according to Kenworthy (1987), the speaker has to use what s/he knows about the spelling conventions of the particular language (in our case English) and try to predict the pronunciation. S/he can come up with more possible pronunciations and ´try them out´. With this in mind, O´Connor (2000) points out that letters are useful to remind us of corresponding sounds, but they cannot make us pronounce them.

Furthermore, Haycraft (1971) and Ur (1991) come to an agreement that the more new sounds, which have nothing in common with those from the native language, there are in the alphabet, the better these are acquired by the learners. Of course, their acquiring will not be without any problem but the learning process will not be disrupted by interference (negative transfer - see Subchapter 3.2).

Finally, there is another problem spelling can cause. Foreign learners who use the Roman alphabet as English does use more or less the same letters but these might represent different sounds in different languages. Kenworthy (1987) gives the example of German speakers. In German the letter ´*v*´ stands for the sound / *f* / as in ´*f*un´; in English it stands for the sound / *v* / as in ´*v*ision´. At the same time, the letter ´*w*´ stands in German for the sound / *v* / as in ´very´ but in English for the sound / *w* / as in ´*w*ill´. Since German learners are aware of this ´danger´ they are trying to avoid making a mistake so much that it causes an "´over-reaction´ and some learners begin to pronounce English words beginning with ´*v*´ with the new sound / *w* / as well" (Kenworthy, 1987, p. 98). So the word ´*very*´ becomes ´*wery*´ then.

6.2 Phonemic transcription

However, besides some other authors, Dalton and Seidlhofer (1994) offer a solution how to be able to concentrate on sounds and try to free oneself from the spelling. This tool is called ***phonemic transcription***. Richards & Platt & Weber (1985, p. 216) say that phonemic transcription is a method which uses special symbols from the *International Phonetic Alphabet* (also *IPA*) which express the

sounds of an actual spoken utterance in writing. The transcription of such an utterance in phonetic symbols is then *phonemic notation* or *script* which is written in square brackets.

Harmer (2001) asks a question whether it is good or not to use phonemic transcription with learners. He states that it is possible to teach foreign learners the sounds of English without using any phonemic symbols. The teacher can just describe how the sounds are made in the mouth and say the words enough times that the learners have enough opportunity to notice the difference. Despite this fact, he simultaneously lists the advantages of using phonemic symbols.

First of all, most of the dictionaries give apart from the translation of a particular word also its phonemic transcription using phonemic symbols. When the learners know these symbols they can read them and find out the pronunciation without having to hear the word.

Further, if both the learner and the teacher know these symbols it is easier for the teacher to explain the learner which mistake s/he did and where did it occur. Almost every students´ book of English contains also a phonemic chart (see Appendix 1 Figure 1).

Finally, the symbols can be used for various pronunciation games and tasks in the classroom. Thus they can liven up the lesson and make learning pronunciation funnier. There are various books containing such games and tasks.

As Harmer (2001) further mentions some teachers might oppose that learning the symbols is useless and unnecessarily burdens the learners. Nevertheless, even this assumption has a solution. The teacher can teach their learners the symbols gradually or the learners´ task is just to recognise not produce the symbols.

6.3 Most common errors of Czech learners

It was already mentioned why foreign learners make errors in pronunciation. The most frequent reasons are the interference of the native language and the disruptive influence of the English spelling. In this Subchapter I would like to mention some of the most common errors of Czech learners concentrating on the segmental features:

CONSONANTS

1) Problematic consonants are / θ / and / ð /. The reason for this is that both these consonants do not exist in Czech thus they are totally new for the Czech learners. They usually substitute them with similar Czech ones:

- [θ] with *f* or *s* → *three* [θriː] → [friː] or [sriː]

- [ð] with *d* or *dz* → *this* [ðɪs] → [dɪs] or [dzɪs]

2) The consonant / ŋ / in Czech appears only before [k] and [g], but in English also at the end of a word (final position) and before a vowel (prevocalic position). In such cases, it is difficult for Czech learners to pronounce it.

Final position - the final G is, incorrectly, pronounced:

- *ring* [rɪŋ] → [rɪŋg] or [rɪŋk]

Prevocalic position – the spelled G gets lost even if it should be pronounced:

- *finger* [fɪŋgə(r)] → [fɪŋə(r)]

3) The consonant / w / often causes the same problem as to the German speakers, [v] and [w] are confused:

- *very well* might be pronounced either [weri vel], [veri vel] or [weri wel]

4) The consonant / r / is in RP (see Subchapter 4.1) pronounced only in the prevocalic position and actually, it only lengthens the preceding vowel; nevertheless

Czech learners pronounce it even in the final and preconsonantal position (before a consonant):

- *park* [pɑːk] → [pɑːrk]

- *hear* [hɪə(r)] → [hɪər]

5) The consonant */ h /* is not pronounced in the initial position in English but Czech learners do pronounce it:

- *heir* [eə(r)] → [heə(r)]

This is similar with some other consonants which are pronounced where they should not such as:

- */b/* in *mb → bomb* or *bt → debt*

- */d/* in *→ Wednesday*

- */k, g/* in initial *kn, gn → knee*, *gnaw*

- */w/* in *→ answer* or initial *wr →wrong*

- */p/* in initial *ps → psychology*

- */n/* in *mn → damn*

- */l/* in *→ calm*

6) Czech learners do not preserve the voicing of final consonants; they do not fully pronounce them:

- *scab* [skæb] → [skæp]

- *boys* [bɔɪz] → [bɔɪs]

- *played* [pleɪd] → [pleɪt]

7) Problem also causes the aspiration of */ p, t, k /*; Richards & Platt & Weber (1985) describe aspiration as a little puff of air that sometimes follows a speech sound.

VOWELS

1) Very often, Czech learners have problem with pronunciation of the ´schwa´ vowel:

- *away* [əˈweɪ] sounds rather as [ɛˈweɪ]

2) Czech speakers also do not hold the length of vowels and have a tendency to shorten the longer ones. Actually, there are three types of vowel lengths:

- "short" vowel + voiceless consonant → *bit*

- "short" vowel + voiced consonant or "long" vowel + voiceless consonant → *bid, beat*

- "long" vowel + voiced consonant → *bead*

What´s more, Czech learners also do not discriminate the quality of vowels. The difference between these words does not lie in the length of the vowels but in their different quality:

- *bed* pronounced like [bɛd]

- *bad* pronounced like [bɛd]

3) Czech learners have a tendency to exaggerate the second element in diphthongs even if in English it should be shorter than the first one. This happens especially in [aɪ, eɪ, ɔɪ]:

- *high* [haɪ] → [haːj]

- *boy* [bɔɪ] → [boːj]

- *scale* [skeɪl] → [skeːjl]

In addition, Czech learners tend to pronounce the diphthong [əʊ] like [oʊ], then the word sounds:

- *bow* [bəʊ] → [bɔʊ]

Moreover, many of the learners have also problem to pronounce the second element of [əʊ] properly:

- *go* [gəʊ] → [gɒ]

(Skaličková, 1982, p. 185-189)

This Chapter was dedicated to the errors in pronunciation and especially to the causes of errors. As it is obvious, as far as English is concerned, the main source of errors in pronunciation is the English spelling which is pretty tricky. Its delicacy lies in its irregularity and, above all, in the fact that words are pronounced differently from how they are spelled. This causes many problems to foreign speakers learning English in whose native languages words are pronounced according to how they are spelled. It was also found out that there is one "tool" which could help to cope with the English spelling and make the process of acquiring a good pronunciation easier. The "tool" is called phonemic transcription. Phonemic transcription uses phonemic symbols which are used to express sounds in writing.

Since this diploma project wants to concentrate on Czech learners further, I summarized the most common errors Czech learners do in English pronunciation in Subchapter 6.3. I concentrated on the segmental features, which means on particular sounds of English, and the errors Czech learners do when pronouncing them. On purpose, I did not mention suprasegmental features and problems connected with them Czech learners have because it is not the aim of my diploma project.

II. PRACTICAL PART

7. The Aims of the Practical part

As mentioned previously, the practical part of this diploma project deals with pronunciation errors which can occur by Czech learners. The research made in this diploma project is focused only on the segmental features. It means on the individual sounds which create words – vowels and consonants. The aim of the practical part then is to give answers to these questions:

- Do the pupils at lower-intermediate level in this class make more mistakes when reading aloud than when talking without notes?

- If so, does it mean that they are influenced negatively by the spelling of words when they are reading?

- Do the errors these pupils do correspond to the errors described as most common by Czech learners?

8. Research description

This research was carried out at Základní škola Zeyerova in Olomouc. The research was undertaken in the class 6. C. This class is taught by an experienced teacher and they have three English lessons per week. There are 23 pupils in this class and their age is between 11 and 12 years. All of them took part in the research. I decided to use the method of the analysis of tape recordings. The pupils´ task was to do two speaking activities. Since this was their first experience with making a recording their nervousness influenced partly the grammatical correctness of their utterances.

8.1 Description of the speaking activities

As already mentioned in the previous paragraph, there were two pronunciation activities the pupils had to carry out:

1) The first activity was a description of a picture (see Appendix 2 Figure 2). The picture was taken from the magazine R&R - An English Magazine For You. This magazine was used by the teacher and the pupils worked with it in their English lessons. The pupils did not see the picture before but they learned a few phrases in the previous English lesson. Now they had to talk on their own, without notes. The aim of this activity was to find out how good was their pronunciation when not being influenced by the spelling.

2) The second activity was reading an article aloud (see Appendix 3). The article was taken from LOOK 1! TEST BOOK. This test book belongs to the book the pupils use in their English lessons and they have already come across this article. The pupils learned the vocabulary used in this article before thus they were familiar with it. This article is describing the appearance of Harry Potter. It also mentions his best friends Ron and Hermione and their nature. In my opinion, this topic was close to the pupils. In comparison with the first activity, the aim was now to find out whether the pupils make more pronunciation errors when being influenced by the spelling of the words.

I made a recording of their utterances and then I analysed the recordings. The segmental features, individual sounds, were in my focus of attention. In order to be able to process the data I made phonemic transcription of words which were mispronounced. I have determined the RP as standard because this one is used in dictionaries and is also taught at schools. As the next step I made a table showing the errors in pronunciation of vowels and consonants the pupils made. I made such tables for the first and the second activity separately. Then I summarized the errors made by the pupils and finally I draw the conclusions.

9. Analysis of tape recordings

First, I analysed the description of a picture. As noted before the pupils had to talk without notes. So the grammatical mistakes which occur in their utterances should be tolerated with respect to this fact and also with respect to their nervousness. In addition, there were some imperfections and noises in the recordings so it was sometimes difficult to recognize the right sound the pupils made. However, I tried to note their utterances the best I could.

9.1 Description of a picture

Speaker 1: There [de(r)] are a man [mɛn] in a office in the picture. He has [hɛs] brown hair and blue eyes [iːs]. He is [ɪs] working [wɔrkɪŋg] in a computer and he is [ɪs] looking [lʊkɪŋg] in the paper.

Speaker 2: There [de(r)] is [ɪs] a one man [mɛn]. He is [ɪs] sitting [sɪtɪŋg]. He wear a [e] blue T-shirt. He has got a [e] computer.

Speaker 3: There is man in the picture. He is probably [prɒbebli] engineer [ɪndʒenɪər] job. He is wearing [verɪŋg] blue shirt.

Speaker 4: There [deɪr] is man [mɛn] in the picture. He is probably [prɒbedli] engineer [ɪndʒenɪər] job. He is wearing [weərɪŋg] blue T-shirt.

Speaker 5: There is man [mɛn] in the picture [pɪtʃɜːr]. He is [ɪs] brown hair. He is [ɪs] blue shirt.

Speaker 6: He has [hes] got blue T-shirt. He has [hes] got brown hair [hɪər]. He is sitting [sɪtɪŋg].

Speaker 7: This [dɪs] is [ɪs] man in the picture. He is play on the computer. He is wearing [weːrɪŋg] blue sweatshirt.

Speaker 8: There [deər] is man in the picture. He is blue T-shirt. He is brown hair [heːər]. He thinks [fɪnks].

Speaker 9: Is man in the picture. He is wearing [weːrɪŋg] a blue shirt. He is sitting [sɪtɪŋg].

Speaker 10: There [deɪr] are man [men]. He is blue T-shirt, brown hair. He is sitting [sɪtɪŋg].

Speaker 11: There [deər] is [ɪs] man in the picture. Has [hes] got a brown hair and [ænt] blue vest. Working [wərkɪŋg] is a computer.

Speaker 12: There [der] is [ɪs] man in the picture. He´s got brown hair [heːr] and [ent] brown eyes [ajs]. He is happy.

Speaker 13: Has got computer. Has [hez] got green hair and black eyes [ɪərs]. He got blue shirt.

Speaker 14: There [deər] is a man in the picture [pɪktʃɜː]. He is [ɪs] blue a T-shirt and he is short [ʃɔːrt] hair. He is engineer [ɪndʒenɪər].

Speaker 15: There [deər] is picture man. He is probably [prɒbedli] engineer [ɪndʒenɪər]. He is probably [prɒbedli] in home.

Speaker 16: There [deər] is a man. He´s probably engineer [ɪndʒenɪər] job. He has got blue shirt and brown hair [her].

Speaker 17: This [dɪs] is [ɪs] a man in the picture. He is [ɪs] probably [prɒbebli] engineer [ɪndʒenɪər]. He is [ɪs] blue shirt and [ænt] he is [ɪs] brown hair.

Speaker 18: There [dær] is one man in this [dɪs] picture. He´s wearing [veːrɪŋ] blue T-shirt. He was [wɔːs] blue eyes [aɪs]. I don´t like this [dɪs] picture.

Speaker 19: There [deər] is in the picture man. He is probably engineer [ɪnjenɪər]. He wearing [veərɪŋ] blue T-shirt [tiːʃɜː] and [en] he has [hes] brown short hair.

Speaker 20: There [deər] is [ɪs] man in the picture. He is [ɪs] probably [prɒbedli] engineer [ɪndʒenɪər] job. He has got brown short [ʃɒrt] hair. He has got blue shirt.

Speaker 21: There [deər] is a man in the picture. He is [ɪs] probably [prɒbebli] an [en] engineer [ɪndʒenɪər]. He is [ɪs] sitting [sɪtɪŋg] and working [vɒrkɪŋg].

Speaker 22: There [deər] is [ɪs] a man in the picture. He is [ɪs] probably an [en] engineer [ɪndʒenɪər] job. He has got brown hair, he has got blue shirt.

Speaker 23: There [deər] is a man in the picture. He probably [prɒbebli] an [en] engineer [ɪndʒenɪər]. He has got short hair and has got a shirt.

9.2 Summary of errors

consonant	mispronunciation	speaker	example
[θ]	[f]	8	thinks
[ð]	[d]	1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23	there, this
[ŋ]	[ŋg], [n]	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 18, 19, 21 8	looking, sitting, wearing, working thinks
[w]	[v]	3, 18, 19, 21	wearing, working
[r]	pronounced in final and preconsonantal position	6, 8, 12, 14, 16, 20	hair, short
voicing of final consonant **-s [z]**	[s]	1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22	has, is, this, eyes, was
-d [d]	[t]	11, 12, 17	and

vowel	mispronunciation	speaker	example
schwa [ə]	[e]	2, 19, 22, 23	a, an
[eə]	[e], [eɪ], [æ], [eː], [eːə]	1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 18	hair, there
length [ɔː]	[ɒ]	20	short
[ɒ]	[ɔː]	18	was
discrimination of the quality [æ]	[e]	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 13, 19	man, has
diphthongs [aɪ]	[iː], [aj], [ɪə]	1, 12, 13	eyes

First, I focused on the errors made in pronouncing consonants. According to the table, the **[ð]**, **[ŋ]** and **[r]** sounds were the most problematic ones for the pupils. The vast majority of the pupils pronounced instead of [ð] the sound [d]. In my opinion, the reason for this is that this sound does not exist in the Czech language and the learners simply do not know how to ´make ´ the sound in their mouth. As a result, they substitute the sound for something they already know and this is the [d] sound. This error was done in words *there* and *this*.

The next problematic sound was [ŋ]. Since this sound exists in Czech only before [k] and [g] the Czech learners are not able to pronounce it at the end of a word or before a vowel. Instead of [ŋ] they pronounced [ng] very clearly. This error was done especially in the progressive forms of verbs such as *looking, sitting* and *wearing.* This sound appeared also in the word *think.* In this case the pupil pronounced [nk].

Another error which I registered was pronouncing of [r] in the final and preconsonantal position, which is not accepted by RP. The [r] sound was pronounced in words *hair* and *short.* According to the fact that RP is taught at schools, this should be regarded as a mistake. On the other hand, pronouncing of [r] in the final and preconsonantal position is accepted in the American English and in other accents, too. Thus it depends on the teacher whether s/he assesses this as a mistake.

Lastly, the final consonants *–s* and *–d* were not voiced properly thus they sounded as unvoiced. This occurred in the words *has, is, this, eyes, was* and in the word *and.*

As far as vowels are concerned, these did not cause so many problems. This might be because the Czech language uses most of them as well. The only problematic sounds were those which do not exist in the Czech language: **[ə]** and **[æ]**. The schwa [ə] was mispronounced in indefinite articles *a* and *an.* Moreover, when schwa was in combination with [eə], like in words *hair* and *there*, it was either not pronounced at all or totally differently such as [eɪ] or [eː].

The quality of [æ] was discriminated and it was not pronounced properly so that it sounded like [e] in words *man* and *has.*

9.3 Reading an article

Speaker 1: Harry has [hæs] got glasses [glɑːsiːs] and a scar [scɑːr] on his face. He´s got short, black hair and blue eyes [iːz]. His favourite sport [spɒrt] is Quidditch. Harry has got two best friends [freːnds]. Their [deər] names are Ron and Hermione. Ron has a lot of [ɒf] brothers and sisters. Ron isn´t very confident [kɒnfiːnt] but he is brave [brʌv]. Harry and Hermione are brave [brʌv], too.

Speaker 2: Harry has got glasses and a scar on his face. He´s got short, black hair [haːr] and blue eyes. His favourite [feɪvɒrɪt] sport is Quidditch. Harry has got two best friends. Their [dejr] names are Ron and Hermione. Ron has a lot of [ɒf] brothers [brʌdrs] and sisters. Ron isn´t very [weri] confident but he is brave. Harry and Hermione are brave, too.

Speaker 3: Harry has got glasses and a scar on his face. He´s got short, black hair and blue eyes [eɪs]. His favourite sport is Quidditch. Harry has [hes] got two best friends. Their [deə] names [neɪm] are Ron and Hermione. Ron has a lot of brothers [brʌdrs] and sisters. Ron isn´t very [weri] confident [kɒnfiːdent] but he is brave. Harry and Hermione are brave, too.

Speaker 4: Harry has got glasses and a scar [sk3ːr] on his face. He´s got short, black hair and blue eyes. His [hiːs] favourite sport is Quidditch. Harry has [hes] got two best friends. Their [heər] names are Ron and Hermione. Ron has [hes] a lot of [ɒf] brothers and sisters. Ron isn´t very confident [kɒnfiːd] but he is [es] brave [braːv]. Harry and Hermione are brave, too.

Speaker 5: Harry has got glasses and a scar [skɜːr] on his face. He´s got short, black hair and blue eyes. His favourite sport is Quidditch. Harry has [hes] got two best friends. Their [deɪr] names are Ron and [end] Hermione. Ron has [hes] a lot of [ɒf] brothers [brɒdrs] and [end] sisters. Ron isn´t very confident [kɒnfiːdɪt] but he is brave. Harry and [end] Hermione are brave, too.

Speaker 6: Harry has got glasses and a [e] scar [skeər] on his face. He´s got short [ʃɔːrt], black hair and blue eyes. His favourite sport is Quidditch. Harry has got two best friends. Their [theɪr] names are Ron and Hermione. Ron has a lot of brothers and sisters. Ron isn´t very confident [kɒnfɪdent] but he is brave. Harry and Hermione are brave, too.

Speaker 7: Harry has got glasses and a scar on his face. He´s got short, black hair and blue eyes. His favourite sport [spɒrt] is Quidditch. Harry has [hes] got two best friends. Their [deər] names [neɪm] are Ron and Hermione. Ron has a lot of [ɒf] brothers [brʌdərs] and sisters. Ron isn´t very confident [kɒnfɪnt] but he is brave. Harry and Hermione are brave, too.

Speaker 8: Harry has got glasses and a scar on his face. He´s got short, black hair and blue eyes. His favourite sport is Quidditch. Harry has got two best friends. Their [deɪr] names are Ron and Hermione. Ron has a lot of brothers and sisters. Ron isn´t very [weri] confident [kɒnfiːdet] but he is brave [bref]. Harry and Hermione are brave [bref], too.

Speaker 9: Harry has got glasses and a scar on his face. He´s got short, black hair and blue eyes. His favourite sport is Quidditch. Harry has got two best friends. Their names are Ron and Hermione. Ron has a lot of [ɒf] brothers [brʌdərs] and sisters. Ron isn´t very confident [kɒnfiːdɪt] but he is brave. Harry and Hermione are brave, too.

Speaker 10: Harry has got glasses and a scar [skær] on his face. He´s got short, black hair and blue eyes. His favourite sport is Quidditch. Harry has got two best friends [frænds]. Their [deɪr] names are Ron and Hermione. Ron has a lot of brothers and sisters. Ron isn´t very [weri] confident [kɒnfiːdənt] but he is brave. Harry and Hermione are brave, too.

Speaker 11: Harry has got glasses [glaːs] and [ent] a [e] scar on his face. He´s got short, black hair and blue eyes [ɪərs]. His favourite sport is Quidditch. Harry has got two best friends. Their [deər] names are Ron and Hermione. Ron has a lot of brothers and sisters. Ron isn´t very [weri] confident [kɒnfɪd] but he is brave [brev]. Harry and Hermione are brave, too.

Speaker 12: Harry has got glasses [glesəs] and a scar on his face. He´s got short, black hair and blue eyes. His favourite sport is Quidditch. Harry has got two best friends. Their [deɪr] names [neɪm] are Ron and Hermione. Ron has a lot of [ɒf] brothers [brʌdərs] and sisters. Ron isn´t very [weri] confident [kɒnfɪdənt] but he is brave. Harry and Hermione are brave, too.

Speaker 13: Harry has [hez] got glasses [glesɪt] and a scar [skɜːr] on his face. He´s got short, black [blek] hair and blue eyes. His favourite sport is Quidditch. Harry has got two best friends. Their [heər] names are [eər] Ron and Hermione. Ron has a lot of [ɒf] brothers and sisters. Ron isn´t very [weri] confident [kɒnfiːdent] but he is brave. Harry and Hermione are brave, too.

Speaker 14: Harry has got glasses [glaːsəs] and a scar [skær] on his face. He´s got short, black hair and blue eyes [iːs]. His favourite sport is Quidditch. Harry has got two best friends [frænds]. Their [deɪr] names are [eər] Ron and Hermione. Ron has a lot of brothers and sisters. Ron isn´t very confident [kɒndɪfənt] but he is brave. Harry and Hermione are brave [briːf], too.

Speaker 15: Harry has got glasses and a scar [skær] on his face. He´s got short, black hair and blue eyes. His [hiːz] favourite sport is Quidditch. Harry has got two best friends. Their [deər] names are Ron and Hermione. Ron has a lot of brothers and sisters. Ron isn´t [ɪsnt] very [weri] confident [kɒnfɪdənt] but he is brave. Harry and Hermione are brave, too.

Speaker 16: Harry has got glasses and a scar [kær] on his face. He´s got short, black hair and blue eyes. His favourite sport [ʃɒrt] is Quidditch. Harry has got two best friends. Their [deɪr] names [neɪm] are Ron and Hermione. Ron has a lot of brothers and sisters [sɪstər]. Ron isn´t very [weri] confident but he is brave. Harry and Hermione are brave, too.

Speaker 17: Harry has got glasses [glesɪs] and a scar on his face. He´s [hes] got short, black [blek] hair and blue eyes [eɪs]. His [hiːs] favourite sport is [ɪs] Quidditch. Harry has [hes] got two best friends. Their names are [ər] Ron and Hermione. Ron has [hes] a lot of brothers and [ʌnt] sisters. Ron isn´t very [weri] confident [kənfiːd] but he is brave. Harry and Hermione are brave, too.

Speaker 18: Harry has got glasses and a scar [skeər] on his face. He´s got short, black hair [haer] and blue eyes. His favourite sport is Quidditch. Harry has got two best friends. Their [theɪr] names [neɪm] are [er] Ron and Hermione. Ron has a lot of [ɒf] brothers and sisters. Ron isn´t very confident [kɒnfɪdent] but [bʊt] he is brave. Harry and Hermione are brave [brʌvə], too.

Speaker 19: Harry has got glasses [glæs] and a scar [kaːr] on his face. He´s got short, black hair [haɪr] and blue eyes [iːs]. His favourite sport is Quidditch. Harry has got two best friends. Their names are Ron and Hermione. Ron has a lot of brothers and sisters. Ron isn´t [ɪsnt] very [weri] confident [kɒnfɪdent] but he is brave [braʊ]. Harry and Hermione are brave [braʊ], too.

Speaker 20: Harry has got glasses and a scar on his face. He´s got short, black hair and blue eyes [eɪs]. His favourite sport is Quidditch. Harry has got two best friends. Their [deɪr] names [neɪms] are Ron and Hermione. Ron has a lot of brothers and sisters. Ron isn´t very [werɪ] confident [kaːnfɪlt] but he is brave [bref]. Harry and Hermione are brave [bref], too.

Speaker 21: Harry has got glasses and a [e] scar on his face. He´s got short, black hair and blue eyes. His [hiːs] favourite sport is Quidditch. Harry has [hæs] got two best friends. Their names are Ron and Hermione. Ron has a lot of [ɒf] brothers and sisters. Ron isn´t very confident [kɒnfent] but he is brave. Harry and Hermione are brave, too.

Speaker 22: Harry has got glasses and a scar [skeər] on his face. He´s got short, black hair and blue eyes. His favourite sport is Quidditch. Harry has got two best friends. Their [deɪr] names [nems] are Ron and Hermione. Ron has [hʌs] a lot of brothers [brʌdr] and sisters. Ron isn´t [ɪsnt] very confident [kɒnfɪdənt] but he is brave. Harry and Hermione are brave, too.

Speaker 23: Harry has got glasses and a scar [glaːs] on his face. He´s got short, black hair [heɪr] and blue eyes [ɪərs]. His favourite sport is Quidditch. Harry has got two best friends [freɪntʃ]. Their names are Ron and Hermione. Ron has a lot of brothers and sisters. Ron isn´t [ɪsnt] very [werɪ] confident [kɒnfrɪdənt] but he is brave. Harry and Hermione are [heər] brave, too.

9.4 Summary of errors

consonant	mispronunciation	speaker	example
[ð]	[d], [th], [h]	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20, 22	their
[v]	[w]	2, 3, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 19, 20, 23	very
[r]	pronounced in final and preconsonantal position	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 22, 23	scar, sport, hair, short
voicing of final consonant **-s** [z]	[s]	1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23	has, glasses, friends, brothers, eyes, his, is, isn´t
-d [d]	[t]	11, 17	and

vowel	mispronunciation	speaker	example
schwa [ə]	[e], [ɒ], [ɪ]	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9,12, 13, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22	favourite, of, confident
[ɛə]	[ej], [eɪ], [aː]	2, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12,14, 16, 18, 19, 23	hair, their
length [ɪ]	[iː]	1, 3, 4, 5, 10, 15, 17, 20	confident, his
[e]	[eː], [æ], [eɪ]	1, 10, 14, 23	friends
[ɔː]	[ɒ]	1, 7, 16	sport
discrimination of the quality [æ]	[e]	3, 4, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17	has, and, black

Again, I summarized the errors made in consonants firstly. I could see from the table that the pupils made considerably much more errors in pronunciation than in the previous speaking activity. For instance once as many speakers pronounced [r] in the positions where it should not be pronounced according to RP (*scar, sport, hair, short*) than before.

It is interesting that the error in pronunciation of [ð] sound made the same number of pupils. And again it was the vast majority of the whole class.

In addition, one more phenomenon emerged and that was pronouncing the [v] sound as [w]. This was apparent in the word *very* which 12 pupils out of 23 pronounced as [weri]. The reason for this may lie in what Kenworthy (1987) refers to in connection with German speakers (see Subchapter 6.1). In my opinion, the same effect appeared by these pupils. They are aware of the fact that the letter *w* is pronounced [w]. But they tried so hard to avoid the mistake that they mispronounced the letter *v* (it caused an ´over-reaction´).

As far as voicing of the final **–s** is concerned; the number of pupils who made an error in this is more or less the same.

It is apparent from the table that there appeared pretty a lot of errors in pronouncing of vowels. The errors are made approximately in the same vowels as before but in larger numbers. To start with, schwa [ə] was pronounced incorrectly not only in the initial position, like in *of* but also in the middle of the words, like in *confident* or *favourite.* Again, schwa was pronounced as another vowel when it was in combination [eə], words *hair* and *their.*

As far as the length of vowels is concerned, there was an error in three of them. First, the vowel [ɪ] was longer than it should be in words *confident* and *his*. Second, the vowel [e] was also longer in the word *friends*. And finally, the vowel [ɔː] was pronounced shorter in the word *sport*.

Surprisingly, fewer pupils made an error in the vowel [æ] and that was in the words *and, has* and *black.*

10. Research results

To conclude, the results in the tables show that the pupils made considerably more errors in pronunciation of individual sounds when they were reading an article aloud than when they were describing a picture without notes. This fact gives an answer to my first question whether pupils make more mistakes when reading aloud than when talking without notes. And the answer is: Yes, they do.

My second question sounds: If so, does it mean that they are influenced negatively by the spelling of words when they are reading? In my opinion, the answer is positive again. It is apparent from the results that the number of errors is considerably higher. I assume that this is caused by the fact that words in the Czech language are pronounced as they are written. That is why the English spelling is confusing for the Czech pupils and leads to more errors.

My last question is: Do the errors these pupils do correspond to the errors described as most common by Czech learners? Unfortunately, not all of the errors, which Skaličková (1982) names, appeared in the texts in the research, for example the $[\theta]$ sound did not occur in the article at all and so did most of the diphthongs. However, I believe that all the errors the pupils did correspond to the errors which Skaličková (1982) describes. Thus the answer to the last question would be positive again.

Finally, I would like to share some more details which I noticed when analysing the recordings. As I could hear the letter ´r´ was pronounced very markedly by almost all of the pupils. Whether the ´r´ appeared in the middle of the word or at the end it was voiced. Overall, the pupils had a big difficulty with voicing of final consonants. I dare to say that they are even not aware of this fact properly. Moreover, it is interesting that sometimes the pupils pronounced a word correctly for the first time but wrongly for the second time. However, I attribute this to their nervousness.

The previous Chapters summarized the errors which the pupils made. The next Chapter will describe various activity types which can be used in the lessons to improve the pupils´ pronunciation.

11. Ways of improving pupils´ pronunciation

As it is obvious from the results of the research, the pupils make errors in pronunciation which make their speech more unintelligible and sometimes even uncomfortable to listen to. If I do not take the nervousness of the pupils into account I suppose that there is little attention paid to the teaching of pronunciation. What is more, I believe that just listening to the teacher is not sufficient for acquiring a correct pronunciation but a practice is needed as well. There are some of the types of activities described by Carter and Nunan (2001, p. 62-64) which can be used for this purpose:

1. Elicited mechanical production – individual sounds are manipulated but there is no evident communicative reason in this activity, e.g. *tongue twisters*

2. Listen and repeat – the learners´ task is to listen to words, phrases or sentences provided by the teacher or a recording and then to repeat them

3. Discrimination practice – learners have to listen to words and look for the differences in particular sounds, this activity is very useful for ear-training. Especially, listening to *minimal pairs* is very good for discrimination of particular sound contrasts.

4. Sounds for meaning contrasts – the aim of this activity is not to be just drill-like but to make the learners to be more active and involved; this can be reached when *minimal pairs* are *embedded in sentences* (e.g. Please SIT in this SEAT.)

5. Cognitive analysis – very often, older or more mature learners, appreciate when there is some cognitive explanation, this can be represented by:

- *´talking about it´*

- *phonetic training* – includes explanation of how the individual sounds are made in the mouth

- *teaching learners phonemic script* – this enables to use pronunciation dictionaries and the learners can put the pronunciation down themselves

- *giving rules* – the teacher explains some simple rules, e.g. for the pronunciation of the *–ed* in the past tense or the *–s* ending in 3rd person singular

- *comparison of L1 an L2 sound systems* – the teacher explains the differences in the sound systems of the native language and the foreign language, so that the learners can compare them and understand them better

- *analysis of sounds in words or texts*

- *looking up the pronunciation of new words in a dictionary* – it is the easiest way how to find out the pronunciation of a new word; however, this requires the knowledge of phonemic script

6. Communication activities and games – in comparison with the previous activities which have just a game-like element, such activities are focused on communication

7. Whole brain activities – "these are intended to activate the right brain hemisphere" (Carter & Nunan, 2001, p. 63); music, poetry or guided fantasies can be used to achieve this

8. Learning strategies – these strategies help the learners to develop their autonomy and independence and to be able to learn on their own, *learner diaries* or *recording of learners´ production* can be used to achieve this

There is a plenty of various activities which can be used to achieve a better pronunciation by the learners. It depends on the teacher which activities s/he chooses. I have decided to take some of them and to test them in the lesson. I present the results in the following Chapter.

12. Pronunciation activities in practice

On the basis of the research results I have decided to choose some pronunciation activities and use them with the pupils in their English lessons. I did this in order to find out whether such activities can make a contribution to the improving of pronunciation and whether the pupils will like such activities or not. I would like to present my findings in this Chapter. I chose three different types of activities out of the list made by Carter and Nunan (2001).

1. Elicited mechanical production

The main aim of this activity is to manipulate individual sounds. Tongue twisters are used for this purpose. According to Hewings (2004) the problem with the tongue twisters is to say words containing similar sounds, for example [r] and [l] or the consonant clusters [fr] and [fl]. Of course, the objective is to say them as quickly as possible. In the lesson were used these tongue twisters:

[s] and [ʃ]   She sells sea shells by the sea shore.

[fr] and [fl]   Freshly fried fresh flesh.

[θr] and [fr]   Three free throws.

First, I wrote the tongue twisters on the table and read them aloud. Then the pupils had to repeat after me and say it several times. After that they had to work in pairs. Their task was to say the tongue twister as quickly as possible. While the first one from the pair was saying the tongue twister, the other one was checking it. After a few minutes I asked some individuals to try to say it for the rest of the class.

The pupils liked this activity. It was something new and interesting for them. They were trying hard to pronounce the tongue twisters correctly but it was pretty difficult for them. Especially, the tongue twister aimed at practising of [θr] and [fr] was demanding for the pupils for it was problematic for them to say [r] after [θ]. The disadvantage of this activity is that when the whole class is practising the tongue

twisters they are very loud, which some teachers might find disrupting. For more tongue twisters see Appendix 4.

2. Discrimination practice

This kind of activity is very good for ear-training. The task of the pupils is to listen to words, so called *minimal pairs*, provided by the teacher or a recording and look for the differences between the words. The words differ in one particular sound only. I used in the lesson an exercise of minimal pairs practising the difference between the sounds [ɛ] and [æ] taken from **Ship or Sheep?** by Ann Baker (2006) (see Appendix 5).

The pupils had to listen to five words from each minimal pair and decide which word contained the sound [ɛ] and which contained the sound [æ]. I played the recording twice. After that we checked the answers together. Then I played the recording again, stopped after each word and the pupils had to repeat it.

This type of activity was a challenge for the pupils. It was not easy for them to discriminate these two sounds. What is more, the recording was relatively fast for them to follow. For this reason I played the recording twice. As I could observe, this activity was really demanding but the pupils were willing to bring it off. I believe that if this kind of activity was practised at least once a week, the pupils´ awareness of such tricky pairs of sounds would be better.

3. Pronunciation game

The game is called *Simple sound maze* and is taken from **Pronunciation Games** by Mark Hancock (1995) (see Appendix 6). This game is also devoted to the discrimination of individual sounds. This time the pupils had to find a path from a maze. The maze consisted of different words but the path was made from the words containing only the [iː] sound. In addition, they could move from one square to the next only horizontally or vertically.

First, I pronounced the words and they had to repeat them after me. This was done so that the pupils were aware of the pronunciation of each word. Then they were looking for the path in pairs. Finally, we checked the route together.

I had expected that this activity would be easy for the pupils for the [iː] sound appears in the Czech language as well and they can discriminate it. However, the pupils had a problem to discriminate the [ɪ] and [iː] sounds. They thought that, for example words *these* and *this* are pronounced the same with the [iː] sound. It means that their path was totally wrong then. Thus I decided to practise the pronunciation of each word after correcting the path again. Nevertheless, even if the pupils were not as successful as expected they found the game funny and enjoyed it.

There were described three out of many other different activities which can be used for pronunciation practice in this Chapter. I tried to choose such activities which would practise at least partly the aspects of pronunciation which were most problematic for the pupils. My choice was based on the research results. Overall, the pupils enjoyed doing these activities probably even because most of them are game-like. Since they are not used to do such pronunciation exercises it was interesting and funny for them. They learned new pieces of information concerning particular sounds and above all, the lessons were not so stereotypical as ever.

13. Conclusions

In the last Chapter of my diploma project, I would like to restate the theory and draw conclusions from the research carried out in the practical part. By doing this, I would like to answer the research questions defined in Chapter 7 – The Aims of the practical part. Finally, I would like to derive some practical implications not only for my own teaching but also for other (future) teachers.

Intentional teaching of pronunciation in the lessons can be regarded by some teachers as useless and time-wasting. However, it is apparent that pronunciation is an important part of human´s communication enabling us to establish relationships with other people. Furthermore, there are many factors which influence proper acquisition of pronunciation. Many of these factors are very difficult to affect or at least minimize their effect. What is more, pronunciation containing many errors can lead to unintelligibility of the speech, thus making a conversation uncomfortable. For these reasons, pronunciation should not be neglected in the learning/teaching process.

The research results make it possible to give a positive answer to the research questions specified at the beginning of the practical part of this diploma project. The research investigating the errors made in the individual sounds of the English language shows that the tested group of pupils at lower-intermediate level makes the same errors which are regarded as the most common errors of Czech learners. What is more, it was found out that these pupils make more pronunciation errors when reading an article aloud than when describing a picture. It is highly probable that this is caused by the disruptive function of the English spelling.

Further, the ways of improving pupils´ pronunciation were suggested. Some of these methods and activities described by Carter and Nunan (2001) were used in the English lessons with the same group of pupils tested before. As I could observe, the pupils appreciated the new kind of activities which revived the routine of grammatical and listening exercises used in each lesson. The pupils enjoyed doing these activities and learned new pieces of information. I discovered on the basis of these exercises that there are a lot of gaps in their knowledge of the English pronunciation. These

could be easily filled when practising the problematic aspects by using similar activities.

I had been interested in the topic of pronunciation even before I started to write this diploma project. Even then, I was convinced, also on the basis of my own experience, that there is only little attention paid to pronunciation at schools. Unfortunately, as I could see, not many things have changed since I was at primary school. I hope that this diploma project will motivate also other future teachers to use pronunciation activities in their English lessons and that they will be aware of the fact that pronunciation is important and worth teaching.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

AKIHIRO, T. a spol. *Visual speech improves the intelligibility of time-expanded auditory speech.* [cit. 2010-08-03]. Dostupný z www: <http://journals.lww.com/neuroreport/Abstract/2009/03250/Visual_speech_improves_the_intelligibility_of.4.aspx>.

BAKER, A. *Ship or Sheep? An intermediate pronunciation course.* Cambridge: CUP, 2006. 224 s. ISBN 978-0-521-60673-8.

CARTER, A., NUNAN, D. *The Cambridge Guide to Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages.* Cambridge: CUP, 2001. 294 s. ISBN 0-521-80516-3.

CLARK, JOHN. Teaching Children: is it different? *JET,* 1990, č. 10, s. 6-8.

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment. Cambridge: CUP, 2001. 260 s. ISBN 0-521-80313-6.

CRUTTENDEN, A. *Gimson´s Pronunciation of English.* London: Edward Arnold, 2001. 339 s. ISBN 0-340-58265-0.

DALTON, C., SEIDLHOFER, B. *Pronunciation.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994. 191 s. ISBN 0-19-437197-2.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE SERVICES *English Pronunciation: A Manual for Teachers.* London: Collier-Macmillan, 1968. 97 s.

HANCOCK, M. *English Pronunciation in Use.* Cambridge: CUP, 2003. 200s. ISBN 978-0-521-68752-2

HANCOCK, M. *Pronunciation Games.* Cambridge: CUP, 1995. 108 s. ISBN 0-521-46735-7.

HARMER, J. *The Practice of English Language Teaching.* Harlow: Longman, 2001. 296 s. ISBN 0582-04656-4.

HAYCRAFT, B. *The Teaching of Pronunciation: A Classroom Guide.* Harlow: Longman, 1971. ISBN 0-582-52434-2.

HEWINGS, M. *Pronunciation Practice Activities.* Cambridge: CUP, 2004. 246 s. ISBN 0-521-75457-7.

HOLOUŠOVÁ, D., KROBOTOVÁ, M. *Diplomové a závěrečné práce.* Olomouc: Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci, 2005. 117 s. ISBN 80-244-1237-3.

HORNOVÁ, L. *Referenční slovník gramatických termínů.* Olomouc: Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci, 2003. 86 s. ISBN 80-244-0738-8.

KENWORTHY, J. *Teaching English Pronunciation.* Harlow: Longman, 1987. 164 s. ISBN 0-582-74631-3.

NUNAN, D. *Language Teaching Methodology.* New York: London, 1991. 264 s. ISBN 0-13-521469-6.

 O´CONNOR, J. D. *Better English Pronunciation.* Cambridge: CUP, 2000. 150 s. ISBN 0-521-78964-8.

 O´CONNOR, J. D., FLETCHER, C. *Sounds English: A Pronunciation Practice Book.* Harlow: Longman, 1989. 125 s. ISBN 0-582-01439-5.

Office clerk. *R& R An English Magazine For You*, 2009, roč. 19, č. 9, s. 7.

Rámcový vzdělávací program pro základní vzdělávání. Praha: Výzkumný ústav pedagogický, 2006. 92 s. ISBN 80-87000-02-1.

REYNOLDS, B. *Phonetic Coding in Language Aptitude: Different Roles for Different Languages.* [cit. 2010-03-03]. Dostupný z www: http://www.tuj.ac.jp/newsite/main/tesol/publications/working_papers/vol_14/reynolds.html>.

RICHARDS, J., PLATT, J., WEBER, H. *Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics.* Harlow: Longman, 1985. 323 s. ISBN 0-582-55708-9.

ROACH, P. *English Phonetics and Phonology.* Cambridge: CUP, 1983. 283 s. ISBN 0-521-40718-4.

ROCHA, JEFFREY A. *A Thorough Look At Native Language & Speech Intelligibility Problems.* [cit. 2010-09-03]. Dostupný z www: <http://www.prosoundweb.com/article/native_language_and_speech/P3/>.

ROGERSON, P., GILBERT, J. B. *Speaking clearly: Pronunciation and listening comprehension for learners of English.* Cambridge: CUP, 1990. 136 s. ISBN 0-521-31287-6.

SCHÜTZ, R. *The Importance of Pronunciation.* [cit. 2010-23-02]. Dostupný z www: <http://www.sk.com.br/pronunciation.ppt>.

SCRIVENER, J. *Learning Teaching.* Oxford: Heinemann, 1994. 218 s. ISBN 0-435-24089-7

SKALIČKOVÁ, A. *Fonetika současné angličtiny.* Praha: Státní pedagogické nakladatelství, 1982. 261 s.

SWAN, M., SMITH, B. *Learner English.* Cambridge: CUP, 1994. 265 s. ISBN 0-521-26910-5.

UR, P. *A Course in Language Teaching.* Cambridge: CUP, 1991. 375 s. ISBN 0-521-44994-4.

URBANOVÁ, L. *An Introduction to English Phonetics and Phonology.* Košice: Rektorát Univerzity P. J. Šafárika, 1986. 107 s.

VAUGHAN-REES, M. Pickled peppers and pronunciation practice. *English Teaching Professional,* 1997, č. 5, s. 18-19.

WELLS, J. C., COLSON, G. *Practical Phonetics.* London: Pitman, 1994. 116 s. ISBN 0-273-01681-4.

WONG, RITA. Pronunciation Myths and Facts. *English Teaching Forum,* 1993, č. 31, s. 45-46.

Textbooks:

BURROW, T., FRICKER, K. *LOOK 1! TEST BOOK*. Malaysia: Pearson Education Ltd, 2009. 61 s. ISBN-13: 978-1-4058-8568-3.

OXENDEN, C., LATHAM-KOENIG, C. *New English File: Pre-Intermediate Student´s Book.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007. 167 s. ISBN 978-0-19-451909-0.

APPENDICES

List of appendices

Appendix 1: Figure 1: Phonemic chart

Appendix 2: Figure 2: Picture to the first speaking activity

Appendix 3: Text of the second speaking activity

Appendix 4: Tongue twisters

Appendix 5: Minimal pairs [e] and [æ] exercise

Appendix 6: Pronunciation game

Appendix 7: Sound contrasts – Consonants: letters ´th´ and ´t´

Appendix 8: Sound contrasts – Consonants: ´v´ and ´w´

Appendix 9: The consonant sounds [m], [n] and [ŋ]
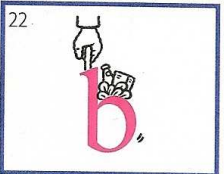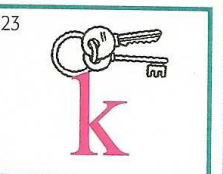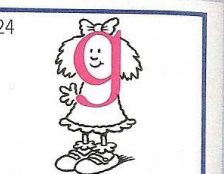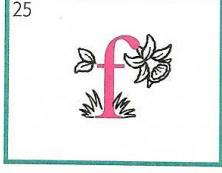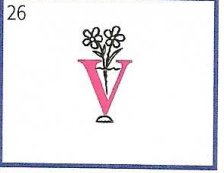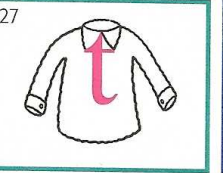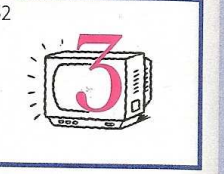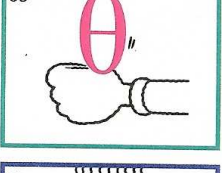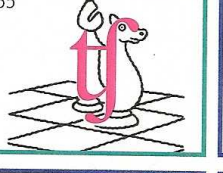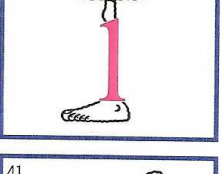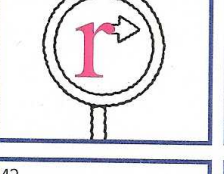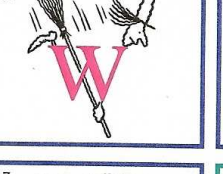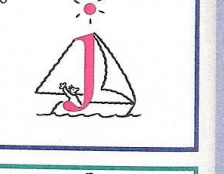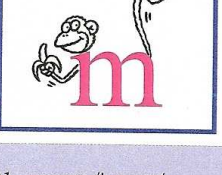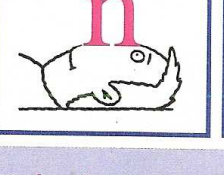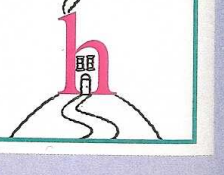
Appendix 10: The vowel sounds [ɑː(r)] and [eə(r)]

Appendix 11: Pronunciation game

Appendix 1

Figure 1: Phonemic chart

Consonant sounds

21 p	22 b	23 k	24 g
25 f	26 v	27 t	28 d
29 s	30 z	31 ʃ	32 ʒ
33 θ	34 ð	35 tʃ	36 dʒ
37 l	38 r	39 w	40 j
41 m	42 n	43 ŋ	44 h

■ voiced
■ unvoiced

21 parrot /ˈpærət/	22 bag /bæg/	23 key /kiː/	24 girl /gɜːl/
25 flower /ˈflaʊə/	26 vase /vɑːz/	27 tie /taɪ/	28 dog /dɒg/
29 snake /sneɪk/	30 zebra /ˈzebrə/	31 shower /ˈʃaʊə/	32 television /ˈtelɪvɪʒn/
33 thumb /θʌm/	34 mother /ˈmʌðə/	35 chess /tʃes/	36 jazz /dʒæz/
37 leg /leg/	38 right /raɪt/	39 witch /wɪtʃ/	40 yacht /jɒt/
41 monkey /ˈmʌŋki/	42 nose /nəʊz/	43 singer /ˈsɪŋə/	44 house /haʊs/

Study Link MultiROM www.oup.com/elt/englishfile/pre-intermediate

8

	usual spelling	⚠ but also
parrot	**p** promise possible copy cap **pp** opposite appearance	
bag	**b** belt body probably job cab **bb** rabbit rubbish	
keys	**c** camping across **k** skirt kind **ck** neck kick	chemist's stomach
girl	**g** grow goat forget begin **gg** foggy bigger	
flower	**f** find afraid safe **ph** elephant nephew **ff** off different	enough laugh
vase	**v** video visit lovely invent over river	of
tie	**t** try tell start late **tt** better sitting	walked dressed
dog	**d** did dead hard told **dd** address middle	loved tired
snake	**s** stops faster **ss** miss message **ce/ci** place circle	science
zebra	**z** zoo lazy freezing **s** reason lose has toes	
shower	**sh** shut shoes wash finish **ti** patient information (+ vowel)	sugar sure machine
television	An unusual sound. revision decision confusion usually garage	

	usual spelling	⚠ but also
thumb	**th** thing throw healthy tooth maths both	
mother	**th** weather the clothes sunbathe that with	
chess	**ch** chicken child beach **tch** catch match **t (+ure)** picture future	
jazz	**j** jacket just journey enjoy **dge** bridge judge	generous teenager
leg	**l** little less plan incredible **ll** will silly	
right	**r** really rest practice trainers **rr** borrow married	written wrong
witch	**w** wet twins worried win **wh** why which whale	one once
yacht	**y** yet year young yoga **before u** useful uniform	
monkey	**m** mountain modern remember smell **mm** summer swimming	
nose	**n** need nephew none any **nn** funny dinner	knees knock
singer	**ng** tongue fingers along thing bring going	think thank
house	**h** hit hate ahead perhaps hard	who whose whole

Vowel sounds

1 fish /fɪʃ/	2 tree /triː/	3 cat /kæt/	4 car /kɑː/
5 clock /klɒk/	6 horse /hɔːs/	7 bull /bʊl/	8 boot /buːt/
9 computer /kəmˈpjuːtə/	10 bird /bɜːd/	11 egg /eg/	12 up /ʌp/
13 train /treɪn/	14 phone /fəʊn/	15 bike /baɪk/	16 owl /aʊl/
17 boy /bɔɪ/	18 ear /ɪə/	19 chair /tʃeə/	20 tourist /ˈtʊərɪst/

Sounds and spelling

	usual spelling	⚠ but also
fish	i thin lips history kiss if since	English women busy decide repeat gym
tree	ee feel teeth ea teach mean e she we	people machine key niece
cat	a hands hat back catch carry match	
car	ar far arms scarf a fast pass after	aunt laugh heart
clock	o top lost socks wrong hot box	what watch want because
horse	or boring more al walk ball aw awful saw	water four bought thought abroad towards
bull	u pull push oo foot book look room	would should woman
boot	oo school choose u* rude use ew new knew	do suit juice shoe lose through
bird	er person verb ir dirty shirt ur nurse turn	earn work world worse
computer	Many different spellings, always unstressed. further nervous arrive polite inventor agree	

* especially before consonant + e

	usual spelling	⚠ but also
egg	e spell lend smell send very red	friendly head sweater any said
up	u sunny mustn't funny run lucky cut	come does someone enough young touch
train	a* face wake ai brain fail ay away pay	break steak great eight they grey
phone	o* open hope won't so oa coat goal	snow throw although shoulders
bike	i* smile bite y shy why igh might sights	buy eyes heights
owl	ou trousers round mouth blouse ow towel down	
boy	oi coin noisy boiling oy toy enjoy	
ear	eer beer engineer ere here we're ear near fear	really idea serious
chair	air airport stairs fair hair are square careful	their there wear bear
tourist	A very unusual sound. Europe furious sure plural	
/i/	A sound between /ɪ/ and /iː/. Consonant + y at the end of words is pronounced /i/. happy angry thirsty	
/u/	An unusual sound. education usually situation	

Appendix 2

Figure 2: Picture to the first speaking activity
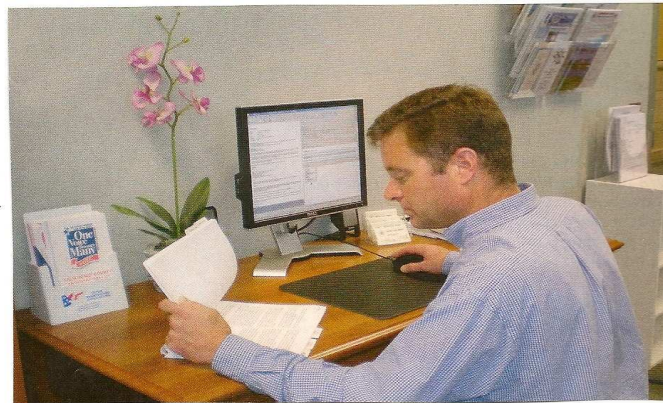
Appendix 3: Text of the second speaking activity

Harry has got glasses and a scar on his face. He´s got short, black hair and blue eyes. His favourite sport is Quidditch. Harry has got two best friends. Their names are Ron and Hermione. Ron has a lot of brothers and sisters. Ron isn´t very confident but he is brave. Harry and Hermione are brave, too.

Appendix 4: Tongue twisters

To practise single consonants

[r] and [l]	Red lorry, yellow lorry, red lorry, yellow lorry. (etc.)
[s] and [ʃ]	Mrs Smith´s Fish Sauce Shop.
	The shells she sells are surely seashells.
[p] and [f]	Give papa a cup of proper coffee in a copper coffee cup.

To practise consonants and consonant clusters

[b], [br] and [bl]	Betty and Bob brought back blue balloons from the big bazaar.
[p], [pr] and [pl]	Please pay promptly. Please pay promptly. (etc.)
[s], [sl] and [sn]	Six slippery snails, slid slowly seaward.
[θr] and [fr]	Three free throws. Three free throws. (etc.)
[t], [tw], [tr] and [θr]	The two-twenty-two train tore through the tunnel.

Vowels

[ɔɪ]	What noise annoys a noisy oyster?
Variety of vowels	Swan swam over the sea,
	Swim, swan, swim!
	Swan swam back again
	Well swum, swan!
Variety of vowels + [w]	While we were walking, we were watching window washers wash Washington´s windows with warm washing water.

HEWINGS, M. *Pronunciation Practice Activities.* Cambridge: CUP, 2004. 246 s. ISBN 0-521-75457-7., s. 222-223

Appendix 5: Minimal pairs [e] and [æ] exercise

Minimal pair words

You will hear five words from each minimal pair. For each word write 1 for [e] (sound 1) or 2 for [æ] (sound 2).

EXAMPLE   Pair 1:   2, 2, 1, 1, 2

WORDS   Pair 1:   axe, axe, x, x, axe

              Pair 2:   pen, pan, pan, pen, pen

              Pair 3:   men, men, man, man, man

              Pair 4:   sand, send, send, sand, sand

              Pair 5:   gem, gem, gem, jam, jam

              Pair 6:   Brad, bread, bread, Brad, bread

KEY   Pair 2:   1, 2, 2, 1, 1

              Pair 3:   1, 1, 2, 2, 2

              Pair 4:   2, 1, 1, 2, 2

              Pair 5:   1, 1, 1, 2, 2

              Pair 6:   2, 1, 1, 2, 1

BAKER, A. *Ship or Sheep? An intermediate pronunciation course.* Cambridge: CUP, 2006. 224 s. ISBN 978-0-521-60673-8., s. 16

Appendix 6: Pronunciation game

B8 Simple sound maze Puzzle 1 /i:/ (see)

tea	these	meat	meet	main
like	this	friend	complete	hear
scene	sheep	eat	need	fit
TV	ship	it	year	pain
feel	fill	night	head	fly
seat	read	please	right	fine
sit	dead	street	break	smile
cheap	sea	me	fight	sin
feet	bear	beer	nine	sign
bean	teach	tree	east	meal

From **Pronunciation Games** by Mark Hancock © Cambridge University Press 1995 **PHOTOCOPIABLE**

Appendix 7: Sound contrasts – Consonants: letters ´th´ and ´t´

A **Listen and practice the difference in these words**

	Continuants	*Stops*
Voiced	they	day
	Than	Dan
	Those	doze
	loathe	load
Unvoiced	thought	taught
	thank	tank
	thin	tin
	theme	team
	bath	bat
	both	boat

B **Say the words below and ask a partner to put them in the correct group above.**

dare   bad   clothes   breath

there   din   that   month

toes   these   teeth   breathe

ROGERSON, P., GILBERT, J. B. *Speaking clearly: Pronunciation and listening comprehension for learners of English.* Cambridge: CUP, 1990. 136 s. ISBN 0-521-31287-6., s. 89

Appendix 8: Sound contrasts – Consonants: ´v´ and ´w´

A   Listen and practise these contrasts

1	*2*
vet	wet
veal	wheel
vine	wine
veil	whale
vest	west

Now say the words above in any order. Get your partner or teacher to tell you which column they are in.

B   Practise saying the following sentences with a partner, and giving the correct responses.

1 A: There´s something wrong with this   a) veal.

b) wheel.

   B: c) It should be fresh.

d) Ask the garage to check it.

2 A: This is a very old   a) vine.

b) wine.

   B: c) When was it planted?

d) It´s delicious.

ROGERSON, P., GILBERT, J. B. *Speaking clearly: Pronunciation and listening comprehension for learners of English.* Cambridge: CUP, 1990. 136 s. ISBN 0-521-31287-6., s. 9

Appendix 9: The consonant sounds [m], [n] and [ŋ]

15.2 Find a way from Start to Finish. You may pass a square only if the word in it has the sound /ŋ/. You can move horizontally (↔) or vertically (↕) only.

START

sing	think	thick	strong	wrong	rung
sign	uncle	unless	drug	strange	comb
thanks	angry	signal	drank	English	finger
anxious	angel	single	monkey	money	young
language	tongue	skiing	skin	came	ink
lounge	danger	band	dream	swim	wing

FINISH

KEY:

15.2 START

sing	think	thick	strong	wrong	rung
sign	uncle	unless	drug	strange	comb
thanks	angry	signal	drank	English	finger
anxious	angel	single	monkey	money	young
language	tongue	skiing	skin	came	ink
lounge	danger	band	dream	swim	wing

FINISH

HANCOCK, M. *English Pronunciation in Use.* Cambridge: CUP, 2003. 200s. ISBN 978-0-521-68752-2., s. 39

Appendix 10: The vowel sounds [ɑː(r)] and [eə(r)]

14.2
A66

Complete this conversation using the words in the box.
Then listen and check.

| cars | cares | stars | stairs |

SID: This is a great life, with no worries or ___*cares*___ !

JOE: It would be nice if we had _____ though, Sid.

SID: I didn't say _____, I said _____!

JOE: Oh, I see. Not _____, as in traffic, but _____ with an ES at the end!

SID: That's right. I've always loved sleeping under the _____.

JOE: But why? There's hardly any space under the _____!

SID: No, not _____, _____! You know, little lights in the sky.

JOE: Oh, _____! I thought you said _____, that people walk up!

Follow up: Play the recording again, pausing the recording after each of Sid's lines.
You say Joe's lines before listening to him saying them.

KEY

14.2
SID: This is a great life, with no worries or *cares*!
JOE: It would be nice if we had *cars* though, Sid.
SID: I didn't say *cars*, I said *cares*!
JOE: Oh, I see. Not *cars*, as in traffic, but *cares* with an ES at the end!
SID: That's right. I've always loved sleeping under the *stars*.
JOE: But why? There's hardly any space under the *stairs*!
SID: No, not *stairs*, *stars*! You know, little lights in the sky.
JOE: Oh, *stars*! I thought you said *stairs*, that people walk up!

Appendix 11: Pronunciation game

Join the dots

B 11

Point: words and phonetic transcriptions
Minimum level: pre-intermediate
Game type: a matching puzzle for students working individually (or in pairs)
**Approximate time:** 15 minutes

Preparation

Make a copy of the puzzle for each member of the class. You may also want to make a copy on an OHP transparency or a large piece of paper. There are two puzzles.

Conducting the game

1 Give each student a puzzle. (The puzzle could also be done in pairs.) Explain that to reveal the picture, the dots must be joined in the order shown by the words in the list. To do this, students will need to match words and phonetic transcriptions. Leave students to join the dots.
2 When students have finished, check answers together. (Use your OHP transparency or large piece of paper if you have copied the puzzle.)
3 Drill the pronunciation of the words.

Key

Puzzle 1
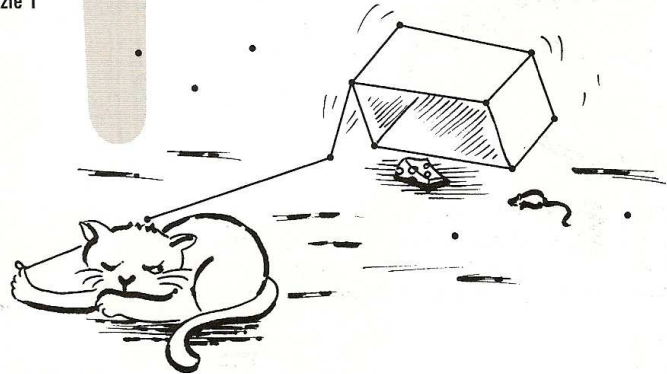
Puzzle 2
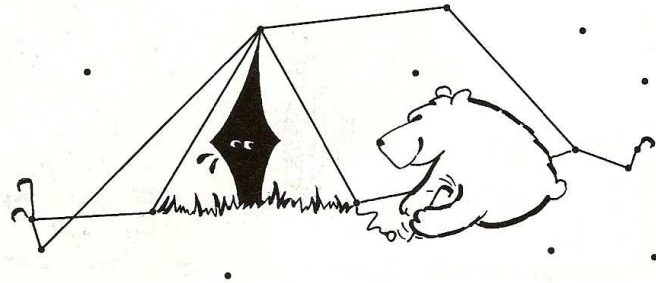
Puzzle 1

To find out what the cat is doing, match the phonetic transcriptions to words in the picture. Then join the dots by these words in the same order as the list of phonetic transcriptions. Some dots may be used twice.
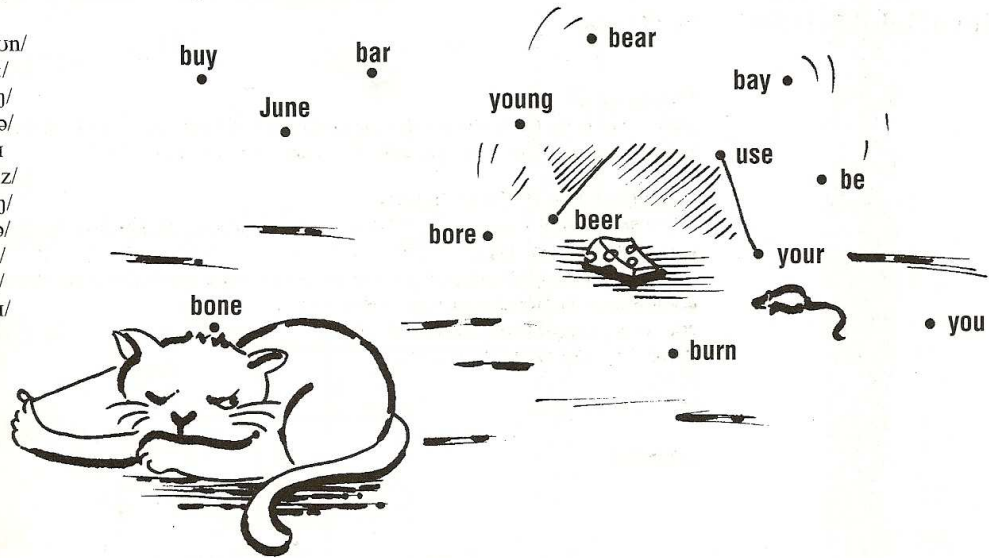
1 /bəʊn/
2 /bɔː/
3 /jʌŋ/
4 /beə/
5 /beɪ/
6 /juːz/
7 /jʌŋ/
8 /bɪə/
9 /jɔː/
10 /biː/
11 /beɪ/

buy   bar   • bear
                        bay •
    June   young
                        • use
                            • be
            bore •   • beer
                        • your
    bone   • you
                    • burn

Puzzle 2

To find out what the bear is doing, match the phonetic transcriptions to words in the picture. Then join the dots by these words in the same order as the list of phonetic transcriptions. Some dots may be used twice.
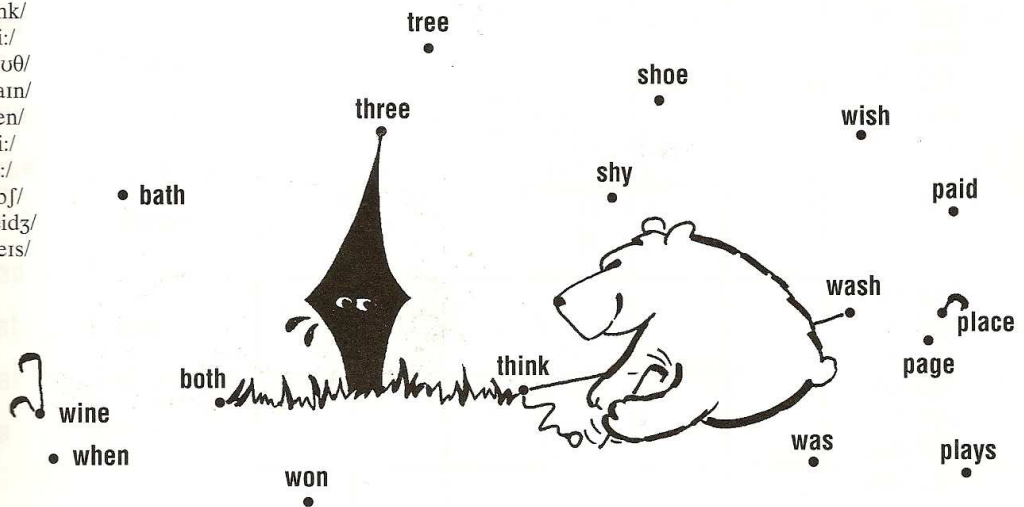
1 /θɪnk/
2 /θriː/
3 /bəʊθ/
4 /waɪn/
5 /wen/
6 /θriː/
7 /ʃuː/
8 /wɒʃ/
9 /peidʒ/
10 /pleɪs/

        tree
            •
                shoe
    three   •   wish
        •
                shy   paid
• bath   •   •
                        wash
                            •   place
both   think   •   •
            wine   •   page
                                was   plays
• when   •   •
        won
        •

Résumé

Tato diplomová práce se zabývá tématem výslovnosti anglického jazyka středně pokročilých žáků. Hlavními cíli mé diplomové práce bylo zjistit, zda jsou žáci při čtení nahlas negativně ovlivňováni anglickým pravopisem, a tudíž dělají i více chyb ve výslovnosti, a zda chyby žáků korespondují s chybami považovanými za běžné u českých mluvčích.

V praktické části diplomové práce byl proto proveden výzkum zaměřený na chyby, které žáci dělají v segmentální úrovni jazyka, tedy v individuálních zvucích – hláskách a samohláskách. K tomuto účelu byly použity nahrávky jejich mluvního projevu. Úkolem žáků bylo popisovat obrázek a přečíst nahlas daný článek. Na základě analýzy těchto nahrávek bylo zjištěno, že chyby, které se objevovaly u vybrané skupiny žáků, se opravdu shodují s chybami vyskytujícími se nejčastěji u českých mluvčích, a že žáci dělali více výslovnostních chyb při čtení článku nahlas než při popisování obrázku bez jakýchkoli poznámek.

Další částí výzkumu bylo ohodnocení vybraných aktivit použitých v hodinách. Tyto aktivity byly určené k procvičování těch aspektů výslovnosti, které, jak vyplynulo z výsledků první části výzkumu, byly pro žáky nejvíce problémové. Bylo zřejmé, že některé informace týkající se vyslovování různých hlásek a samohlásek se žáci dozvídají poprvé, ale aktivity se jim líbily, považovali je za zábavné a se zaujetím plnili, co se od nich vyžadovalo.

ANOTACE

Jméno a příjmení:	Markéta Nováková
Katedra:	Anglického jazyka PdF UP v Olomouci
Vedoucí práce:	Mgr. Zuzana Bartsch-Veselá, Ph.D.
Rok obhajoby:	2010

Název práce:	Způsoby nápravy výslovnosti středně pokročilých žáků
Název v angličtině:	Ways of improving pupils´ pronunciation at lower-intermediate level
Anotace práce:	Tato diplomová práce je zaměřena na možnosti nápravy chyb v anglické výslovnosti českých žáků. Diplomová práce pojednává o důležitosti výslovnosti a její roli, kterou sehrává v komunikaci. V teoretické části práce jsou zpracovány poznatky z odborné literatury týkající se např. faktorů, které ovlivňují proces osvojování si správné výslovnosti, vlivu anglického pravopisu či vhodnosti používání fonetické transkripce. Dále je zde vysvětlen pojem srozumitelnosti řeči a příčiny naší nesrozumitelnosti. V první části práce jsou také popsány nejčastější chyby žáků ve výslovnosti. Praktická část obsahuje výsledky výzkumu zaměřeného na chyby, které žáci dělají v segmentální úrovni jazyka – tedy v jednotlivých zvucích. Dále je zde provedeno ohodnocení aktivit zaměřených na procvičování výslovnosti hlásek a samohlásek. Je také navržen seznam dalších možných aktivit a cvičení, které mohou být použity v hodinách anglického jazyka.

Klíčová slova:	Výslovnost, osvojování si výslovnosti, anglický pravopis, fonetická transkripce, srozumitelnost a nesrozumitelnost, časté chyby ve výslovnosti, segmentální úroveň jazyka, hlásky a samohlásky
Anotace v angličtině:	This diploma project is focused on the ways of improving English pronunciation of Czech pupils. The diploma project deals with the importance of pronunciation and the role it plays in communication. The theoretical part is based on relevant background literature mediating the knowledge about the factors which influence the process of acquiring a good pronunciation, the influence of English spelling or the appropriateness of the usage of the phonemic transcription. The concept of intelligibility and the causes of our unintelligibility are explained, too. The most common errors in pronunciation of pupils are described in the first part as well. The practical part contains the results of the research focused on the errors made at the segmental level of the language – it means in the individual sounds. In addition, there is made the evaluation of the activities focused on practising pronunciation of consonants and vowels. A list of possible pronunciation activities and exercises is presented, too.
Klíčová slova v angličtině:	Pronunciation, acquiring pronunciation, English spelling, phonemic transcription, intelligibility and unintelligibility, common errors in pronunciation, segmental of the language, consonants and vowels
Přílohy vázané v práci:	11 příloh
Rozsah práce:	67 s., 17 s. příloh
Jazyk práce:	Anglický jazyk