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DIPLOMOVÁ PRÁCE

**English word stress in pronunciation of secondary
school students**

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Olomouc, 2024   Mgr. Jana Kořínková, Ph.D.

Prohlášení

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                                                                                              Bc. Tereza Holá

ANNOTATION

Jméno a příjmení:	Bc. Tereza Holá
Katedra:	Ústav cizích jazyků
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Název práce:	English word stress in pronunciation of secondary school students
Název v angličtině:	English word stress in pronunciation of secondary school students
Zvolený typ práce:	Diplomová
Anotace práce:	Tato diplomová práce se zabývá anglickým slovním přízvukem ve výslovnosti studentů středních škol a jeho výukou v anglickém jazyce na středních školách v České Republice. Teoretická část pojednává o přízvuku obecně, slovním přízvuku a jeho umístění ve slovech. Dále se zaměřuje na výuku anglického slovního přízvuku. Praktická část popisuje výzkum, skládající se ze studie provedené na Jiráskově Gymnáziu v Náchodě a studie využívající dotazník rozeslaný mezi učitele středních škol v České Republice.
Klíčová slova:	Výslovnost, přízvuk, anglický slovní přízvuk, výuka anglického slovního přízvuku
Anotace v angličtině:	This diploma thesis examines English word stress in the pronunciation of secondary school students and its teaching in secondary education in the Czech Republic. The theoretical part discusses stress in general terms, including word stress and its placements in words. Additionally, it focuses on teaching English word stress. The practical part presents research consisting of a study

	conducted at Jirásek Grammar School in Náchod and a study using questionnaire distributed among secondary school teachers across the Czech Republic.
Klíčová slova v angličtině:	Pronunciation, stress, English word stress, English word stress teaching
Přílohy vázané v práci:	5
Rozsah práce:	140 stran (174 488 znaků)
Jazyk práce:	Anglický jazyk

TABLE OF CONTENT

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Adj	Adjective
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
CX	Complex word
FEP SGE	Framework Education Programme for Secondary General Education
IPA	International Phonetic Alphabet
N	Noun
S	Simple word
SP	Stressable portion
V	Verb

ABSTRACT

This diploma thesis deals with English word stress in secondary school education in the Czech Republic. The theoretical part aims to provide a theoretical background on English word stress and its pedagogical implications in practice. The practical part aims to examine the proficiency of secondary school students and explore the current state of English word stress teaching in secondary schools in the Czech Republic.

INTRODUCTION

English pronunciation plays a pivotal role in English language learning, serving as a foundation for effective communication. However, despite its significance, it tends to be overlooked by a large number of teachers. The author's personal experience confirms this unfortunate fact. Before entering university, the author had a solid grasp of English vocabulary and grammar, yet pronunciation was far from satisfactory. English word stress was found to be particularly interesting due to its complexity. This led to the decision to make it the focus of the thesis, not only to deepen the author's understanding but also to contribute to the broader field of pedagogical research.

Among the many aspects of pronunciation, word stress emerges as a crucial element influencing communication effectiveness and overall language proficiency. Word stress is defined as the emphasis or prominence placed on certain syllables within individual words (Fudge, 2016).

The aim of the thesis is to explore the landscape surrounding the English word stress and its teaching in the Czech Republic. The theoretical part of the thesis aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of English word stress within linguistic contexts. Additionally, it aims to offer insights into effective strategies for teaching word stress. The practical part aims to examine the proficiency of secondary school students in word stress. Moreover, it aims to explore the landscape surrounding English word stress teaching at secondary schools as perceived by teachers.

The theoretical part consists of four chapters, each addressing a different topic. It begins by defining stress and describing its types, including both word and sentence stress, while also examining the factors that influence stress production. Subsequently, the thesis focuses specifically on word stress, discussing the levels of stress, its notation, and the principles governing stress placement in words. Moreover, the pedagogical aspect is considered as the thesis delves into the exploration of English word stress teaching, providing strategies and techniques to raise word stress awareness and addressing other aspects surrounding word stress within English education.

The practical part of this thesis presents a study conducted by the author, examining the proficiency of secondary school students in word stress at Jirásek Grammar School in Náchod. Furthermore, the study explores the views of secondary school teachers on word stress and its teaching through a questionnaire distributed among teachers across the Czech Republic. Based on the research findings, the author intends to draw conclusions regarding the state of English word stress education in the Czech Republic.

THEORETICAL PART

1 Stress in general

1.1 Definition of stress

Initially, it is crucial to initiate an examination of the concept of stress. This investigation will begin by clarifying the various definitions put forth by different authors, thereby establishing a foundational understanding of the complexities inherent in the phenomenon of stress.

According to Fudge (2016, p. 1) stress is when *"one phonological element is singled out within another, longer phonological element"*. In other words, this element is given a special emphasis of some kind in pronunciation. Roach (2009a.) defines stress as relative prominence given to a certain syllable or word. Stressed elements are more prominent than unstressed elements. Roach (2009a.) also states that the production of stress is closely connected to the usage of more muscular energy. Experimental studies showed that when producing stressed syllables, the muscles used to expel air from the lungs are more active and produce higher subglottal pressure. According to Kingdon's definition (1985, p. 1), stress is *"the relative degree of force used by a speaker on the various syllables he/she is uttering. It gives a certain basic prominence to the syllables, and hence to the words, on which it is used, and incidentally assists in avoiding monotony"*. Dalton and Seidhoffer (1994) emphasize the fact that stress does not correspond only with one feature such as loudness, but it is the combination of several factors – loudness, length, pitch, and quality. They also state that we can perceive stress from two perspectives: the physiological activity of the speaker and the perceptual activity of the listener.

1.2 Types of stress

Stress can be differentiated into two main types, word stress and sentence stress. Subsequent sections will delve into a more detailed exploration of the distinctions between these two variants. Given the thesis's primary emphasis on word stress, a comprehensive examination of this word stress will unfold in the following chapters.

1.2.1 Word stress

According to Dalton and Seidhoffer (1994, p. 38) *"the smallest domain in which the contrast between stressed and unstressed syllables surfaces is the word."* Fudge (2016) defines word stress as the emphasis or prominence placed on specific syllables within an individual word. He also argues that some words can have no word stress while others can have multiple stresses with varying intensities depending on the number of vowels, consonants, or the type of vowels in certain syllables.

1.2.2 Sentence stress

Fudge (2016) states that sentence stress is the prominence of a certain word or phrase within a sentence and giving it a special emphasis of some kind in pronunciation. It depends on the situation and the speaker which sentence element one wants to stress. Therefore, sentence stress is highly variable. Fudge (2016) states that sentence stress usually indicates emphasis and importance, therefore new information or more important sentence elements will generally bear stronger stress in an utterance.

Below can be seen an example provided by Fudge (2016):

In the sentence *John hasn't arrived.*, any word can be stressed (the stressed element is written in capitals):

a. *John hasn't ARRIVED.* In this case, we might suggest that John has already set out to get here.
b. John HASN'T *arrived*. Here we might be correcting someone else talking about John's arrival.
c. *JOHN hasn't arrived*. In this case, we say that John was supposed to come but he didn't.

Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) and Carr (2019) discuss the idea, that sentence stress placement can be determined by the syntactic structure of the utterance. Certain words may naturally receive stress because of their grammatical roles. Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) and Carr (2019) distinguish between content words (or words of lexical category); and function words

(words of non-lexical category). According to Celce-Murcia et al. (2010), content words are those words that carry the most information and are generally stressed. Content words include nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs.

On the other hand, function words are not normally stressed, according to Celce-Murcia et al. (2010), function words are the elements that modify the lexically important verbs and nouns. Function words include prepositions, pronouns, conjunctions and determiners (articles: *a, an, the*; demonstratives: *this, that, these, those;* possessives: *my, your, his*; quantifiers: *few, some*; numbers). Cruttenden (2008) emphasizes the fact that function words can be exceptionally stressed in case the meaning requires it.

The figure below provided by Hüseyn (2014) categorizes content and function words:

Content Words	Function Words
Nouns (*computer, board, peace, school*)	Articles (*the, a/an*)
Verbs (*say, walk, run, belong*)	Auxiliaries (*can, must, might, will*)
Adjectives (*clean, quick, rapid, enormous*)	Demonstratives (*this, these, that, those*)
Adverbs (*quickly, softly, enormously, cheerfully*)	Quantifiers (*many, few, little, some*)
	Prepositions (*on, with, to, from*)
	Pronouns (*he, she, they, we*)
	Conjunctions (*and, but, or, but*)

Figure 1: Content and Function words

The concept presented by Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) echoes Fudge's (2016) viewpoint and supports the idea that stressing words carrying more information contributes to the emphasis and importance observed in sentence stress, as suggested by Fudge (2016). The alignment between Fudge's (2016) and Celce-Murcia's et al. (2010) assertion strengthens the argument that stressed elements often correspond to words that carry more meaning or significance in the context of a sentence.

Cruttenden (2008) discusses the variable nature of sentence stress. More than one word in an utterance may receive primary stress. A deliberate, emphatic, or excited manner of speech

frequently demonstrates an increase in the number of stressed words in an utterance. In contrast, a more rapid and straightforward delivery is likely to feature fewer stressed words. Cruttenden (2008) provides a dialogue, to present this issue, the words written in capitals are more likely to receive stress in these utterances:

‚Did you have a good HOLIDAY?'

‚YES, VERY good.'

‚WAS the WEATHER all right?'

‚It was FINE for the FIRST part, but for the REST of the time it was pretty MIXED. We ENJOYED ourselves though. We had the CAR, so we were able to do some SIGHTSEEING, when it was too wet to go on the BEACH.'

1.3   Production of stress

Roach (2009a.) proposes four factors of pronunciation that contribute to the listener's perception of a syllable as stressed. Those include loudness, length, pitch, and quality.

1.3.1 Loudness

Roach (2009a.) states that most people assume that stress is only created by loudness, which is not true. It is, in fact, difficult for a speaker to make a certain syllable sound stressed without the usage of other factors such as length, pitch, or quality. If a speaker tries to make a syllable sound stressed by only changing its loudness and neglecting the other factors, the perceptual effect or impact on the listener is rather weak. Cruttenden (2008, p. 237) claims that greater loudness is carried principally by voiced sounds in which, *"greater amplitude of vibration of the vocal folds, together with the reinforcing resonance of the supraglottal cavities, results in acoustic terms in relatively greater intensity"*. This results in greater loudness perceived by the listener.

1.3.2 Length

Syllable duration, on the other hand, is quite a strong factor. If one of the syllables is prolonged compared to its counterparts, the hearer often tends to hear it as a stressed syllable (Roach, 2009a.).

1.3.3 Pitch

According to Roach (2009a.), the strongest effect on perceiving a syllable as stressed or unstressed is the highness or lowness of the pitch. If all syllables are produced with a low pitch except for one that is produced with a high pitch, it is perceived as stressed.

1.3.4 Quality

The final factor that needs to be addressed is quality. As Cruttenden (2008) points out, some syllables may sound more prominent due to the quality of the vowels at their centre. According to quality, vowels are categorized into strong and weak vowels. According to Ivanová and Kořínková (2012), **strong vowels** include all long vowels /iː uː ɜː ɔː ɑː/, short vowels /ɪ ʊ e ɒ æ ʌ/, and all the diphthongs. Strong vowels mostly appear in stressed syllables, as in the examples: _orange_ /ɒ/, _Tuesday_ /uː/, and _arctic_ /ɑː/. However, they may occasionally appear in unstressed syllables (e.g. _magnificent_ /æ/). **Weak vowels**, including /i/, /u/, and /ə/, exclusively occur in unstressed syllables. Ivanová and Kořínková (2012) provide these examples: _photograph_ /ə/, _photography_ /i/, _situation_ /u/.

According to Roach (2009a.), stress is produced by the factors mentioned above: loudness, length, pitch and quality. "_Generally these four factors work together in combination, although syllables may sometimes be made prominent by means of only one or two of them_" (Roach, 2009a., p. 74). He also claims that these factors are not equally important, according to Roach (2009a.), pitch has the strongest effect on recognizing a syllable as stressed. Length is also a powerful factor, while loudness and quality have minor effects. On the other hand, Gosh and Levis (2021) argue that the default cue used by native speakers to identify stressed syllables is vowel quality.

2 Word stress

2.1 Levels of stress

So far, we have dealt with syllables being either stressed or unstressed. However, within longer expressions, syllables can have different degrees of stress. De Lacy (2007) states that it is common to distinguish between primary and secondary stress. However, he also mentions that we can come across a three-way distinction into primary, secondary, and tertiary stress. Kelly (2000, p. 51) shares the opinion that *"we should consider all syllables in terms of their level of stress, rather than its presence or absence."* Jones (in Kelly, 2000) distinguishes up to 5 levels of stress.

To present this he uses the word *opportunity* which has according to his theory 5 levels of stress, number 1 indicates the greatest level of stress and number 5 the least:

```
   2  4   1    5 3
/ˌɒpəˈtjuːnɪti/
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As Kelly (2000) says, the existence of different levels of stress is well documented and evidenced.

Nevertheless, in this work, we will settle on a three-level distinction, as many authors, for example, Roach (2009a), Teschner and Whitley (2004), and Wells (2000) do. The following subchapters will explore the distinctions between primary, secondary, and zero stress.
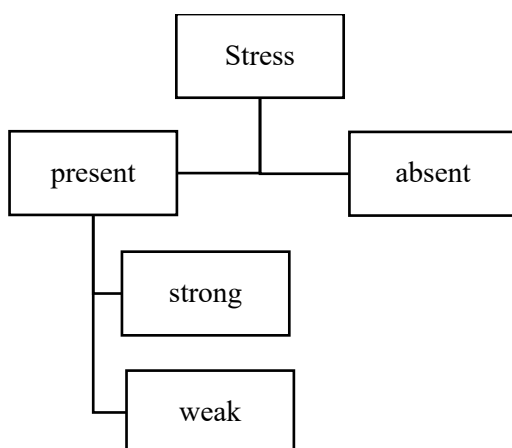
Figure 2: Relationships between the terms used to classify stress

The figure above provided by Teschner and Whitley (2004, p. 2) illustrates the relationships among the terms used for categorizing various levels of stress. Stress can either be present or absent. In the presence of stress, a specific syllable is stressed, while in its absence, a certain syllable is referred to as unstressed or is said to carry zero or null stress. As noted above, there are two types of present stresses: strong (or primary) and weak (or secondary).

2.1.1 Primary stress

"A syllable in a word which receives most stress has primary stress" (Carr, 2019, p. 72). For example, within the term *around* /əˈraʊnd/, the primary stress is situated on the second syllable. When pronouncing a word, the pitch of our voice does not remain on the same level but changes. According to Roach (2009a., p. 75) *"the prominence that results from this pitch movement, or tone, gives the strongest type of stress (primary stress)."*

Primary stress can fall on the first, middle, or last syllable, as shown in the examples provided by Kelly (2000, p.66):

Ooo	oOo	ooO
SYLlabus	enGAGEment	usheRETTE
SUBstitute	baNAna	kangaROO
TECHnical	phoNEtic	underSTAND

Figure 3: Syllables with primary stress

In the given examples, capital letters indicate the primary stressed syllables. The words in the first column are all stressed on the first syllable, the words in the second column are stressed on the middle syllable and the words in the third column receive primary stress on the last syllable.

2.1.2 Secondary stress

According to Roach (2009a.), the secondary stress is a stressed syllable in a word. However, compared to primary stress it is weaker in prominence. Cruttenden (2008) defines a syllable carrying secondary stress as a syllable pronounced with the second-highest level of energy. In his definition, secondary stress is described as a form of accentuation that lacks any noticeable pitch emphasis. According to Cruttenden (2008), secondary stress appears in longer words, when words have more than one syllable before or after syllables with primary stress. *"A general rhythmical pattern is often apparent, there being a tendency to alternate more prominent and less prominent syllables"* (Cruttenden, 2008, p. 242). Roach (2009a.) states that secondary stress is weaker than primary stress but stronger than zero stress. According to Fudge (2016), there is a tendency for secondary stressed syllables to precede primary stressed syllables, as can be seen in the examples below:

independent   /ˌɪndɪˈpɛndənt/
economic   /ˌiːkəˈnɒmɪk/
education   /ˌɛdʒʊˈkeɪʃ°n/

2.1.3 Zero stress

Roach (2009a.) claims that a syllable is unstressed when it carries neither primary nor secondary stress, there is the absence of any recognizable amount of prominence. According to Kelly (2000), an unstressed syllable is one in which features such as loudness, longer syllables, or pitch change (see Chapter number 1.3) are greatly reduced. Meaning they may have lower intensity (loudness), shorter duration (length), and less pitch variation compared to stressed syllables. For illustration, the word *around* /əˈraʊnd/, where the first syllable is unstressed can be used.

Kelly (2000, p. 69) provides these examples which can illustrate the differentiation between primary stress, secondary stress, and zero stress. Primary stress is represented by the biggest circles (O), secondary stress is represented by the small circles (o), and zero stress is represented by the dots (.):

```
 o  .  O ..
opportunity
 O .  o
telephone
 O   . o
substitute
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2.2 Notation of word stress

There are several methods of marking stress in written form. In this chapter, an overview of the possibilities of stress indication will be provided.

According to Fudge (2016), primary stress in the word is traditionally indicated by placing the diacritic mark (ˈ) before the relevant syllable. Secondary stress is indicated by the diacritic mark (ˌ) before the relevant syllable: economic (ˌiːkəˈnɒmɪk). When a syllable is not marked by diacritic marks, it is unstressed. This convention is used in British dictionaries such as *Oxford English Dictionary* (1989), *Cambridge International Dictionary of English* (1995), *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (2001), and *Macmillan English Dictionary (2002).*

As stated by Teschner and Whitley (2004), this method of stress notation is preferred by the International Phonetic Association (IPA)[1], while American dictionaries typically indicate stress by the diacritic mark in bold (ˈ) for primary stress and by the plain diacritic mark (ˈ) for secondary stress. While IPA places the marks before the stressed syllables, in American dictionaries such as the *Webster's New World Dictionary* (1988) or the *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (1992); the mark is placed after the stressed syllable: *economic* (ĕkˈnŏmˈik). As you can see in the example a (˘) mark is placed above 'e' and 'o', this marks the unstressed syllable in the above-mentioned dictionaries.

Among English language dictionaries available online, all dictionaries (*Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, Merriam-Webster's dictionary, Cambridge English Dictionary, Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*), except for *Collins online dictionary,* use IPA conventions. These conventions involve the use of diacritic marks before stressed syllables to denote primary and secondary stress: *economic* (ˌiːkəˈnɒmɪk). In *Collin's English dictionary* stress is marked by underlining a certain syllable: *economic* (<u>iː</u>kən<u>ɒ</u>mɪk).

Kelly (2000) suggests several ways of indicating stressed syllables that might be more suitable when teaching about word stress:

o O o
- Circles above or below the word: banana

▫ ☐ ▫
- Boxes above or below the word: banana
- Underlining the stressed syllable: ba<u>na</u>na
- Writing it in bold: ba**na**na
- Writing it in capitals: baNAna

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[1] The International Phonetic Association is the oldest and major representative organisation for phoneticians established in 1886. It promotes the scientific study of phonetics and plays a crucial role in standardizing the notation and description of the sounds of languages around the world. The IPA has developed the International Phonetic Alphabet (also known as IPA), which is a standardized system of phonetic notation. According to the International Phonetic Association (n.d.; available at: https://www.internationalphoneticassociation.org)

Lane (2010) argues that capitals and bold letters are visually strong, however, it is difficult to show more levels of stress without either altering the font size or combining both techniques. For example, using bold caps for primary stress, plain caps for secondary stress, and lower case for unstressed syllables, as in the following example: Eko**NO**mic.

Some of the marking techniques provided by Kelly (2000) are also employed in dictionaries. For example, in *Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary* (1988) stressed syllables are underlined and written in bold: *economic* (**i̱**ːkən**ɒ**mɪk). A stressed syllable marked by capital letters can be found in *Webster's New World Essential Dictionary* (2005): *economic* (Ek uh NAH mik).

Dictionaries evolve and their stress-marking techniques change and vary between editions. The examples mentioned above are just a few of the many available on the market.

3   Word stress placement

We are now moving on to the question of stress placement within a word, a topic addressed by Ashby (2013) who categorizes stress into fixed and free forms. Ashby (2013) argues that the stress in fixed-stress languages consistently falls on the same syllable in every word regardless of its length. In such cases, the position of stress is predictable. On the other hand, in free-stress languages, the stress placement is highly unpredictable. Without extensive knowledge of a word's etymology and morphology, determining which syllable carries the stress becomes challenging, as stress can occur on any syllable. Ashby (2013) points out that stress in fixed-stress languages, serves a demarcative function, signalling the beginning of a new word, whereas in free-stress languages, stress patterns must be learned alongside other linguistic features, as they are not bound by consistent rules.

Authors like Ashby (2013), Davenport and Hannahs (2013), Dalton and Seidhoffer (1994), and Carr (2019) argue that word stress in free-stress languages follows relatively uncomplicated patterns. For example, in Finnish and Czech it is the first syllable in a word that carries the main stress, in French it is the last syllable and in Polish it is the second last syllable of a word.

The English word stress presents a more complex phenomenon. Authors such as Ashby (2013); Dalton and Seidhoffer (1994); and Gosh and Levis (2021) classify English as a free-stress language, noting its unpredictability compared to languages like Finnish or Polish. *"From the point of view of speakers of a language like Finnish or Polish, the main stress can fall almost anywhere in an English word"* (Dalton and Seidhoffer, 1994, p. 39). Nevertheless, Roach (2009a.) points out that when English speakers try to pronounce a new unfamiliar word, they pronounce it with correct stress. Gosh and Levis (2021) identify other free-stress languages besides English, including Dutch, German, Spanish, Italian, and Russian. Cruttenden (2008) presents a more complex perspective, arguing that the English word stress pattern is fixed, the primary stress always falls on a certain syllable, and is free in the sense that the primary

stress *"is not tied to any particular point in the chain of syllables constituting a word, as it is in some languages"* (Cruttenden, 2008, p. 235). [2]

3.1 Rules (tendencies) for placing stress

Stress in English is a very complex phenomenon, its placement can be hardly reduced to a set of strict rules. Many authors throughout history have been occupied with efforts to identify these rules. Several linguists tried to propose some rules for English word stress. At this point, some of the main authors will be discussed.

One of the authors who should be mentioned is **Roger Kingdon,** who in *The Groundwork of English Stress* (1958, in Fudge, 2016) introduced the suffix-based approach. In his work, he demonstrates that in many cases suffixes influence stress placement. The suffix-based approach is generally accepted nowadays.

Chomsky and Halle claimed in their work *The Sound Pattern of English* (1968, in Fudge, 2016), that the placement of stress in an English word can be predicted. They argue that it is possible to predict stress placement based on whether *"particular vowels are long or short, and whether consonants occur singly or in sequences of more than one"* (Fudge, 2016, p. 11). As Fudge (2016) explains, Chomsky and Halle use a cyclic process to determine stress placement, where stress assignment begins at the root level of the word and progressively extends to larger constituents until the word's boundaries are reached and the entire word is analysed.

Another crucial name is **Erik Fudge** who, in his work *English Word-Stress,* adopts parts of the approaches mentioned above and constructs a method of stress placement. In this method, he advises to first find the "stressable portion" of the word (SP). *"The stressable portion is what*

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[2] This means that while there is a certain predictability in which syllable carries the primary stress within individual English words, there is flexibility in where the stress falls relative to other syllables in the word. This flexibility allows for variations in stress placement based on factors such as word origin, morphology (how words are formed and structured), and pronunciation context (accent or dialect).

is left of the word when certain suffixes and prefixes have been removed from it" (Fudge, 2016, p. 17). After certain suffixes and prefixes are removed it depends on the structure of the stressable portion. If the SP is monosyllabic, the primary stress falls on that syllable (e.g. *unmanliness* /ˌʌnˈmænlɪnəs/). If the SP is polysyllabic without prefixes or suffixes, the stress follows principles outlined for simple words (see sections 3.1.1.2 and 3.1.1.3). If the SP contains prefixes or suffixes, the prefixes and suffixes can influence and determine the stress placement (see sections 3.1.2.1 and 3.1.2.2).

The last author that should be mentioned is **Peter Roach** and his work *English Phonetics and Phonology*. Roach (2009a.) provides a set of ideas that should be considered when deciding on stress placement:

a) Whether the word is morphologically simple or complex.

b) What the grammatical category of the word is (noun, verb, adjective, etc.).

c) How many syllables the word has.

d) What the phonological structure of those syllables is. [3]

It is sometimes difficult to make the decision referred to in (a). Roach (2009a., p. 82) explains how to recognise simple and complex words. He defines **simple words** as words *"not composed of more than one grammatical unit"*. For example, the word *care* is simple, while the words *careful* or *careless* are complex (composed of two grammatical units). The terms *carefully* and *carelessness* are also complex words (composed of three grammatical units).

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[3] The phonological structure of syllables can be broken down into three main components: the peak, coda and onset. The peak is the central part of a syllable (typically the vowel sound). The coda is the part of a syllable that appears after the peak at the end of the syllable, and the onset comes before the peak at the beginning of the syllable. The coda and the onset are optional and if present they typically consist of consonant sounds. (Roach, 2009a.)

Roach (2009a.) divides **complex words** into two major types:

a) Words composed of a basic word form called the stem, and an affix, which can be either a prefix or a suffix, e.g. prefix "*un-*" + stem "*pleasant*" → *unpleasant,* stem "*good*" + suffix "*-ness* " → *goodness.*

b) Compound words made of two or more independent words, e.g. *armchair, bedroom, toothbrush*.

At this point, an examination of rules and principles used for determining the placement of word stress in English words will be provided. Certain rules do exist, and they tell us what is true most of the time, but not always. As usual, there is a great deal of exceptions to almost any rule of English stress, so the next chapters should be regarded rather as a description of tendencies than strict rules.

3.1.1 Stress in simple words

Authors such as Carr (2019) or Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) distinguish between words of content and function words (see **Chyba! Nenalezen zdroj odkazů.**). Function words tend to be unstressed, thus, it is not necessary to deal with them any further. Content words, on the other hand, can have variable stress; therefore, they will be dealt with in the following subchapters.

3.1.1.1 One-syllable words

Monosyllabic words or one-syllable words are unproblematic because there is only *"one syllable for the primary stress to fall on"* (Carr, 2019, p. 77).

3.1.1.2 Two-syllable words

Two-syllable words can also be referred to as bisyllabic words. *"In the case of two-syllable words, either the first or the second syllable will be stressed – not both"* (Roach, 2009a., p. 77). As stated by Kelly (2000) and Roach (2009a.), there is a general tendency for two-syllable verbs to be stressed on the second syllable and for nouns and adjectives to be stressed on the first syllable. *"Adverbs are generally derived from adjectival roots with no alternation to the stress pattern"* (Cruttenden, 2008, p. 238).

Two-syllable verbs		Two-syllable nouns		Two-syllable adjectives	
reLAX	/rɪˈlæks/	TAble	/ˈteɪbᵊl/	YELlow	/ˈjɛləʊ/
reCEIVE	/rɪˈsiːv/	LANguage	/ˈlæŋgwɪʤ/	HAppy	/ˈhæpi/
beGIN	/bɪˈgɪn/	WINdow	/ˈwɪndəʊ/	CLEver	/ˈklɛvə/
seLECT	/sɪˈlɛkt/	TEACher	/ˈtiːʧə/	SPAcious	/ˈspeɪʃəs/

Table 1: Typical two-syllable word stress patterns

The table above consists of several examples provided by Celce-Murcia et al. (2010), Cruttenden (2008), and Roach (2009a.). The table shows typical word stress patterns in two-syllable verbs, nouns and adjectives. Bisyllabic verbs are, as displayed in the table, stressed on the second syllable. Bisyllabic nouns and adjectives are stressed on the first syllable.

However, as discussed above, stress patterns can be influenced by various factors. One of the factors that influence stress placement discussed by Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) is the historical origin of a word. English vocabulary consists of words of Germanic origin (including words of Anglo-Saxon origin), French origin, Spanish origin, Latin or Greek origin and others. According to Celce-Murcia et al. (2010), loan words in English can sometimes retain the stress patterns of the language they come from.

"For words of Germanic origin, the first syllable of the base form of a word is typically stressed" (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p. 186). For example:

VISit   PICture   PURple

Words of French origin often have stress on the final syllable or the final syllable of the root. Examples include:

acCEPT   caFÉ   biZARRE

Another factor which has a major influence on the word stress position is the quality of the syllables (strong and weak). The influence of quality has already been discussed in Chapter 1.3.4, nevertheless, it is important to be mentioned here as well.

According to the general tendency two-syllable verbs are to be stressed on the second syllable, however, *"if the final syllable is weak (/i/, /u/, /ə/), then the first syllable is stressed"* (Roach, 2009a., p. 77). Thus:

ENter /ˈɛntə/

ENvy /ˈɛnvi/

The same rule applies to two-syllable adjectives. Adjectives are typically stressed on the first syllable unless the first syllable is weak:

aLIVE /əˈlaɪv/

diVINE /dɪˈvaɪn/

Stress in nouns *"will fall on the first syllable unless the first syllable is weak and the second syllable is strong"* (Roach, 2009a., p. 78). Thus:

baLLOON /bəˈluːn/

deSIGN /dɪˈzaɪn/

According to Cruttenden (2008) and Roach (2009a.), there are exceptions where these rules cannot be applied, and strong syllables can be unstressed. However, as highlighted by Roach (2009a.), these exceptions do not extend to weak syllables, which always remain unstressed.

Certain words exhibit different stress patterns depending on whether they are nouns or verbs. Cruttenden (2008) argues that a relatively small number of pairs of nouns and verbs may differ only in the stress position, with the stress falling on the first syllable in the nouns and on the second syllable in the verbs, without any other changes in their sound:

	Verb	Noun
digest	/daɪˈdʒɛst/	/ˈdaɪdʒɛst/
transfer	/trænsˈfɜː/	/ˈtrænsfɜː/
transport	/trænsˈpɔːt/	/ˈtrænspɔːt/

Cruttenden (2008) states that in a somewhat larger number of pairs, the change of stress position is more frequently accompanied by a sound change as well, mostly by the reduction of the vowel in the first syllable of verbs to /ɪ/ or /ə/:

	Verb	Noun
combine	/kəmˈbaɪn/	/ˈkɒmbaɪn/
present	/prɪˈzɛnt/	/ˈprɛzᵊnt/
project	/prəˈdʒɛkt/	/ˈprɒdʒɛkt/

Nevertheless, according to Cruttenden (2008), certain dissyllabic words do not conform to the general noun/verb stress pattern distinction nor exhibit instability, e.g. *comment* /ˈkɒmɛnt/ for both noun and verb or *contact* /ˈkɒntækt/. There is no change in the stress pattern.

3.1.1.3 Three-syllable words

Moving on to three-syllable words, we find out that the picture is more complicated, it is not only necessary to determine the stress position but sometimes also the level of stress. As discussed in Chapter **Chyba! Nenalezen zdroj odkazů.**, a syllable can receive primary stress or secondary stress.

According to Roach (2009a.), the word stress in three-syllable verbs can be determined according to the quality of the vowel in a given syllable. If the final syllable is strong, then it will receive primary stress, e.g. *entertain* /ˌɛntəˈteɪn/, *resurrect* /ˌrɛzᵊrˈɛkt/. On the other hand, as stated by Roach (2009a., p. 78), if the final syllable is weak, *"it will be unstressed and stress will be placed on the preceding (penultimate) syllable if that syllable is strong,"* e.g. *encounter* /ɪnˈkaʊntə/, *determine* /dɪˈtɜːmɪn/. In case both the middle and final syllables are weak, then the stress will be on the initial syllable, e.g. *parody* /ˈpærədi/, *monitor* /ˈmɒnɪtə/.

Three-syllable nouns require a slightly different rule demonstrated by Roach (2009a.). As in two-syllable nouns, the general tendency for three-syllable nouns is for the stress to fall on the first syllable, e.g. *quantity* /ˈkwɒntəti/, *emperor* /ˈɛmpərə/. This rule can be applied unless the first syllable is weak, then the stress will be moved on to the next (middle) syllable, e.g. *potato* /pəˈteɪtəʊ/, disaster /dɪˈzɑːstə/. However, unlike verbs, if the final syllable of three-

syllable nouns is strong, it will not usually receive the main stress, e.g. *intellect* /ˈɪntᵊlɛkt/. Three-syllable adjectives seem to follow the same stress patterns as nouns.

It is necessary to highlight that there are numerous exceptions to the rules for simple words that have just been described. Roach (2009a., p. 79) argues that *"despite the exceptions, it seems better to attempt to produce some rules, even if they are rather crude and inaccurate than to claim that there is no rule or regularity in English word stress."*

3.1.2 Stress in complex words

This chapter will first address complex words made with affixes (prefixes and suffixes) and subsequently discuss compound words composed of two individual words.

As claimed by Roach (2009a.), affixes can have three possible effects on word stress in complex words:

a) The affix itself will receive the primary stress, e.g. *picture* /ˈpɪktʃə/ → *picturesque* /ˌpɪktʃəˈrɛsk/.
b) The word will have the same stress pattern as if the affix was not there, e.g. *pleasant* /ˈplɛzᵊnt/ → *unpleasant* /ʌnˈplɛzᵊnt/
c) The stress will remain on the stem, but it will be shifted to a different syllable, e.g. *magnet* /ˈmægnət/ → *magnetic* /mægˈnɛtɪk/

3.1.2.1   Influence of prefixes

Most prefixes do not affect the stress pattern of the stem to which they are attached, therefore, they are generally regarded as stress-neutral. According to Celce-Murcia et al. (1996), the primary stress in words with prefixes generally falls on the initial syllable of the stem and the prefix is, in most cases, unstressed or, in a few cases, bears secondary stress.

The following examples provided by Celce-Murcia et al. (1996) show the typical stress pattern (secondary or no stress on the prefix and primary stress on the stem) of complex words made with prefixes:

a-	awake	/əˈweɪk/
be-	belief	/bɪˈliːf/
com-	complain	/kəmˈpleɪn/
ex-	expect	/ɪkˈspɛkt/
dis-	discharge	/dɪsˈtʃɑːdʒ/
for-	forgive	/fəˈgɪv/
fore-	forewarn	/fɔːˈwɔːn/
in-	inhale	/ɪnˈheɪl/
im-	improve	/ɪmˈpruːv/
il-	illegal	/ɪˈliːgəl/
ir-	irrelevant	/ɪˈrɛləvənt/
mis-	mistake	/mɪˈsteɪk/
out-	outrun	/aʊtˈrʌn/
over-	overcome	/ˌəʊvəˈkʌm/
pro-	proclaim	/prəˈkleɪm/
re-	recharge	/riːˈtʃɑːdʒ/
un-	unleash	/ʌnˈliːʃ/
under-	understand	/ˌʌndəˈstænd/
up-	upset	/ʌpˈsɛt/
with-	withdrawn	/wɪðˈdrɔːn/

An exception to this general pattern occurs *"when a word with prefix (such as fore-, out, over- under- up-) functions as a noun and has the same pattern as a noun compound"* (Celce-Murcia et al., 1996, p. 134). In this case, the prefix or its first syllable receives primary stress and the noun receives secondary stress as in *forearm* /ˈfɔːrɑːm/; *outlook* /ˈaʊtlʊk/; *overdose* /ˈəʊvədəʊs/; *underwear* /ˈʌndəweə/; *upstart* /ˈʌpstɑːt/.

3.1.2.2   Influence of suffixes

Suffixes are generally more discussed than prefixes when it comes to word stress. The addition of a suffix can frequently alter the stress pattern of a word. Both Cruttenden (2008) and Roach (2009) divide suffixes into 3 major categories: stress-neutral suffixes, stress-attracting, and stress-fixing suffixes. Fudge (2016) adds one extra category which he calls mixed suffixes.

Stress-neutral suffixes leave the stress pattern unchanged, e.g. *bitter* /ˈbɪtə/→ *bitterness* /ˈbɪtənəs/. According to Fudge (2016), this category includes all inflectional endings, e.g. plural (-s/-es); possessive (-'s); third person singular (-s/-es); comparative and superlative (-er, -est); past tense and past participle (-ed, -en); and present participle (-ing).

The table below lists stress-neutral suffixes:

suffix	original word		word with suffix	
-able	comfort	/ˈkʌmfət/	comfortable	/ˈkʌmfᵊtəbᵊl/
-age	anchor	/ˈæŋkə/	anchorage	/ˈæŋkərɪdʒ/
-al	refuse	/rɪˈfjuːz/	refusal	/rɪˈfjuːzᵊl/
-en	wide	/ˈwaɪd/	widen	/ˈwaɪdᵊn/
-ful	wonder	/ˈwʌndə/	wonderful	/ˈwʌndəfᵊl/
-fy	glory	/ˈglɔːri/	glorify	/ˈglɔːrɪfaɪ/
-ing	amaze	/əˈmeɪz/	amazing	/əˈmeɪzɪŋ/
-ish	fool	/ˈfuːl/	foolish	/ˈfuːlɪʃ/
-ism	alcohol	/ˈælkəhɒl/	alcoholism	/ˈælkəhɒlɪzᵊm/
-ist	separate	/ˈsɛpᵊrət/	separatist	/ˈsɛpᵊrətɪst/
-like	bird	/ˈbɜːd/	birdlike	/ˈbɜːdlaɪk /
-less	power	/ˈpaʊə/	powerless	/ˈpaʊələs/
-ly	hurried	/ˈhʌrɪd/	hurriedly	/ˈhʌrɪdli/
-ment	engage	/ɪnˈgeɪdʒ/	engagement	/ɪnˈgeɪdʒmənt/
-ness	yellow	/ˈjɛləʊ/	yellowness	/ˈjɛləʊnəs/

-ous	poison	/ˈpɔɪzᵊn/	poisonous	/ˈpɔɪznəs/
-wise	other	/ˈʌðə/	otherwise	/ˈʌðəwaɪz/
-y	fun	/fʌn/	funny	/ˈfʌni/

Table 2: List of stress-neutral suffixes

The table above shows stress-neutral suffixes with examples listed by Cruttenden (2008) and Roach (2009a.).

Stress-attracting or auto-stressed suffixes attract the stress onto themselves, e.g. *disk* /ˈdɪsk/→ *diskette* /dɪˈskɛt/. According to Roach (2009), the first syllable of the suffix receives the primary stress. *"If the stem consists of more than one syllable there will be a secondary stress on one of the syllables of the stem"* (Roach, 2009, p. 83).

The table below lists stress-attracting suffixes:

suffix	original word		word with suffix	
-aire	million	/ˈmɪljən/	millionaire	/ˌmɪljəˈneə/
-ation	private	/ˈpraɪvət/	privatization	/ˌpraɪvətaɪˈzeɪʃᵊn/
-ee	refuge	/ˈrɛfjuːdʒ/	refugee	/ˌrɛfjʊˈdʒiː/
-eer	mountain	/ˈmaʊntɪn/	mountaineer	/ˌmaʊntɪˈnɪə/
-ese	Portugal	/ˈpɔːtʃəgᵊl/	Portuguese	/ˌpɔːtʃəˈgiːz/
-ette	cigar	/sɪˈgɑː/	cigarette	/ˌsɪgəˈrɛt/
-esque	picture	/ˈpɪktʃə/	picturesque	/ˌpɪktʃəˈrɛsk/

Table 3: List of stress-attracting suffixes

The table above shows stress-attracting suffixes with examples listed by Cruttenden (2008), Fudge (2016), and Roach (2009a.).

Stress-fixing or pre-stressed suffixes have the effect of fixing the stress on a particular syllable of the stem, e.g. *definite* /ˈdɛfɪnɪt/ ➔ *definition* /ˌdɛfɪˈnɪʃᵊn/. They can be further divided according to the position of the stress in the stem. The stress can fall:

a) on the final syllable of the stem, e.g. *-eous, -graphy,-ial, -ic, -ion, -ity, -ious, -ive;*

b) on the penultimate syllable, thus, two syllables before the syllable containing suffix, e.g. *-fy, -tude*

c) on the final or penultimate syllable according to the quality of the final syllable of the stem (strong or weak), e.g. -al.[4]

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[4] If the syllable before the one containing the suffix is strong, then it is stressed as in the following example: *homicidal* /ˌhɒmɪˈsaɪdᵊl/. If the syllable before the one containing the suffix is weak, then it is stressed as in the following example: *original* /əˈrɪʤᵊnᵊl/. (Fudge, 2016)

The table below lists stress-fixing suffixes:

suffix	original word		word with suffix	
-al	origin	/ˈɒrɪdʒɪn/	original	/əˈrɪdʒᵊnᵊl/
-eous	advantage	/ədˈvɑːntɪdʒ/	advantageous	/ˌædvənˈteɪdʒəs/
-fy	glory	/ˈglɔːri/	glorify	/ˈglɔːrɪfaɪ/
-graphy	photo	/ˈfəʊtəʊ/	photography	/fəˈtɒgrəfi/
-ial	proverb	/ˈprɒvəb/	proverbial	/prəˈvɜːbiəl/
-ic	climate	/ˈklaɪmət/	climatic	/klaɪˈmætɪk/
-ion	perfect	/ˈpɜːfɛkt/	perfection	/pəˈfɛkʃᵊn/
-ious	injure	/ˈɪndʒə/	injurious	/ɪnˈdʒʊəriəs/
-ity	curious	ˈ/kjʊəriəs/	curiosity	/ˌkjʊəriˈɒsəti/
-ive	reflex	/ˈriːflɛks/	reflexive	/rɪˈflɛksɪv/
-tude	grate	/ˈgreɪt/	gratitude	/ˈgrætɪtjuːd/

Table 4: List of stress-fixing suffixes

The table contains examples of stress-fixing suffixes listed by Cruttenden (2008), Fudge (2016), and Roach (2009a.).

In addition to the above-mentioned suffixes that exhibit a preference for a specific pattern, there are others that operate in two distinct modes. Fudge (2016) calls them **mixed suffixes**. According to Fudge (2016), depending on the word, these suffixes may fall into one category in some instances and into a different category in others. Thus, for instance, the suffix -ate falls into the category of stress-attracting suffixes in words of two syllables such as *rotate* /rəʊˈteɪt/, while in words of three or more syllables e.g. *demonstrate* /ˈdɛmənstreɪt/, it functions as a stress-fixing suffix. Also, the suffix -able typically operates as stress-neutral, however, in certain cases, it may act as a stress-fixing suffix e.g. *admirable* (*admire* /ədˈmaɪə/ → *admirable* /ˈædmərəbᵊl/).

It is important to note that the suffixes discussed in this chapter and provided in Table 2, Table 3, and Table 4 are not all stress-neutral, stress-attracting and stress-fixing suffixes; rather,

this chapter constitutes a select subset of them. It was not intended to give a full list of all suffixes, Instead, the purpose was to highlight the key patterns in placing stress within complex words. The suffixes mentioned serve as illustrations of these patterns rather than an exhaustive list.[5]

3.1.2.3   Compound words

As discussed on page 27, compound words are a type of complex words. However, they do not consist of a stem and affix, they can be according to Carr (2019) analysed as consisting of two (or more) words which can exist independently. Cruttenden (2008) states that compounds can be written in different ways: they are either written as one word (e.g. *daybreak, glasshouse*); with a hyphen (e.g. *clear-cut, open-minded);* or with a space between the two elements (e.g. *working party, desk lamp*).[6]

Fudge (2016) notes that regarding stress placement, compounds have similar features as simple words. According to Cruttenden (2008) and Roach (2009a.), the most common types (approximately 75% of compounds) are the ones consisting of two nouns. These are generally stressed on the first element, as in:

birthplace	/ˈbɜːθˌpleɪs /
keyboard	/ ˈkiːbɔːd/
typewriter	/ˈtaɪpˌraɪtə/
seaside	/ˈsiːsaɪd/
suitcase	/ˈsjuːtkeɪs/
teacup	/ˈtiːkʌp/

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[5] For further information see the book English Word-Stress written by Erik Fudge. Fudge (2016) provides a detailed examination of suffixes and their properties in section number 4 (p. 40 – 133).

[6] According to Roach (2009a.), there is no clear division between two-word compounds separated by a space and pairs of words that generally occur together.

According to Cruttenden (2008), there are many exceptions to this general tendency, such as in words where the second item is made of the first item (e.g. *fruit salad* /fruːt ˈsæləd/, *rice pudding* /raɪs ˈpʊdɪŋ/, *clay pigeon* /kleɪ ˈpɪʤən/).

Cruttenden (2008) says that compound words stressed on the first element can consist of other elements than just nouns, for example:

1) Compounds made of adjectives and nouns:

blackboard	/ˈblækbɔːd/
greenhouse	/ˈgriːnhaʊs/
faintheart	/ˈfeɪnthɑːt/
searchparty	/ˈsɜːʧˌpɑːti/

2) Compounds made of phrasal and prepositional verbs:

set-up	/ˈsɛtʌp/
showdown	/ˈʃəʊdaʊn/

3) Compounds functioning as adjectives:

headstrong	/ˈhɛdstrɒŋ/
ladylike	/ˈleɪdɪlaɪk/
seasick	/ˈsiːsɪk/
trustworthy	/ˈtrʌstˌwɜːði/

4) Compounds functioning as verbs:

babysit	/ˈbeɪbɪsɪt/
sidestep	/ˈsaɪdstɛp/
tiptoe	/ˈtɪptəʊ/

However, some compounds are final-stressed, primary stress falls on the second element and the first element receives secondary stress. Based on Cruttenden (2008), Fudge (2016), and Roach (2009a.) these include, for example:

1) Compounds functioning as adverbs:

downstream   /ˌdaʊnˈstriːm/
indoors   /ˌɪnˈdɔːz/
upstairs   /ˌʌpˈsteəz/
underneath   /ˌʌndəˈniːθ/

2) Compounds which function as verbs and have an adverbial first element:

back-pedal   /bækˈpɛdᵊl/
downplay   /ˌdaʊnˈpleɪ/
oversleep   /ˌəʊvəˈsliːp/
understate   /ˌʌndəˈsteɪt/

3.1.3 Shifting word stress

"It would be wrong to imagine that the stress pattern is always fixed and unchanging in English words" (Roach, 2009a., p. 86). According to Roach (2009a.), the positioning of stress within a word may be altered due to the stress patterns in neighbouring words occurring next to it. As is the case of a final-stressed compound (*bad-tempered* /ˌbædˈtempəd/), however, when paired with a word that begins with a primary-stressed syllable, the stress tends to shift to the preceding syllable and become secondary stress (e.g. *bad-tempered teacher* /ˈbædtempəd ˈtiːtʃə/). As Fudge (2016, p. 137) explains: *"there seems to be a tendency for stronger stresses to alternate with weaker ones rather than to follow one another directly."*

Some words may be stressed differently according to the word class they belong to, e.g. *transport* (V) /trænsˈpɔːt/, *transport* (N) /ˈtrænspɔːt/ (see verb-noun pairs discussed in Chapter 3.1.1.2).

Stress placement in certain words may differ according to the speaker's preference, an example provided by Roach (2009a.) is the word *kilometre* which is pronounced by some speakers as /kɪˈlɒmɪtə/ and by others as /ˈkɪləmiːtə/.

Fudge (2016) discusses differences in word stress between phrases and compounds using the example of *blackboard* (a compound) and *black board* (a phrase). Following the rule of stressing compounds made of adjectives and nouns, *blackboard* (= a board for writing on with chalk) is stressed on the first element (/ˈblækbɔːd/). When talking about the phrase black board (= a board which is black), both elements are stressed equally (/ˈblæk ˈbɔːd/).

Word stress placement is indeed complex and intricate. Despite the challenges posed by its multifaceted nature, the discussion has aimed to demonstrate the existence of certain rules or tendencies for stress placement. This analysis emphasizes the significance of understanding these rules as not merely random or subject to individual preference but rather as a structured and patterned aspect of language pronunciation. By acknowledging these intricacies, we gain valuable insights into the dynamics of stress placement.

4 Teaching word stress

4.1 Perceptions of pronunciation teaching

Before focusing specifically on word stress teaching it is essential to address pronunciation teaching as a whole.

Based on Lane (2010) pronunciation is recognised as a crucial element of effective communication, and pronunciation teaching is an essential part of English language education. However, as Murphy (2014, in Grant, 2014, p. 241) notes: *"many teachers are hesitant when it comes to teaching pronunciation due to inexperience, lack of specialized training, lack of resources, and/or lack of institutional support."*

Murphy (2014, in Grant, 2014) has conducted research dealing with critical topics of teacher readiness to effectively teach pronunciation. He claims that in recent decades, the majority of English language training and degree programs have failed to adequately equip English language teachers in the domain of pronunciation instruction. He lists the key findings of his research including the following:

- Teachers feel underprepared to teach pronunciation.
- Teachers believe more training in teaching pronunciation is needed.
- Few teacher training programs offer a full course dedicated to how to teach pronunciation.
- Stronger ESL pronunciation curricula are needed.
- Teacher preparation programs are faulted for lacking a pedagogical focus in the phonology-related courses they offer.
- Teachers do not like (or are reluctant) to teach pronunciation.
- Teachers lack confidence in teaching suprasegmental.

Moreover, when it comes to pronunciation teaching in practice, Kelly (2000) claims that pronunciation teaching is more often responsive to specific errors, which students make in the classroom rather than being strategically planned. She believes that one of the reasons for the insufficient emphasis on pronunciation is the typical organization of textbooks, which

primarily focus on grammatical structures. *"Therefore, it is quite natural to make grammar the primary reference when planning lessons"* (Kelly, 2000, p. 13). Furthermore, according to Crofton-Martin (2015), if teachers underestimate the significance of pronunciation teaching, they might assume their students share this perspective.

However, Kelly (2000) also argues that even though teachers may be very interested in pronunciation, they still tend to put greater emphasis on grammar and vocabulary. According to Crofton-Martin (2015), Lane (2010), and Kelly (2000), students value pronunciation teaching, approach it with enthusiasm, and express a desire for more emphasis on pronunciation teaching. It is a paradox that even though both teachers and students may have a positive attitude towards pronunciation, it is still neglected.

Lambacher (2001, in Grant, 2014) explores various activities and resources available for teachers to improve their understanding and proficiency in teaching pronunciation. These include:

- Continued academic training, such as obtaining language certificates or pursuing Bachelor's, Master's, and PhD programs.
- Participation in distance training programs (e.g. online courses).
- Engaging in self-study through the exploration of professional literature, including linguistics books, teacher reference materials, classroom textbooks, and journal articles.
- Membership in professional organizations to benefit from networking opportunities and access organization resources.
- Participation in conferences, which offer networking opportunities and the chance to attend workshops and sessions.
- Using electronic resources including internet resources, Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) software, and electronic visual feedback technology.
- Gaining knowledge through teaching experience and research (e.g. reflections on teaching, feedback on teaching from peers and mentors, action research).

4.2 English word stress in the Czech Curriculum

The requirements for foreign language education in the Czech Republic are, according to MŠMT (2021b.) based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The following section will be dedicated to the examination of word stress references in the CEFR.

The CEFR, according to MŠMT (2021b.), provides a general foundation for developing language syllabuses in Europe including the Czech Republic. It describes what students need to learn in order to use language for communication and what knowledge and skills they must develop to be able to use language effectively.

The concept of word stress is addressed in section 5.1. *Linguistic competence*, within the subsection titled *Phonological control.* According to the Council of Europe (2020), the aspects of phonological control include the following:

- articulation (pronunciation of sounds and phonemes);
- prosody (intonation, rhythm and stress – both word stress and sentence stress);
- accent;
- intelligibility (listeners' perceived difficulty in understanding).

Stress (including word stress), as can be seen above, is one of the prosodic features, together with rhythm and intonation. As stated by the Council of Europe (2020), to communicate meaning more accurately, the focus should be placed on using prosodic features effectively. This means having: *"control of stress, intonation and/or rhythm; and ability to exploit and/or vary stress and intonation to highlight the particular message"* (Council of Europe, 2020, p.133).

According to the Framework Education Programme for Secondary General Education (Rámcový vzdělávací program pro gymnázia) developed by MŠMT (2021a.), language acquisition in secondary education should lead to the acquisition of the B2 level, building up on the A2 level which students achieved in previous education.

The Council of Europe (2020) provides a table summarizing learners' expected abilities in phonological control at each level of English ranging from A1 to C2. The table can be found in appendices (see Appendix 1). Based on the Council of Europe (2020), elementary school students (A1-A2 level) can convey everyday words and simple phrases intelligibly. However, their proficiency in stress (including both word stress and sentence stress) is strongly influenced by the stress patterns of other language(s) they speak. According to the Council of Europe (2020), Secondary school students (B1-B2 level) should be able to use stress to enhance the message they want to communicate. Their proficiency in stress (word stress and sentence stress) remains to be influenced by the stress patterns of other language(s) they speak.

Marešová (2021, p. 69) supports this statement, referring to word stress as one of the critical fields of English language teaching in the Czech Republic. Marešová (2021) points out that Czech students often struggle with word stress in English due to the difference in stress placement between Czech and English words. In the Czech language, primary stress is generally placed on the first syllable (as mentioned in Chapter 3), while in the English language, word stress is rather variable. Marešová (2021) claims that Czech students often tend to place primary stress on the first syllable in English words.

4.3 Raising word stress awareness

Stress is an important aspect of pronunciation. Teaching stress is an ongoing process that needs to be approached with caution. As many authors, such as Celce-Murcia et al. (2010), Roach (2009a.), and Zielinski (2008), assert, incorrect stress placement can be a major cause of misunderstanding, primarily within sentences but also affecting individual words. When teaching stress, students need to understand that even though all individual sounds are pronounced correctly, incorrectly placed word stress can cause confusion, for example, *import* (N) ˈɪmpɔːt, versus *import* (V) ɪmˈpɔːt. The individual sounds are identical, the only difference is made by stress.

Cruttenden (2008, p. 249) discusses the acquisition of word stress by native learners: *"This area appears in general not to be a problem for native learners and, because of the complexity involved, it must be assumed that accentual patterns of words are learnt individually as they are heard"*. Nevertheless, this approach can also be adopted by teachers

when presenting new vocabulary to their learners. Kelly (2000) points out that each time the teacher introduces new vocabulary, it is necessary to consider what the students need to know about the word: meaning, spelling, and pronunciation. *"With regard to pronunciation, stressed and unstressed syllables are important features"* (Kelly, 2000, p. 75).

With this in mind, it is important to get into the habit of indicating the stress pattern of any new word. The use of clear visual prompts to support students' learning process of word stress patterns is highly recommended by Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) and Kelly (2000). Stress marking techniques are presented in Chapter 2.2. However, both Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) and Kelly (2000), advise choosing one technique and sticking to it during the process of teaching to avoid confusion and ambiguity. With repeated exposure to teachers' stress marking habits, students will become familiar with the symbols' meanings.

4.4   Teaching framework

Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) identify two primary approaches for pronunciation teaching: intuitive-imitative approach and analytic-linguistic approach. The intuitive-imitative approach is based on the learner's ability to listen and imitate the model sound without any explicit instruction. On the other hand, the analytic-linguistic approach is centred on explicit definitions, explanations and demonstrations to supplement listening, imitation and production.

Based on the principles of the analytic-linguistic approach Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) designed a communicative framework for teaching pronunciation, offering deeper insights into how pronunciation can be taught effectively. This framework is recognised and respected in the field of English language teaching. Authors who have referenced the pronunciation teaching framework designed by Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) include, for example, De La Cruz (2023), Grant (2014), and Newton and Nation (2020). The framework consists of the following five stages, which will now be applied to word stress teaching.

The first stage of the framework designed by Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) is **Description and Analysis**. During this initial stage, teachers introduce the concept and nature of word stress. Teachers explain the principles of word stress and provide learners with a foundation for understanding how word stress works in the English language. Students learn to identify

and analyse the patterns of word stress in English words. De la Cruz (2023) states that the main goal of this stage is to raise awareness of the existence of the feature being taught, which in this case is word stress. Regarding the implementation of this strategy, it is important to consider when students can benefit the most of it. Underhill (1994) emphasizes the significance of teaching stress early on to help students develop clear and intelligible speech, however, it is essential to adjust the complexity of instruction and tasks based on the proficiency level of students. Based on Celce-Murcia et al. (1996) with advanced-level professional or university students, it is useful to extend the discussion of word stress to more specific terminology relevant to their field of study.

Listening discrimination is the second stage of the framework. It focuses on developing learners' ability to perceive and recognize stressed and unstressed syllables and different word stress patterns in spoken language. Students engage in listening activities designed to practice identifying and differentiating the stress patterns in words and phrases through listening (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010). De la Cruz (2023), and Zielinski and Yates (2014, in Grant, 2014) point out that this stage is crucial for learners to understand the differences between stress in the English language and their native language.

The next stage of the framework proposed by Celce-Murcia et al. (1996, 2010) is **Controlled Practice,** which consists of structured exercises and drills enabling learners to practice their word stress skills under controlled conditions. According to De la Cruz (2023), controlled practice marks the transition for students from perceiving word stress to being able to apply it on their own without direct guidance. This stage often involves repetitive practice of specific words and phrases, with a focus on the achievement of accurate stress patterns. Newton and Nation (2020) warn about doing too many repetitive drills. According to Locke's research (1970, in Newton and Nation, 2020), it was found out that after a while there is minimal to no additional improvement in students' pronunciation with continued repetition. They recommend keeping repetitive drills and exercises short to optimize learning outcomes.

Guided practice is the stage where students apply their knowledge of stress in more communicative contexts. Students engage in more challenging structured communication exercises that allow them to apply what they have learned about stress. (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010).

De la Cruz (2023) believes that guided practice and controlled practice are highly similar, and as a result, he combines them into a single stage, in contrast with Celce-Murcia et al. (2010).

The final stage of the teaching framework by Celce-Murcia et al. (2010), **Communicative practice**, focuses on enhancing fluency and the natural use of stress in a wide range of real-life communication situations. In this stage, students focus on using stress naturally and appropriately in everyday conversations. Zielinski and Yates (2014, in Grant, 2014) use the term *extension* to describe this stage, suggesting that it may involve extending language skills and proficiency in stress usage in complex communicative situations.

4.5 Word stress teaching techniques

Kelly (2000) claims that there are various ways in which learners can effectively practice word stress. According to Kelly (2000), among the most common methods aimed at word stress are: choral drilling techniques, the use of notation symbols, listening activities, and auditory and kinesthetic reinforcement techniques. This chapter will explore some of the key techniques used for raising word stress awareness. It is important to note that the methods are typically combined rather than used in isolation, ensuring greater efficacy in helping students master word stress.

4.5.1 Drilling techniques

Kelly (2000) claims that one of the commonly employed techniques for teaching pronunciation, particularly word stress in new words, is the drilling technique. This technique includes choral and individual drilling. Choral drilling involves *"the teacher saying a word or structure and getting the class to repeat it"* (Kelly, 2000, p.16). During individual drilling, students are invited one by one to repeat the word or structure.

Jones (2016) suggests using rubber bands during choral drilling to feel the stress patterns. She recommends having the students pull the rubber band and stretch it as they say the stressed syllable.

4.5.2 Listening activities

Jones (2016) describes a technique that focuses on listening for stressed syllables in words. Students can listen to a recording and highlight or mark the stressed syllables using the stress notation techniques discussed in Chapter 2.2. She also suggests a follow-up activity: letting students read the words aloud, focusing on emphasizing the stressed syllables.

Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) suggest a listening activity where the teacher reads a list of words, and students attempt to categorize them based on their stress patterns into the appropriate columns as outlined in the table provided below:

Figure 4: Word stress listening activity

The figure above shows an example of an activity that can be used for the identification of stressed syllables through auditory perception. The activity was designed by Celce-Murcia et al. (2010, p. 202).

4.5.3 Auditory reinforcement

Celce-Murcia et al. (1996) claim that auditory reinforcement has gained significant importance in pronunciation teaching. According to the Pronunciation Kit developed by Atlas Adult Basic Education (2019), humming is one of the auditory reinforcement techniques. In this technique, students are encouraged to hum more loudly or with greater intensity on the stressed syllable. For example, in the word *banana,* students hum more loudly on the second syllable, as demonstrated below:

ba-NA-na   mm-MM-mm

4.5.4 Visual reinforcement

According to Celce-Murcia et al. (1996), pronunciation teaching has always been closely connected with the use of visual aids. Celce-Murcia et al. (1996) recommend incorporating sketches, charts (see Figure 3), and diagrams either presented on the board or via a projector. Among the visual reinforcement techniques employed for teaching word stress is stress notation, as discussed in Chapter 2.2. With this technique, both teachers and students can clearly distinguish between primary stressed syllables, secondary stressed syllables, and unstressed syllables.

Underhill (1994) suggests using Cuisenaire rods, small blocks of different sizes and colours.[7] Each rod should, according to Underhill (1994), represent one syllable. In the context of word stress awareness, Cuisenaire rods of 3 different sizes would be used: the longest rods would represent primary stressed syllables, the medium-sized rods would represent secondary stressed syllables, and the shortest rods would represent the unstressed syllables. Underhill (1994) presents the typical word profiles using Cuisenaire rods:

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[7] Cuisenaire rods are often used in the Silent Way, a method developed by Caleb Gattegno in the 1960s, as outlined by Celce-Murcia et al. (2010). In this approach, the teacher adopts a silent role, placing emphasis on students' self-discovery and problem-solving. The method uses coloured rods, charts, and various physical objects to illustrate language structures and concepts.
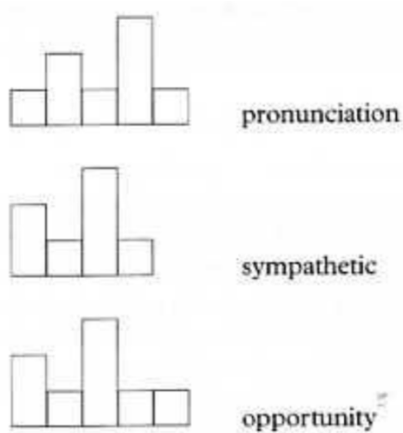
Figure 5: Word stress patterns represented by Cuisenaire rods

4.5.5 Kinesthetic reinforcement

According to Celce-Murcia et al. (1996), kinesthetic methods involve hand signals and body movements. To enhance students' motivation and engagement in the word stress learning process, it is advised by Celce-Murcia et al. (1996), Kelly (2000), and Teschner and Whitley (2004) to include exercises, such as clapping or tapping out the stress patterns of words. These techniques can help students become more sensitive to word stress and pronunciation in general. Teschner and Whitley (2004, p. 22) describe these techniques as a means of *feeling the patterns of English*, highlighting their role in developing students' sensitivity to word stress and pronunciation in general.

Based on Atlas Adult Basic Education's Pronunciation Kit (2019), clapping and tapping are rhythmic drilling techniques used to physically emphasize stress patterns. When using the clapping technique, both the teacher and students clap their hands, either by applying greater force on the stressed syllable and lesser force on unstressed syllables or by clapping solely on the stressed syllable, as demonstrated in the following examples:

ba-NA-na

ba-NA-na   ------ -------
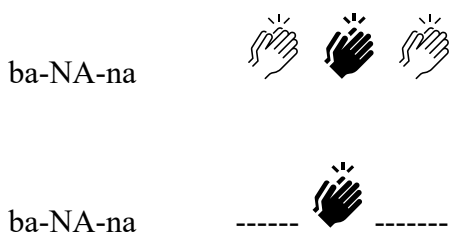
Tapping is, according to the Pronunciation Kit written by Atlas Adult Basic Education (2019), similar to clapping but involves using various objects to tap on. Students can, for example, tap on the table with one finger for unstressed syllables and tap with their palm for stressed syllables, as illustrated below:

ba-NA-na

4.5.6 Using technology

O'Brien and Levis (2017) discuss the use of pronunciation technologies within teaching and learning contexts. They claim that pronunciation training that uses technology has evolved significantly from its early days in language laboratories equipped with record players. Nowadays, as claimed by O'Brien and Levis (2017), language learners can access web-based programs and mobile applications to improve their pronunciation skills wherever and whenever they wish.

Celce-Murcia et al. (1996) discuss the potential of technology in pronunciation practice, emphasizing the effectiveness of addressing individual students' needs, as well as promoting their autonomy and confidence through pronunciation practice. Celce-Murcia et al. (1996) present these advantages associated with integrating technology into pronunciation practice:

- access to a wide variety of native-speaker speech samplings,
- sheltered practice sessions in which the learner can take risks without stress and fear of errors,
- opportunity for self-pacing and self-monitoring of progress,
- one-on-one contact without a teacher's constant supervision,
- an entertaining, game-like atmosphere for learning.

O'Brien and Levis (2017) point out the necessity for collaboration among pronunciation researchers, software developers, and language teachers to ensure that technical pedagogical approaches are grounded in research and tailored to meet the needs of learners.

O'Brien and Levis (2017) explore various pronunciation technologies available on the market. The discussed technologies include tools designed to offer precise feedback on pronunciation errors, ultrasound analysis tools such as *Praat,* and software focused on training learners' perception or production (e.g. *English accent coach*).

According to O'Brien and Levis (2017), language learners and teachers mostly seek out user-friendly software specifically designed for student training, commonly referred to as courseware. Word stress can be practised, for example, through the *Say It* mobile application, as mentioned by Nuñes (2022). The key feature of this application is a sound wave graph that illustrates which part of the word should be emphasized, as can be seen below:

Figure 6: Say It mobile application

The figure above provided by Nuñes (2022) displays the layout of the *Say It* mobile application. At the top, it presents the target word, while below it, the word's phonemic transcription is provided with division into syllables. There are two sound wave graphs provided for comparison: one showing the model pronunciation and the other showing the learner's pronunciation. Clicking on the play button allows learners to listen to both versions repeatedly.

Another application that can be used for word stress practice, according to Nuñes (2022), is *ELSA Speak*. While primarily focused on improving overall speaking skills, the *ELSA speak* application feature of evaluating pronunciation, fluency, and intonation can indirectly help with word stress practice. Learners can focus on articulating words correctly, including placing stress on the correct syllables.

4.6 English word stress teaching literature review

This chapter will provide a comprehensive exploration of the landscape surrounding the English word stress and its teaching in the Czech Republic through examination and analysis of existing research findings.

The research conducted by Petra Nováková in 2007 focuses on the pronunciation challenges in word stress faced by secondary school Czech learners of English. The researcher used a questionnaire distributed among secondary school students. Firstly, the researcher aimed to examine students' attitudes towards word stress. The results suggest that the majority of students recognize the importance of word stress for intelligibility. Additionally, the majority of students reported a lack of focus on pronunciation during lessons. Furthermore, the study found that only 20% of students claim that pronunciation practice is done regularly, indicating a significant gap in addressing pronunciation issues in the classroom. Finally, the researcher conducted a study requiring students to identify primary word stress in the written form of words. According to the results, the participants of the study identified the primary stressed syllables on average in 54% of the cases. However, it is important to note that, while some students demonstrated a strong proficiency in identifying stress patterns in written words, others struggled to apply correct stress patterns consistently. The overall results suggest that the participants possess a general awareness of English word stress patterns, but there is considerable room for improvement. (Nováková, 2007).

The first research that will be discussed here was conducted by Jana Langrová in 2012. Her study involved secondary school students and focused on suprasegmental features (including stress) and their impact on intelligibility. The research involved recording students' speech three times over a few months. For each recording, a reading text was chosen. Throughout the whole study, participants underwent comprehensive pronunciation training, with a particular focus on mastering stress and rhythm. The results indicated that incorrect stress placement led to intelligibility problems. Interestingly, stress became more problematic during the second recording session, despite extensive practice. However, based on the findings from the final session, extensive practice during lessons resulted in overall improvements in students' pronunciation skills. One of the research sub-hypothesis, stating that students would benefit from the training carried out during lessons has eventually been confirmed (Langrová, 2012).

The next research that will be discussed was conducted by Alena Langrová in 2017. The research aims to draw conclusions regarding pronunciation teaching with focus on word stress. The research was targeted at primary school English teachers and their attitudes and practices regarding teaching pronunciation. The researcher conducted interviews with the teachers and observations of their lessons to draw conclusions regarding word stress

teaching. The key findings include the following: various approaches to word stress teaching were observed among the participants. Some believe that learners acquire stress patterns from the model teachers' speech intuitively, while others use specific techniques (some of these techniques were discussed earlier in this thesis, in section 4.5). Some participants use a combination of both approaches. Additionally, the approach to correcting word stress errors was addressed. The results were variable, based on the results it was concluded that some teachers provide feedback (especially those who use specific techniques for word stress teaching), while others neglect to provide any feedback on this aspect, potentially indicating a gap in pronunciation teaching practice (Langrová, 2017).

Research carried out in 2017 by Lenka Nerudová focused on the problematic aspects of pronunciation teaching at secondary schools. The research aimed to examine the current situation of pronunciation teaching at Czech secondary schools, examining both teachers' and learners' perspectives through lesson observations, interviews with teachers and a questionnaire distributed among students. Several findings emerged from the study. Firstly, both students and teachers identified a lack of pronunciation practice as a significant issue. The limited time for pronunciation practice was attributed to the demands of the curriculum and the coursebook syllabus, as well prioritization of topics considered more essential than pronunciation. Secondly, significant variability in the frequency of activities and approaches to pronunciation teaching was observed due to individual teacher preferences. The majority of teachers focused on the correction of pronunciation errors, and only a few teachers incorporated activities addressing specific aspects of pronunciation such as word stress or connected speech (Nerudová, 2017).

In 2020, Ondřej Mužík undertook a study investigating English word stress placement. This research examined non-native English speakers at the B2-C1 level from various countries, including Germany, France, the Czech Republic, Poland, and Greece. Participants were assigned a text to read aloud, and they were recorded to assess their proficiency in word stress placement. According to the findings, Czech students achieved an average accuracy of 71% in word stress placement in pronunciation. The researcher concluded that Czech participants demonstrate a commendable level of proficiency in English word stress, suggesting a solid foundation in understanding and applying English stress patterns. (Mužík, 2020)

In conclusion, the studies presented above offer valuable insights into the difficulties of teaching word stress and pronunciation in English. The studies demonstrate that both students and teachers face challenges when it comes to word stress. Based on the findings, it is evident that teachers use a variety of approaches for word stress teaching, yet they tend to underestimate its significance. Additionally, students' performance highlights the difficulty of mastering word stress. Overall, the findings emphasize the need for continued research and pedagogical improvements in this area.

CONCLUSION OF THE THEORETICAL PART

The theoretical part provides a theoretical background connected with the topic of the thesis – English word stress.

The first chapter focuses on stress, providing its definition by various authors and the differentiation between word stress and sentence stress. Subsequently, the production of stress and the factors influencing it are addressed. In the second chapter, the author focuses on word stress, distinguishing between the levels of stress (primary stress, secondary stress, and zero stress). Additionally, the notation of word stress is addressed, exploring the stress notation in various dictionaries and the notation symbols used in teaching practice. The third chapter aims to provide an overview of principles governing word stress placement in the English language. The strategies for stress placement in both simple and complex words are outlined. In the fourth chapter, the author examines English word teaching. Before delving into word stress, in particular, the author briefly mentions general perceptions on pronunciation teaching as a whole. Subsequently, the Czech curriculum with regard to word stress is examined. Teaching strategies for raising word stress awareness and a teaching framework are discussed. Moreover, various techniques for teaching word stress are presented. Finally, an analysis of existing research findings is provided.

Overall, the theoretical part provides a solid foundation for the subsequent empirical research and links theoretical insights with practical implications for language teaching.

PRACTICAL PART

5   Introduction

The practical part of this thesis consists of two parts. The first part involves evaluating the English word stress proficiency of secondary school students through both a written examination and a recording assessment. The second part of the practical part is research examining the teaching of word stress at secondary schools. The research uses a questionnaire aimed at secondary school teachers.

5.1   Research aims and questions

The practical part aims to examine the English word stress proficiency of secondary school students of Jirásek Grammar School in Náchod in three areas: their accuracy in using English word stress in spoken language, their accuracy in identifying stressed syllables in the written form of words, and their accuracy in identifying stressed syllables through auditory perception.

Furthermore, the research aims to examine whether secondary school teachers of English involve activities connected with word stress in their teaching. The next aim is to examine the frequency of these activities and which teaching techniques are used. Finally, the thesis aims to investigate the challenges, and perceptions surrounding the teaching of word stress in secondary school English education.

Central research question n. 1:
RQ1: What is the proficiency of secondary school students of Jirásek Grammar School in English word stress placement?
Research sub-questions:
RQ1-1: To what extent do secondary school students of Jirásek Grammar School demonstrate proficiency in accurately using word stress in spoken language?
RQ1-2: To what extent do secondary school students of Jirásek Grammar School demonstrate proficiency in accurately identifying stressed syllables through auditory perception?

RQ1-3: To what extent do secondary school students of Jirásek Grammar School demonstrate proficiency in accurately identifying stressed syllables in the written form of words?

The central research question (RQ1) is an overarching question to the aspects of word stress placement in three areas which were investigated. These areas are covered in the following research sub-questions.

The first sub-question aims to explore the proficiency of secondary school students of Jirásek Grammar School in accurately using word stress in their pronunciation. The second sub-question aims to determine the proficiency of secondary school students attending Jirásek Grammar School in correctly placing word stress through auditory perception. The third sub-question aims to examine the proficiency of secondary school students of Jirásek Grammar School in accurately identifying stressed syllables in the written form of words. By answering these questions, the researcher intends to determine the overall proficiency of secondary school students of Jirásek Grammar School in English word stress.

Central research question n. 2:

RQ2: What is the overall landscape surrounding English word stress teaching in secondary school English education?

Research sub-questions:

RQ2-1: To what extent do secondary school teachers of English incorporate methods focused on raising word stress awareness in their teaching practice?

RQ2-2: Which techniques do secondary school teachers of English use to teach word stress?

RQ2-3: What are the main challenges faced by secondary school English teachers in teaching word stress?

RQ2-4: What are the perceptions of secondary school English teachers on word stress teaching?

The central research question (RQ2) is an overarching question to the various aspects of English word stress teaching at secondary schools that were investigated. These aspects are further explored through the following research sub-questions. The first research sub-question aims to assess the extent to which secondary school English teachers include methods focused on raising word stress awareness in their lessons. The second research sub-question

aims to examine the techniques used by secondary school English teachers for teaching word stress. The third research sub-question aims to investigate the challenges encountered by secondary school English teachers in word stress teaching. The fourth sub-question aims to explore the attitudes and opinions of secondary school English teachers regarding word stress teaching.

6   Proficiency assessment

In this part of the research, the assessment of students' proficiency in English word stress was conducted. The researcher has decided to use a written test for evaluating students' proficiency in both, the written form of words and auditory perception. Furthermore, to assess students' proficiency in word stress in pronunciation, a recording was chosen.

6.1   Research sample

The research was conducted in Náchod at Jirásek Grammar School in two different classes. Jirásek Grammar School was chosen based on the previous positive collaboration between the author and the school during the author's teaching practice.

For the purpose of this study, a specific sample of 25 secondary school students of B2 level English was selected. The participants consisted of third-grade and fourth-grade students, within the age range of 17 to 19 years old.

The selection criteria were the following:

- **Willingness:** One of the main criteria was the willingness of both teachers and students. The researcher managed to secure the collaboration of two teachers who agreed to be involved in the research.
- **Language level:** The researcher targeted secondary school students with an upper-intermediate level (B2 level) due to the overall complexity of English word stress placement.
- **Teaching approach:** To ensure variability in language teaching approaches, it was desired to choose one class from each teacher for the study.

The collaboration between the researcher and the English teachers at Jirásek Grammar School in Náchod played the main role in the selection process. Few classes were identified as suitable candidates for participation in the study. The final decision was reached through discussions between the researcher and the teachers, however, the teachers had the final say, given their intimate knowledge of their students.

To maintain participants' anonymity throughout the whole study, no personal information, including the names of the participants, will be mentioned in the study. Each participant was assigned a number ranging from 1 to 25 that they used to identify themselves across all three parts of the study. The participants from the first class (third-grade students) were assigned numbers from 1 to 12 and the participants from the second class (fourth-grade students) were assigned numbers from 13 to 25.

6.2 Research methodology

6.2.1 Research words inventory

The author has decided to choose 20 research words to illustrate the issue of word stress in the pronunciation of English words. Each word present in the inventory has been mentioned or discussed in the theoretical part of the thesis. The author used ChatGPT (2024) for assistance with the generation of words suitable for the research based on the criteria below:

- **Stress pattern:** The inventory contains words with different stress patterns.
- **Level of vocabulary:** The list contains vocabulary in the range from A1 to C1 level of English. For the assessment of the level of the vocabulary in the list The English Vocabulary Profile online (2024) was used. The majority of words fall within the A2-B1 level based on the English Vocabulary Profile (2024). The author has decided to include a few words of C1 level to test students' proficiency in word stress in words that may be less familiar or unknown, comparing them with those words students are familiar with.
- **Number of syllables:** The inventory contains words in the range from a minimum of 2 syllables to a maximum of 5 syllables.
- **Grammatical category:** The list contains words falling into the grammatical categories of either nouns, verbs or adjectives. As discussed in the theoretical part (Chapter 3.1), nouns, verbs and adjectives experience the highest variability in word stress, therefore these three categories are included in the list. It is important to note that based on the context, some of the words can fall into different grammatical categories.

- **Morphological structure:** The list contains simple and complex words (including compounds). The majority of words in the list are complex words made with derivation (adding affixes). As stated by Roach (2009a.) it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between simple and complex words the distinction here is made based on The Oxford English Dictionary (2024), it is important to note that other relevant resources may provide different information.

Word with primary stress indicated	Transcription	Vocabulary level	Number of syllables	Grammatical category	Morphological structure
A<u>ma</u>zing	/əˈmeɪzɪŋ/	A2	3	Adj	CX
<u>Ba</u>bysit	/ˈbeɪbɪsɪt/	B1	3	V	CX (compound)
Ba<u>na</u>na	/bəˈnɑːnə/	A1	3	N	S
<u>Care</u>ful	/ˈkeəfᵊl/	A2	2	Adj	CX
De<u>ter</u>mine	/dɪˈtɜːmɪn/	C1	3	V	CX
En<u>gage</u>ment	/ɪnˈgeɪʤmənt/	C1	3	N	CX
Enter<u>tain</u>	/ˌɛntəˈteɪn/	B1	3	V	CX
For<u>give</u>	/fəˈgɪv/	B1	2	V	CX
Im<u>prove</u>	/ɪmˈpruːv/	A2	2	V	CX
Mag<u>ni</u>ficent	/mægˈnɪfɪsᵊnt/	B1	4	Adj	CX
Oppor<u>tu</u>nity	/ˌɒpəˈʧuːnəti/	B1	5	N	CX
O<u>ri</u>ginal	/əˈrɪʤᵊnᵊl/	B1	4	Adj	CX
Phi<u>lo</u>sophy	/fɪˈlɒsəfi/	B2	4	N	CX
<u>Pho</u>tograph	/ˈfəʊtəgrɑːf/	A2	3	N	CX
Situ<u>a</u>tion	/ˌsɪʧuˈeɪʃᵊn/	B1	4	N	CX
<u>Suit</u>case	/ˈsjuːtkeɪs/ or /ˈsuːtkeɪs/	A2	3	N	CX (Compound)
<u>Tech</u>nical	/ˈtɛknɪkᵊl/	B2	3	Adj	CX
<u>Te</u>lephone	/ˈtɛlɪfəʊn/	A2	3	N	CX (Compound)
<u>Tooth</u>brush	/ˈtuːθbrʌʃ/	A2	2	N	CX (Compound)
Under<u>stand</u>	/ˌʌndəˈstænd/	A2	3	V	CX

Table 5: Research words inventory

6.2.2 Research procedure

The assessment research consists of three parts, in each part participants attempt to place word stress correctly in the research words. Firstly, participants identify primarily stressed syllables in the written form of words. Secondly, they identify primarily stressed syllables through auditory perception and finally, they try to pronounce the words integrated into sentences.

In the pilot stage, the research was tested on two fourth-grade secondary school students. The pilot stage aimed to assess the feasibility of the research, allowing any necessary adjustments before conducting a full study. The two fourth-grade students provided valuable feedback and helped the researcher identify potential challenges and areas for improvement. With the positive outcomes observed during the pilot stage, the researcher has decided to proceed with further testing on a larger scale.

The study took place on the premises of the school where the participants studied, Parts 1 and 2 took place during a single 45-minute lesson, with a break filled with an activity led by the teacher. The third part of the study took place during the subsequent lesson, on the following day. The researcher visited two lessons in each class in total.

In the first part of the study, participants received a worksheet containing Task number 1 (see Appendix 2). They were instructed to identify and underline the syllables which receive primary stress in the written form of words from the list. The time limit for completing this task was 5 minutes. After completing the task, the worksheets were collected by the researcher and the first part of the research was followed by a different activity led by the teacher.

In the second part of the study, each participant received the worksheet with Task number 2 (Appendix 3). This time participants were instructed to identify primarily stressed syllables through auditory perception. The researcher played a recording with research words pronounced with a British accent. The recording had been created using *Narakeet,* a platform designed to create speech recordings from text. The recording was played twice. Participants were asked to listen carefully to the recording and underline the primarily stressed syllables

based on auditory perception. After completing the task, the researcher collected the filled worksheets, and the teacher took over the lesson and continued with the lesson.

The third part of the study took place on the following day. While the teacher led the lesson, the researcher engaged with participants one-on-one. The researcher secured a room with sufficient privacy, ensuring no other people were present.

Each participant was given a text (see Appendix 4) to read, focusing on correct pronunciation. The text was constructed with the assistance of ChatGPT (2024), it contained 15 sentences with 20 inventory words hidden within it. The researcher made an audio recording of each participant reading the text for subsequent evaluation. By incorporating the words into sentences, participants were required to broaden their focus on the entire sentences rather than isolating their attention solely on individual research words.

6.2.3 Methods of data analysis

The data collected from Task 1 and Task 2 involved participants identifying primarily stressed syllables in the written form of words by underlining one syllable. The data obtained from the survey were transferred and summarized into MS Excel tables. Subsequently, the frequency of correct responses for each participant was calculated. This approach provides a clear summary of participants' accuracy and proficiency in identifying primarily stressed syllables in the written form of words, as well as their ability to perceive and identify primarily stressed syllables through listening.

In Task 3, participants were recorded while reading sentences containing the research words. The stressed syllables in each inventory word were identified from these audio recordings. The data obtained were transferred into MS Excel for further calculations. The usage of audio recordings offered a direct means of capturing participants' proficiency in producing stress patterns in spoken language. The evaluation of audio recordings ensured a thorough assessment of participants' proficiency in word stress demonstrated in their pronunciation.

The results gathered were analysed and the accuracy rates of each participant in each task were calculated and transferred into tables and graphs using MS Excel. These results were then compared to identify any consistent patterns or differences in performance across the tasks.

Participants' overall proficiency was evaluated by converting percentage accuracy into verbal assessments based on Trna's (2015) assessment scale:

100-90%	(1) Excellent
89-75%	(2) Commendable
74-60%	(3) Good
59-50%	(4) Satisfactory
49-0%	(5) Insufficient

6.3 Results

In this part of the thesis, the data obtained from the survey will be analysed, and the results will be presented. The data will be presented in the form of graphs and tables, and then commented on by the researcher.

The first central research question aims to determine the proficiency in English word stress placement of secondary school students attending Jirásek Grammar School. The aim of the research sub-questions number 1-3 is to examine the word stress proficiency of students at Jirásek Grammar School in three areas: pronunciation, auditory perception, and identification in the written form of the words.

The researcher will start by presenting and comparing the proficiency of secondary school students at Jirásek Grammar School in word stress (in written form, auditory perception, and pronunciation) in each inventory word. Subsequently, the results will be summarized, and the overall accuracy in word stress will be discussed.

6.3.1 Individual results

Research word n. 1: Amazing
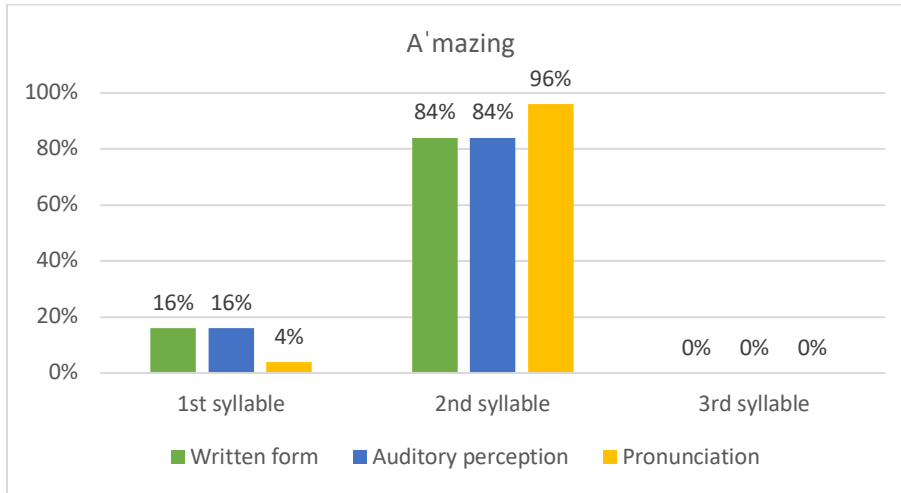
Figure 7: Research word n. 1: Amazing

Based on Figure 8, the word stress accuracy in the word *amazing* was high. 84% of participants identified correctly the second syllable as primarily stressed in both written form and auditory perception. The highest score, 96 %, was achieved in pronunciation, where participants correctly placed primary stress on the second syllable. This suggests that despite some challenges in the first two tasks, most participants were able to produce the correct stress pattern when pronouncing the word. However, 16% of participants identified the first syllable as primarily stressed in the written form and the auditory perception tasks. This indicates a minor potential challenge in perceiving word stress accurately in the word *amazing*. A small percentage (4%) of participants pronounced the word with incorrectly placed stress on the first syllable.

None of the participants identified the third syllable as stressed in any task.

Research word n. 2: Babysit
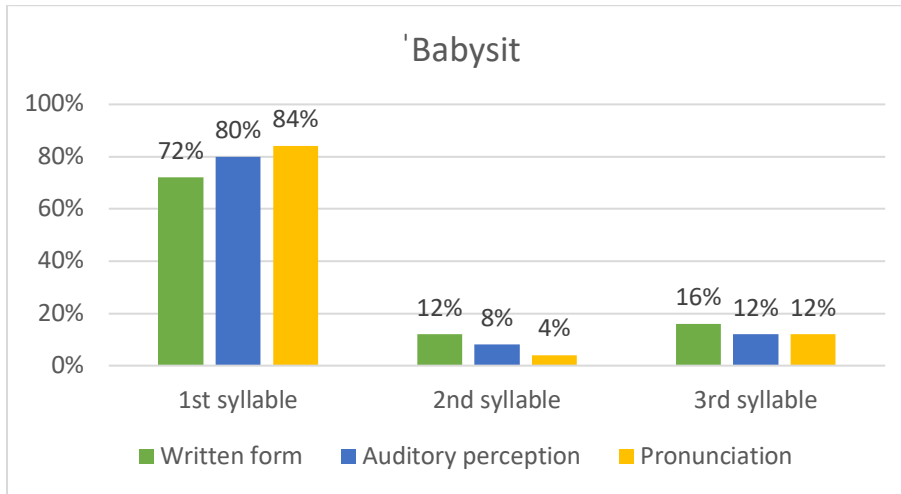
Figure 9: Research word n. 2: Babysit

Figure 10 shows that most participants demonstrated a relatively high level of accuracy in identifying the primary stress in the word *babysit*. Their accuracy in the written form was 72%, 80% of participants identified the syllable correctly through auditory perception, and the highest score (84 %) was achieved when pronouncing it.

Several participants (16% in written form, 12% in auditory perception, and 12% in pronunciation) placed primary stress incorrectly on the third syllable.

Few participants (12% in written form, 8% in auditory perception, and 4% in pronunciation) placed primary stress incorrectly on the second syllable.

Research word n. 3: Banana
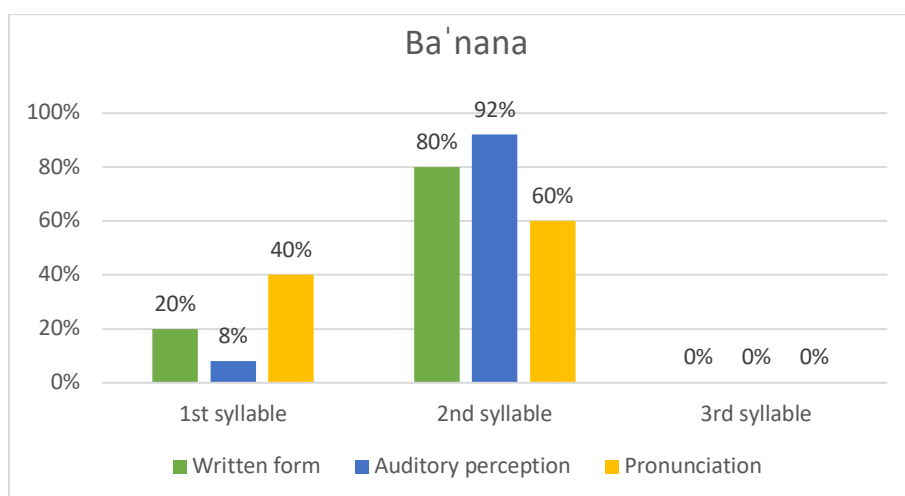
Figure 11: Research word n. 3: Banana

Based on Figure 12, most participants managed to correctly identify the second syllable in the word *banana* as stressed (80% in the written form and 92% in auditory perception). Despite the high rate of correct stress identification, pronunciation accuracy was lower, with only 60% of participants pronouncing the word correctly.

A significant number, 40% of participants, pronounced the word incorrectly with stress on the first syllable. This suggests that although participants might be aware of the stress pattern, they still may encounter challenges in accurately reproducing it during pronunciation. 20% of participants incorrectly placed the stress on the first syllable in the written form of the word, and 8% in auditory perception.

The third syllable was not identified as stressed nor pronounced with emphasis by any participant.

Research word n. 4: Careful
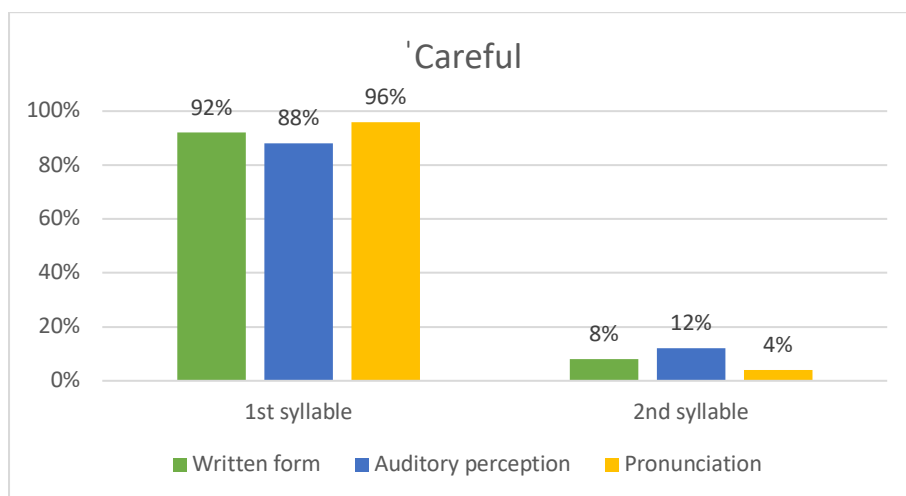
Figure 13: Research word n. 4: Careful

The figure above shows that the word stress accuracy in the word *careful* was very high. The emphasis was correctly identified on the first syllable (in 92% of cases in the written form and in 88% of cases in auditory perception). This suggests a strong awareness of stress placement in the word *careful*. Pronunciation accuracy was notably high, reaching 96%.

Despite the overall high accuracy, a small percentage of participants placed the stress incorrectly on the second syllable. However, these errors were minimal across all tasks: 8% in the written form, 12% in auditory perception, and 4% in pronunciation).

Research word n. 5: Determine
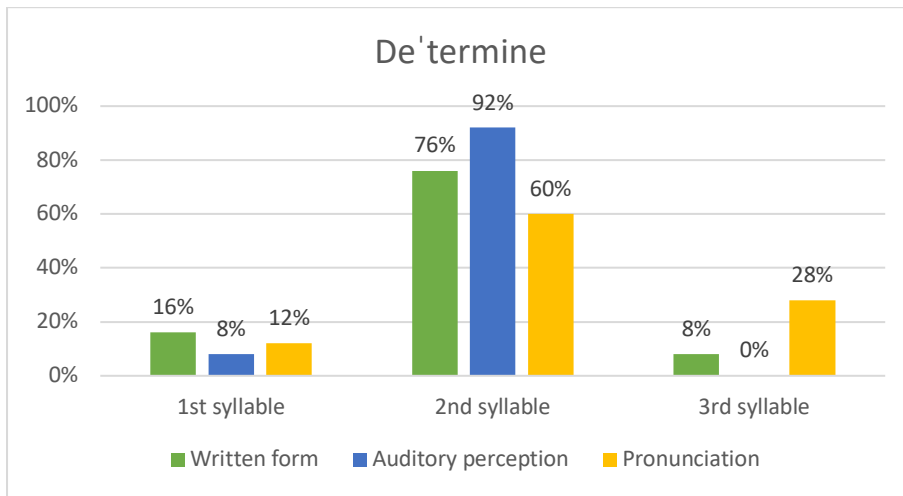
Figure 14: Research word n. 5: Determine

Figure 15 illustrates that 76% of participants identified primary stress correctly on the second syllable in the written form of the word *determine.* The highest accuracy was achieved in the auditory perception task, with 92% of participants correctly marking the stress on the second syllable. However, much lower accuracy (60%) was observed in pronunciation.

Given the fact that the word *determine* falls into the C1 level of vocabulary, and may have been unfamiliar to some participants, 28% pronounced the third syllable of the word incorrectly as /maɪn/ instead of /mɪn/. This mispronunciation shifted the emphasis to the third syllable. A small percentage of participants (8%) incorrectly identified the third syllable as stressed in the written form.

The first syllable was identified as primarily stressed by 16% of participants in written form, 8% in auditory perception, and 12% in pronunciation.

Research word n. 6: Engagement
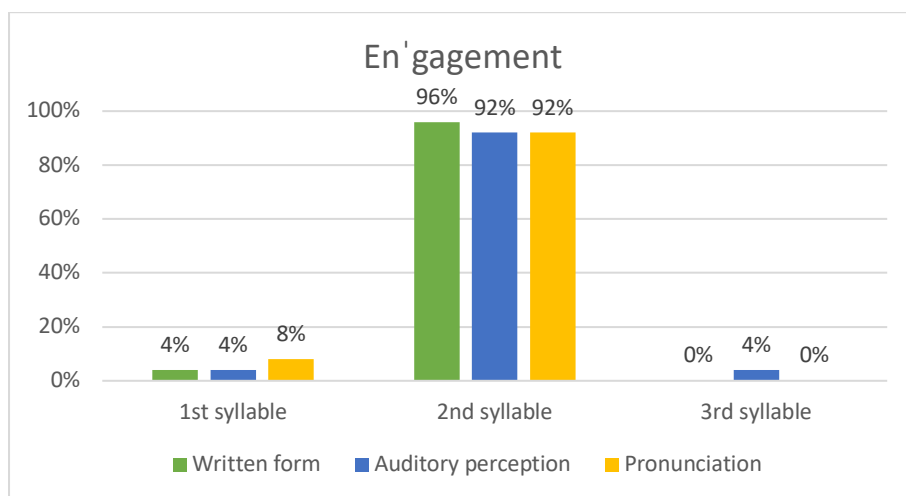
Figure 16: Research word n. 6: Engagement

Based on Figure 17, the second syllable was correctly identified by 96% of participants in the written form of the word *engagement,* and by 92% in both auditory perception and pronunciation.

Only 4% of participants incorrectly marked the first syllable as primarily stressed in both written form and auditory perception task, and 8% of participants pronounced the word with emphasis on the first syllable.

The third syllable was perceived as stressed by one participant (4%).

These results suggest a strong awareness of the stress pattern in the word *engagement* across all tasks.

Research word n. 7: Entertain
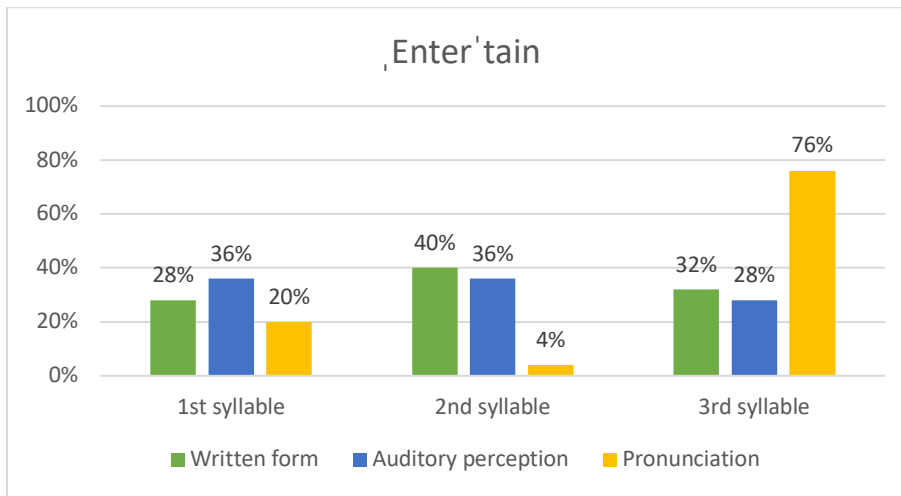
Figure 18: Research word n. 7: Entertain

Figure 19 shows that the participants faced challenges in accurately identifying the stressed syllable in the word *entertain* across the first two tasks (written form and auditory perception task), only 32% of participants correctly identified the primary stress on the third syllable in written form. An even lower percentage (28%) of participants perceived the third syllable as primarily stressed. Despite the low accuracy in the first two tasks, the majority of participants accurately pronounced the word in the third task, suggesting that while participants may struggle with identifying primary stress in the word *entertain* in written or auditory forms, they are more successful in producing it accurately in spoken form.

A notable percentage of participants placed primary stress incorrectly on the first syllable (28% in written form, 36% in auditory perception, and 20% in pronunciation), or on the second syllable (40% in written form, 36% in auditory perception, and 4% in pronunciation).

Research word n. 8: Forgive
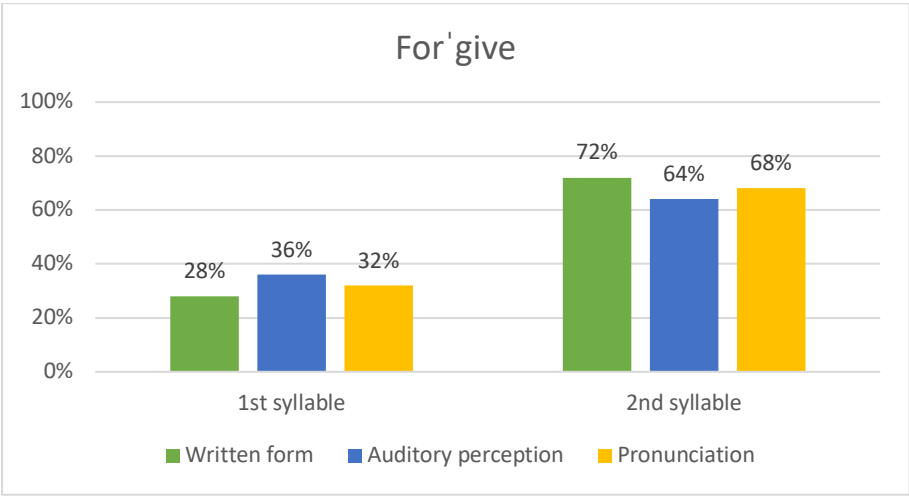
Figure 20: Research word n. 8: Forgive

The figure above shows that the majority of participants identified the stress pattern in the word *forgive* correctly, with the stress falling on the second syllable (72% in written form, 64% in auditory perception) Additionally, 68% pronounced the word correctly. However, a significant number of participants identified the stressed syllable incorrectly, marking the primary stress on the first syllable. Specifically, 28% of participants marked the first syllable as stressed in written form, and an even higher percentage (36%) perceived the first syllable as stressed when listening to the word. This could indicate a greater challenge in perceiving the stress pattern of the word *forgive* accurately during the listening task. Furthermore, 32% of participants were inaccurate and pronounced the word with emphasis on the first syllable.

Research word n. 9: Improve
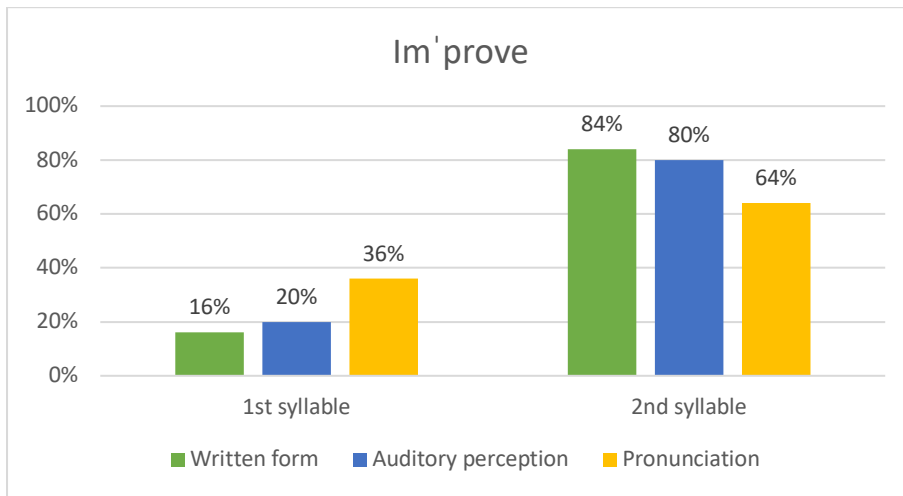
Figure 21: Research word n. 9: Improve

Based on Figure 22, it is evident that the majority of participants accurately placed word stress in the word *improve*. The highest accuracy (84%) was observed in the identification of stress in the written form of the word, and a slightly lower accuracy (80%) was observed in the auditory perception task. Interestingly, although stress identification in the first two tasks was mostly accurate, only 64% of participants pronounced the word correctly with stress falling on the second syllable. This suggests a potential difficulty in transforming their understanding of stress placement into accurate pronunciation.

A significant number of participants (36%) pronounced the word *improve* with inaccurate emphasis on the first syllable, despite correctly identifying stress in the first two tasks. Additionally, the first syllable was incorrectly identified as stressed by 16% of participants in written form and by 20% of participants in auditory perception.

Research word n. 10: Magnificent
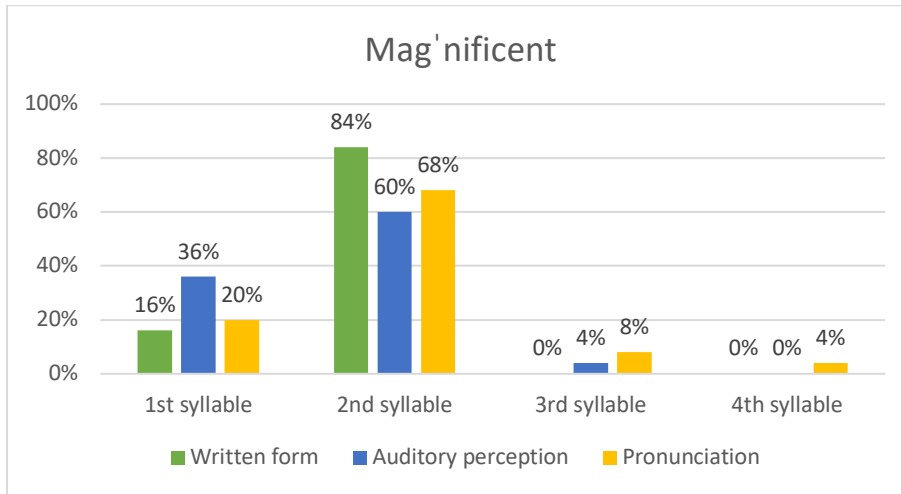
Figure 23: Research word n. 10: Magnificent

Figure 24 suggests that most participants were accurate in word stress placement in the word *magnificent*: 84% accuracy was achieved in the written form of the word, interestingly, much lower accuracy was observed in auditory perception (60%). 68% of participants pronounced the word with the correct stress on the second syllable.

The second-highest scores of stress placement across all tasks were observed on the first syllable (16% in written word, 36% in auditory perception, and 20% in pronunciation).

Only a small percentage of participants incorrectly placed word stress on the third or fourth syllable. The third syllable was marked by 4% in auditory perception and pronounced with emphasis by 8%. The fourth syllable was incorrectly pronounced with emphasis by 4%.

Research word n. 11: Opportunity
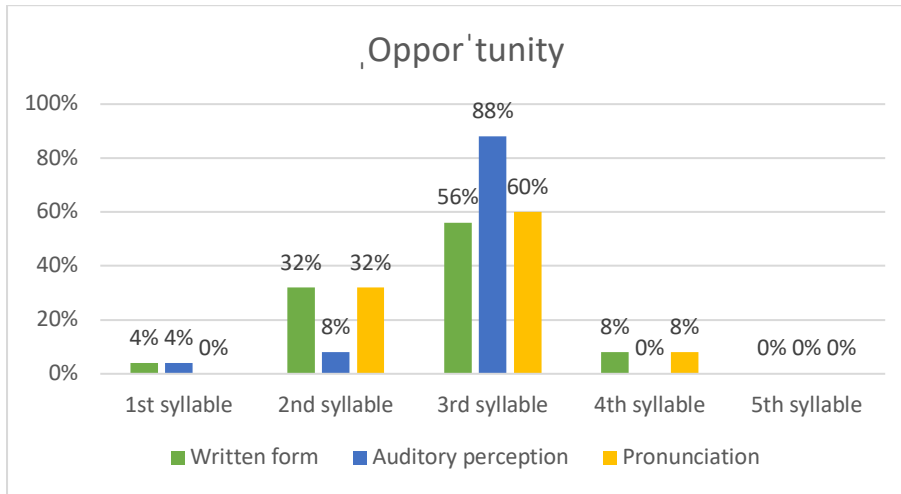
Figure 25: Research word n. 11: Opportunity

Based on Figure 26, it is evident that participants struggled with placing word stress in the word *opportunity,* only 56% of participants correctly marked the primary word stress on the third syllable. Better results were achieved in the auditory perception task, where 88% of participants correctly perceived the third syllable as primarily stressed. Additionally, 60% of participants pronounced the word with primary stress on the third syllable.

Interestingly, a significant number of participants (32%) placed the word stress on the second syllable. This error was consistent across both written form and pronunciation tasks. Additionally, 8% did so in the auditory perception task.

4% of participants identified the first syllable as primarily stressed in the written form of the word and auditory perception.

A small percentage (8%) of participants incorrectly placed stress on the fourth syllable in both the written form and pronunciation task.

None of the participants placed primary word stress on the fifth syllable in any task.

Overall, the data reveal variability in participants' abilities to correctly identify primary stress in the word *opportunity* and produce it in pronunciation task. Many participants correctly perceived primary stress but failed to reproduce it accurately in pronunciation.
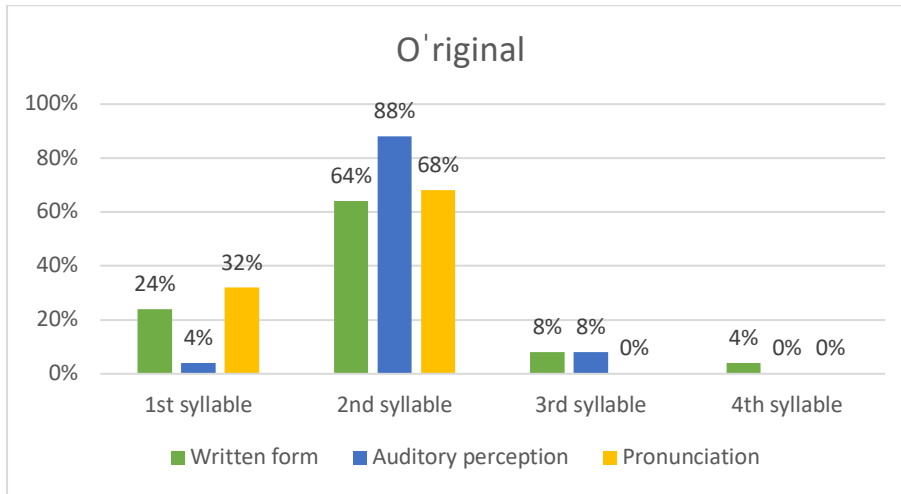
Research word n. 12: Original

Figure 27: Research word n. 12: Original

Figure 28 presents the accuracy of word stress in the word *original*. It can be seen that most participants were accurate in word stress placement on the second syllable: 64% in written form, 88% in auditory perception, and 68% in pronunciation.

A notable number of participants (24%) marked the first syllable as stressed in written form, and an even higher percentage (32%) pronounced the word with emphasis on the first syllable. However, only one participant (4%) heard the first syllable as stressed.

The third syllable was incorrectly identified as stressed by 8% of participants in both written form and auditory perception.

The fourth syllable was incorrectly marked as stressed by only one participant (4%) in the written form of the word.

Research word n. 13: Philosophy
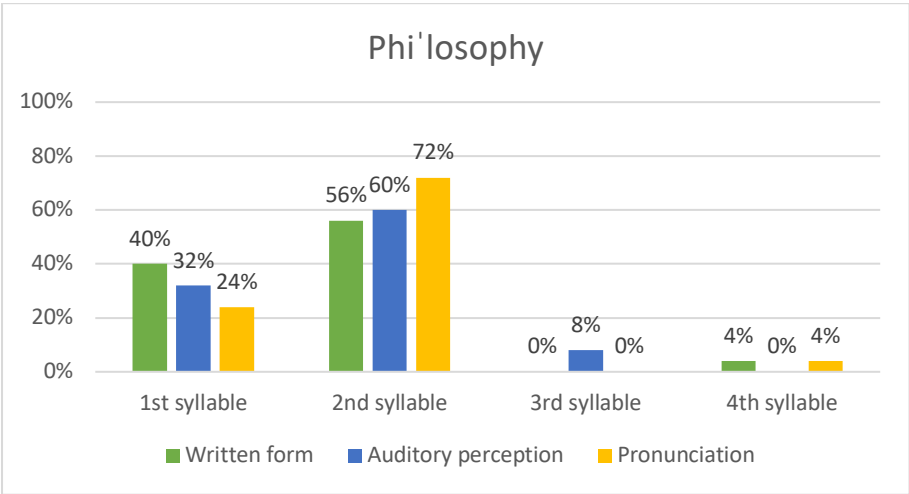
Figure 29: Research word n. 13: Philosophy

Based on Figure 30, the second syllable of the word *philosophy* was correctly identified by 56% of participants in written form, 60% of participants in auditory perception, and pronounced with primary stress on the second syllable by 72% of participants.

However, a common word stress error was observed in the word *philosophy,* where a significant percentage of participants placed primary stress on the first syllable (40% in written form, 32% in auditory perception and 24% in pronunciation).

Only a few participants placed primary stress on the third or fourth syllable, the third syllable was perceived as stressed by 8% of participants, and primary stress on the fourth syllable was placed by 4% of participants in both, written form and in pronunciation.
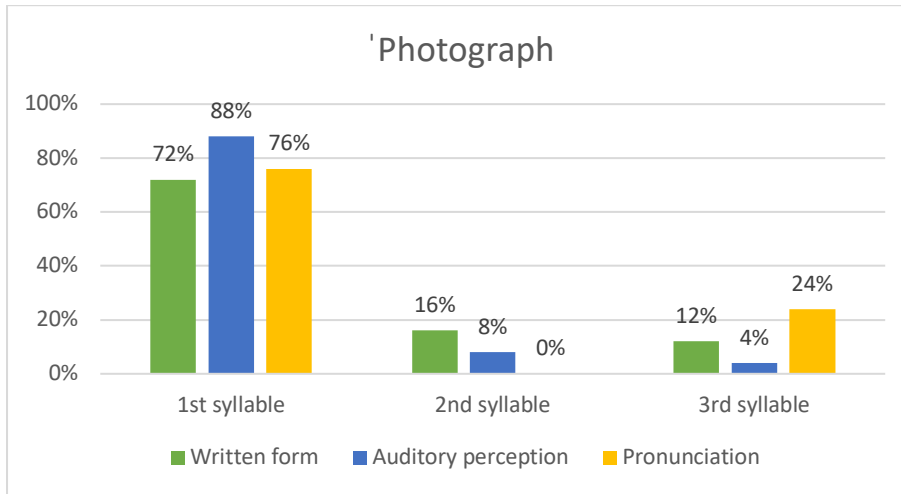
Research word n. 14: Photograph

Figure 31: Research word n. 14: Photograph

Based on Figure 32, the majority of participants were accurate in stress placement in the word *photograph.* 72% of participants correctly identified primary stress on the first syllable in written form and 88% in the auditory perception task. Pronunciation accuracy was 76%.

However, word stress was incorrectly placed on the third syllable by 24% in pronunciation, even though the majority of participants initially identified the stressed syllable correctly. A small percentage of participants marked the third syllable as primarily stressed (12% in written form, 4% in auditory perception).

Additionally, 16% of participants incorrectly identified the second syllable as primarily stressed in written form and 8% did so in auditory perception.
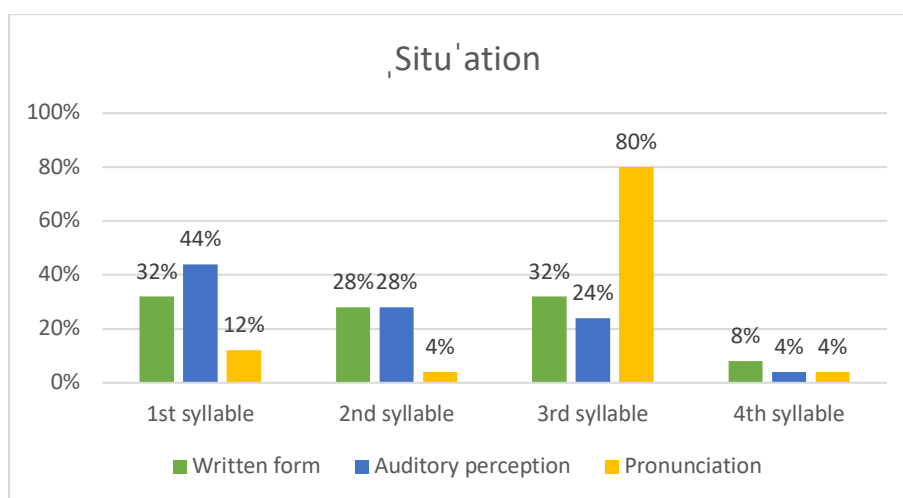
Research word n. 15: Situation

Figure 33: Research word n. 15: Situation

The data presented in Figure 34 reveal variability in participants' word stress placement in the word *situation* across all tasks. This variability indicates that participants may have faced challenges in identifying the correct primary stressed syllable. The highest accuracy was observed in pronunciation, with 80% of participants correctly pronouncing the word with primary stress on the third syllable. However, the accuracy in identifying the stress pattern was notably lower, with only 32% identifying the third syllable correctly in written form and an even lower percentage (24%) in auditory perception. Nevertheless, the high accuracy in pronunciation suggests that even though participants may not have been able to identify the primarily stressed syllable correctly, they produced the word with correctly placed primary stress.

A significant percentage of participants incorrectly placed primary stress on the first syllable (32% in written form, 44% in auditory perception, and 12% in pronunciation). Furthermore, a significant number of participants (28%) incorrectly identified the second syllable as primarily stressed in both written form and auditory perception. 4% of participants pronounced the word with incorrect emphasis on the second syllable.

Moreover, 8% of participants incorrectly placed primary stress on the fourth syllable in written form, and 4% did so in auditory perception and pronunciation.
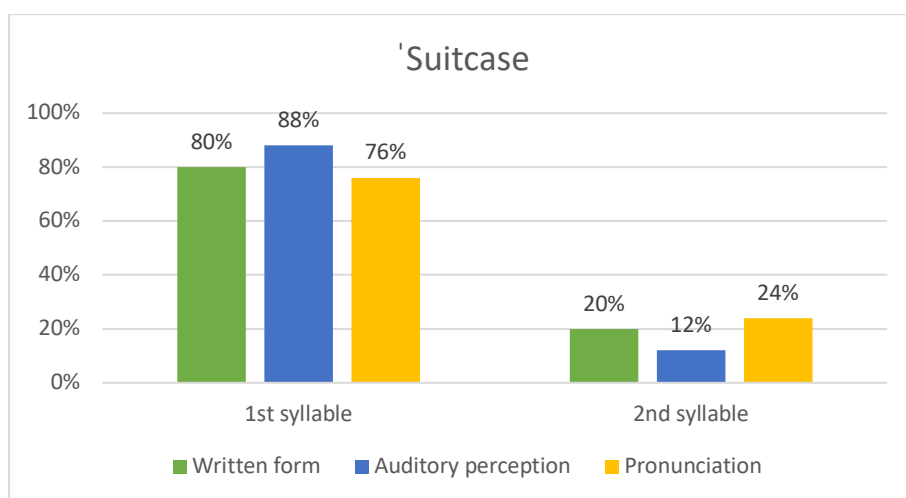
Research word n. 16: Suitcase

Figure 35: Research word n. 16: Suitcase

Based on the figure above, the majority of participants identified the stress pattern in the word *suitcase* correctly, with the stress falling on the first syllable (80% in written form, 88% in auditory perception). 76% of participants managed to pronounce the word correctly.

However, a small percentage of participants identified the stressed syllable incorrectly, marking the primary stress on the second syllable. Specifically, 20% of participants marked the second syllable as stressed in written form, and 12% of participants perceived the first syllable as stressed when listening to the word. A significant percentage (24%) of participants were inaccurate and pronounced the word with emphasis on the second syllable.
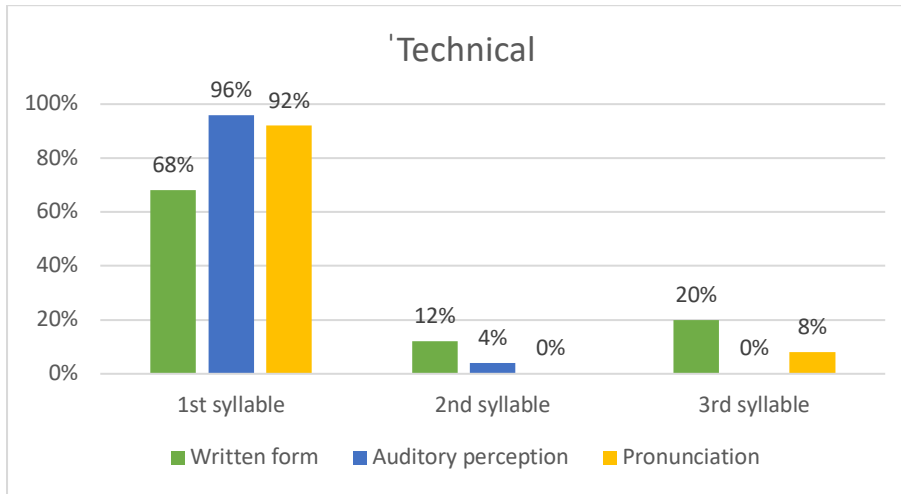
Research word n. 17: Technical

Figure 36: Research word n. 17: Technical

Figure 37 shows that most participants demonstrated a high level of accuracy in placing the primary stress on the first syllable in the word *technical*. The highest accuracy rate of 96% was achieved in auditory perception, suggesting that participants were most proficient in recognizing stress patterns when hearing the word spoken aloud. Although the accuracy in pronunciation (92%) was slightly lower than in auditory perception, it still indicates a strong proficiency in stress placement. The accuracy in the written form (68%) was notably lower compared to pronunciation and auditory perception.

Some participants (20% in written form and 8% in pronunciation) incorrectly placed primary stress on the third syllable of the word *technical*.

A minority of participants (12% in written form, 4% in auditory perception) incorrectly placed primary stress on the second syllable.
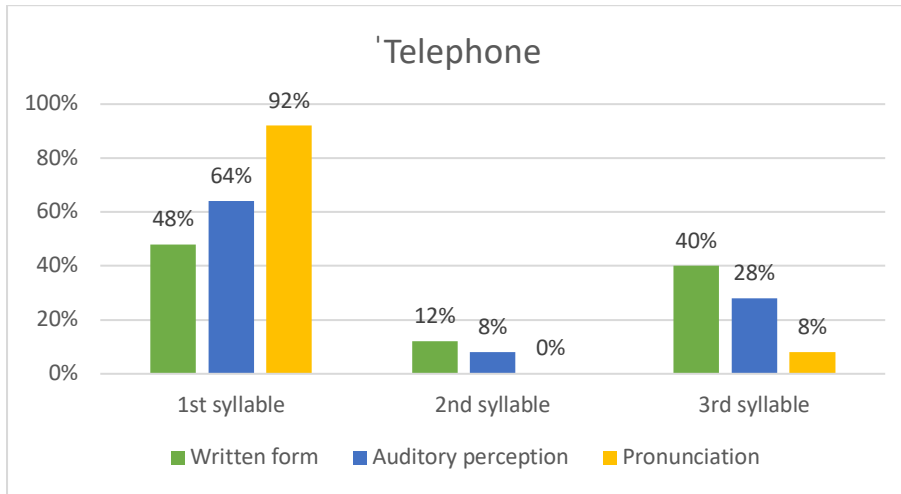
Research word n. 18: Telephone

Figure 38: Research word n. 18: Telephone

In the word *telephone,* stress placement was quite variable based on the data provided. However, most participants correctly identified the primarily stressed syllable, placing emphasis on the first syllable (48% in written form and 64% in auditory perception). The highest accuracy was observed in the pronunciation task, with 92% of participants pronouncing the word correctly.

Although participants were mostly accurate in pronunciation, many of them were inaccurate in the first two tasks, with 40% in written form and 28% in auditory perception identifying the third syllable as primarily stressed. A small percentage of participants (8%) incorrectly pronounced the word with emphasis on the third syllable.

Additionally, 12% of participants in the written form and 8% in auditory perception incorrectly identified the second syllable as stressed.
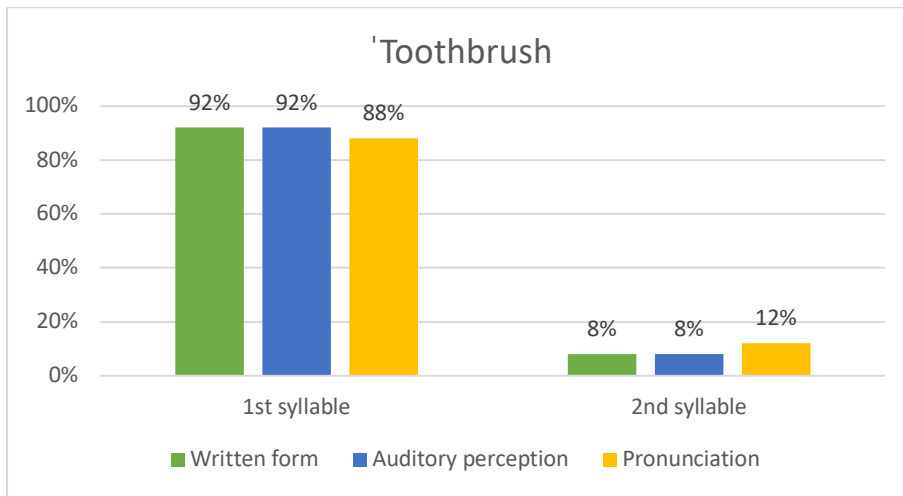
Research word n. 19: Toothbrush

Figure 39: Research word n. 19: Toothbrush

The figure above illustrates that the majority of participants were accurate in word stress placement in the word *toothbrush*. The emphasis was correctly identified on the first syllable in 92% of cases in both the written form and auditory perception, suggesting a strong awareness of stress placement in the word. Pronunciation accuracy was also high, reaching 88%.

Despite the overall high accuracy, a small percentage of participants placed the stress incorrectly on the second syllable. However, these errors were minimal across all tasks: 8% in the written form and auditory perception, and 12% in pronunciation. The consistent accuracy observed across all tasks implies that the participants have a solid understanding of the stress pattern in the word *toothbrush*.
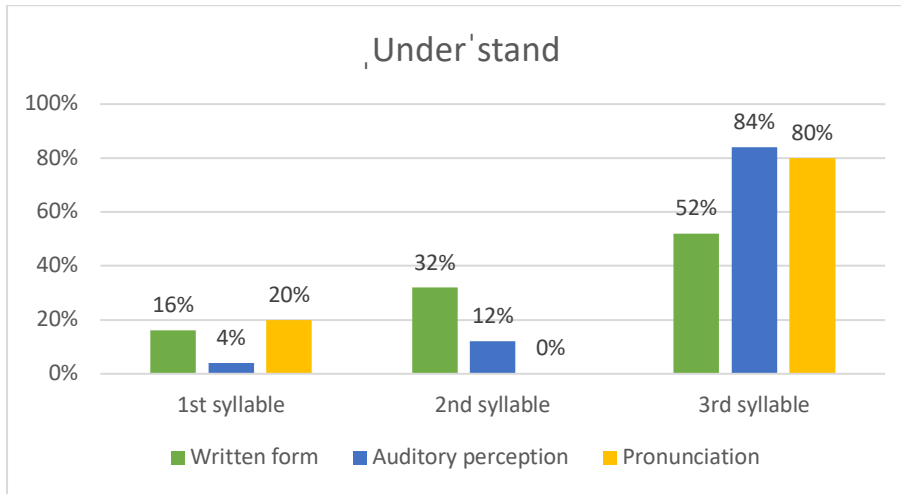
Research word n. 20: Understand

Figure 40: Research word n. 20: Understand

Based on the figure above, most participants accurately perceived and pronounced the third syllable of *understand* as primarily stressed. However, some participants faced challenges in accurately identifying the correct syllable in written form. Only 52% of participants correctly identified the primary stress on the third syllable.

Interestingly, a significant number of participants (32%) incorrectly marked the second syllable as primarily stressed in written form. 12% of participants perceived the second syllable as primarily stressed.

Additionally, a small but notable percentage of participants placed the main emphasis incorrectly on the first syllable (16% in written form, 4% in auditory perception, and 20% in pronunciation). This inaccuracy may have been caused by the secondary stress falling on the first syllable in the word *understand*.

6.3.2 Results summary

Word with primary stress indicated	Accuracy in written form		Accuracy in auditory perception		Accuracy in pronunciation	
	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency
Amazing	21	84%	21	84%	24	96%
Babysit	18	72%	20	80%	21	84%
Banana	20	80%	23	92%	15	60%
Careful	23	92%	22	88%	24	96%
Determine	19	76%	23	92%	15	60%
Engagement	24	96%	23	92%	23	92%
Entertain	8	32%	7	28%	19	76%
Forgive	18	72%	16	64%	17	68%
Improve	21	84%	20	80%	16	64%
Magnificent	21	84%	15	60%	17	68%
Opportunity	14	56%	22	88%	15	60%
Original	16	64%	22	88%	17	68%
Philosophy	14	56%	15	60%	18	72%
Photograph	18	72%	22	88%	19	76%
Situation	8	32%	6	24%	20	80%
Suitcase	20	80%	22	88%	19	76%
Technical	17	68%	24	96%	23	92%
Telephone	12	48%	16	64%	23	92%
Toothbrush	23	92%	23	92%	22	88%
Understand	13	52%	21	84%	20	80%
Accuracy in total	**17**	**70%**	**19**	**77%**	**19**	**77%**

Table 6: Word stress accuracy

Table 7 provides a summary of the results presented in the previous section, displaying the overall accuracy of participants in placing word stress in three areas: written form, auditory perception, and pronunciation.

According to the data provided in the table above, participants achieved an overall average accuracy rate of 70% in correctly identifying primary word stress in the written form of words. However, the average accuracy levels across individual research words vary, ranging from 32% to 96%.

In comparison with the written form task, the average accuracy rate in auditory perception of stressed syllables is higher, reaching 77%. Nevertheless, the variability in accuracy across individual words, ranging from 24% to 96%, indicates significant struggles with certain words in auditory perception.

Based on the table above, the average accuracy in pronunciation remains relatively stable, ranging from 60% to 96%. The overall average accuracy in using word stress in spoken form reaches 77%.

6.4 Conclusion

This section will provide conclusions based on the results presented in the previous sections. The answers to the research questions and key findings of the research will be outlined here.

RQ1-1: To what extent do secondary school students of Jirásek Grammar School demonstrate proficiency in accurately using word stress in spoken language?

According to the data provided in Table 6, participants achieved an overall average accuracy rate of 77% in correctly placing primary word stress in spoken form. However, upon closer analysis, it is evident that certain words presented greater challenges than others, with pronunciation accuracy ranging from 60% to 96%. For example, words such as *banana, determine* or *opportunity*, have proven to be quite challenging to pronounce with the correct stress pattern, with accuracy levels of 60%. This suggests a potential difficulty in reproducing the stress patterns of these specific words. On the other hand, words such as *amazing* or *careful* were pronounced with notably higher accuracy levels, reaching as high as 96%. This indicates excellent proficiency in the production of word stress in these cases. Furthermore, a relatively common error was observed in pronunciation, in words such as *banana, improve, original*

or *philosophy*, incorrectly emphasizing the first syllable of these words in pronunciation. This inaccuracy may have been influenced by the typical stress patterns in respondents' native language. Despite occasional struggles, students' overall proficiency in accurately using word stress in spoken language, graded according to Trna's (2015) scale, is *commendable*, with an average accuracy rate of 77%.

RQ1-2: To what extent do secondary school students of Jirásek Grammar School demonstrate proficiency in accurately identifying stressed syllables through auditory perception?

Based on data provided in Table 6, the participants' average accuracy rate in the identification of stressed syllables through auditory perception reaches 77%. However, it is important to note that the accuracy levels vary significantly across different words. The auditory perception accuracy is as low as 24-28% in words such as *entertain* or *situation*, while in the word *technical* the accuracy reaches 96%. Such variability suggests that participants encounter major challenges in auditory perception with certain words. One notable trend is that multi-syllable words containing multiple levels of stress present the greatest challenge. This implies that participants struggle when distinguishing between different levels of stress when hearing such words. Despite encountering occasional challenges, overall, the proficiency in accurately identifying stressed syllables through auditory perception, graded according to Trna's (2015) scale, is *commendable*, reaching 77% on average.

RQ1-3: To what extent do secondary school students of Jirásek Grammar School demonstrate proficiency in accurately identifying stressed syllables in the written form of words?

Based on the data summarized in Table 6, participants achieved an overall average accuracy rate of 70% in placing primary word stress in the written form of words. The average accuracy levels across individual research words vary, ranging from 32% to 96%. While some words such as *careful, engagement* or *toothbrush* show high accuracy rates, other words such as *entertain* or *situation* show low accuracy rates. The frequency of use and familiarity of words may have influenced participants' ability to accurately identify word stress in written form. Words like *careful* or *toothbrush* are likely more frequently encountered in everyday language

compared to *entertain* or *situation,* which may have contributed to the presented accuracy level differences. In conclusion, with a 70% accuracy rate, the participants' overall proficiency in identifying stressed syllables in the written form of words is *good*, graded according to Trna's (2015) scale.

7   Questionnaire

In this study, a method employed for data collection was the administration of questionnaires. According to Gavora (2000), questionnaires serve as a tool for obtaining data from a large number of respondents efficiently. Hricová et al. (2023) claim that questionnaires are widespread data collection tools for quantitative research. Given that the target group consists of secondary school English teachers from various parts of the Czech Republic, the decision to use online questionnaires was made. Online questionnaires were chosen for their convenience and ability to reach a wider audience efficiently. This method allows for easy distribution and completion, overcoming geographical barriers and allowing respondents from various locations to participate.

7.1   Research sample

The questionnaire was targeted at secondary school English teachers in the Czech Republic. Before the administration, 5 questionnaires were analysed by English teachers from Jirásek Grammar School in Náchod to verify the intelligibility of the questions. The provided feedback was positive, leading the researcher to proceed with the administration.

The questionnaires were administrated by email to 27 secondary schools in total from various regions of the Czech Republic. The majority of schools approached were from the Olomouc Region, South Moravian Region, Hradec Králové Region, Pardubice Region, and Central Bohemian Region. The number of respondents contacted via email was 226. Additionally, the researcher approached 26 students of English from the pedagogical faculty of Palacký University who are currently teaching at secondary schools. The total number of respondents contacted was 252. They completed the questionnaire online via Survio. The total number of returned questionnaires was 59, constituting the research sample for this study. According to Table 9 provided below, 47 respondents are qualified English teachers, 11 respondents are currently studying to obtain their qualification, and 1 respondent is an English teacher without formal qualification. These data are displayed in tables number Table 8Table 9 below:

Questionnaire	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency
Unreturned questionnaires	193	77%
Returned questionnaires	59	23%
Total questionnaires sent	252	100%

Table 8: Return rate

The table above displays the return rate of questionnaires. Out of a total of 252 questionnaires, 59 questionnaires were returned, the return rate stands at 23%.

Qualification	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency
Qualified teachers	47	79,7%
Teachers studying to become qualified	11	18,6%
Not qualified teachers	1	1,7%

Table 9: Teachers' qualification

Table 9 shows the respondents' qualification in the English language. Based on the data provided in the table, 47 respondents are qualified teachers, 11 respondents are studying to get their qualification and 1 respondent is an English teacher without formal qualification.

7.2 Research methodology

7.2.1 Design of the questionnaire

Based on Hricová et al. (2023), the questionnaire is non-standardized because it is self-constructed by the researcher. They argue that a self-constructed questionnaire aims to precisely target the subject of investigation by including questions directly related to the subject being studied. The researcher used ChatGPT (2024) as an inspiration when designing the individual questions and possible answers. The questionnaire was carefully designed following the steps outlined in *Úvod do pedagogického výzkumu* (2000) by Gavora. The questionnaire contains 17 questions in total, based on Gavora (2000) the questionnaire contains three types

of questions: closed questions, semi-closed questions, and scaled questions. The closed questions offer alternative answers without the possibility to add specific answers. The semi-closed questions, first offer fixed alternatives and then provide an open option for respondents' specific answers. The scaled questions use different types of assessment scales (Gavora, 2000).

The questionnaire aims to determine the frequency of usage of strategies aimed at raising word stress awareness. Additionally, it aims to explore the techniques used by secondary school English teachers for teaching word stress. Finally, it aims to examine the educational challenges and perceptions of secondary school English teachers regarding word stress teaching.

The questionnaire (see Appendix 5) consists of five sections, each section is dedicated to a specific aspect. The first section aims to discover the current status in terms of qualification, and it is followed by the second section, discovering the respondents' opinions on word stress and other aspects of pronunciation in terms of their perceived importance. The third section aims to examine the frequency of including pronunciation activities and activities focused specifically on word stress in English lessons and the frequency of correcting students' pronunciation mistakes. Subsequently, the respondents' confidence in using and teaching word stress is addressed. The next section investigates the methods of word stress teaching employed by the respondents and the effectiveness of each method. Additionally, it delves into the usage of word stress notation techniques. The final section of the questionnaire aims to examine the main challenges encountered by respondents when teaching word stress, their perception of the quality of word stress teaching at their school, and the availability of materials. Finally, the questionnaire addresses potential improvements in the current state of word stress teaching.

7.2.2 Methods of data analysis

The data were collected using the online survey tool *Survio*, which allowed the researcher to efficiently gather valuable insights into the issue surrounding word stress teaching. The data obtained were then transferred into MS Excel tables for systematic organization and analysis. Subsequently, the researcher used MS Excel to generate tables and graphs for visual representation of the findings.

7.3 Results

In this chapter, the data obtained from the questionnaires will be presented in the form of graphs and commented on by the researcher. This part of the thesis will work with research question number 2 and its sub-questions.

RQ2-1: To what extent do secondary school teachers of English incorporate methods focused on raising word stress awareness in their teaching practice?

The first sub-question aims to examine the frequency of word stress-related activities integrated into the teaching methods of secondary school English teachers. Items 3, 4, 5, and 6 of the questionnaire are connected to this sub-question and will be presented below:

Question n. 3: How often do you include activities focused on pronunciation in your lessons?

In question number 3, the respondents graded their frequency of usage of activities focused on pronunciation in their lessons. The frequency is graded on a scale from 1 to 5 stars, with 1 meaning *never* and 5 meaning *in every lesson*.
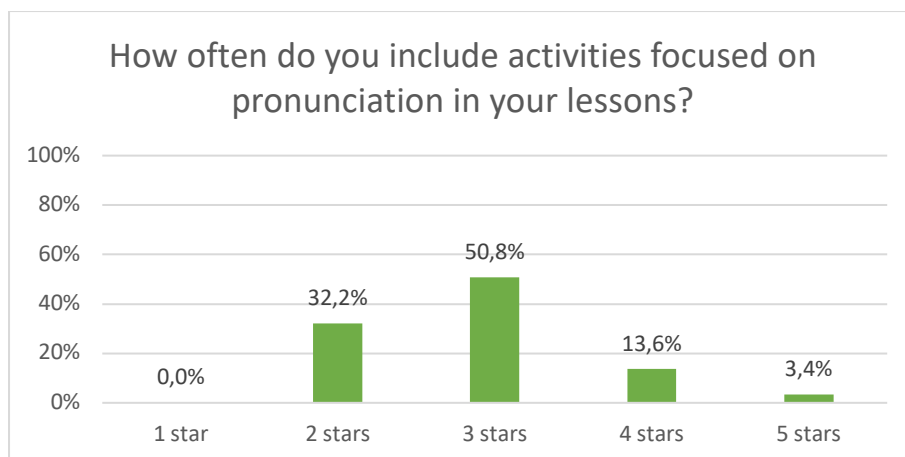

Figure 41: Question n. 3 (How often do you include activities focused on pronunciation in your lessons)

Based on the figure above, slightly over half of the participants (50,8%) chose 3 stars out of 5 which means that they include pronunciation activities in their lessons occasionally. 32,2% of respondents chose 2 stars out of 5, meaning they rarely include pronunciation activities in their lessons. A small but notable percentage of respondents (13,6%) chose 4 stars out of 5, which means they often include pronunciation activities in their lessons. A minority of respondents chose the maximum, 5 stars, meaning that they include activities focused on pronunciation in every lesson. 1 star meaning that they do not include pronunciation activities at all was not chosen by any respondent.

Question n. 5: How often do you include activities focused on word stress in your lessons?

In question number 5, respondents graded their frequency of using word stress-related activities in their lessons. The frequency is graded on a scale from 1 to 5 stars, with 1 meaning *never* and 5 meaning *in every lesson*.
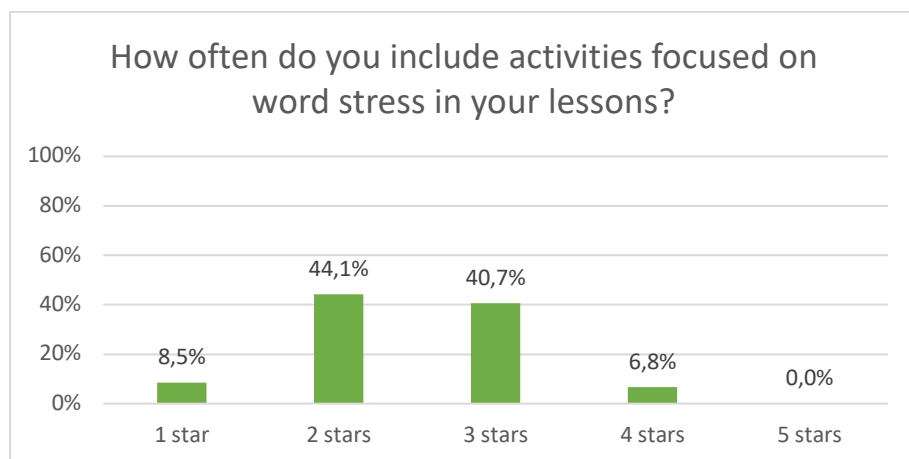

Figure 42: Question n. 5 (How often do you include activities focused on word stress in your lessons?)

Figure 43 shows that the majority of respondents chose 2 or 3 stars out of 5, 2 stars were chosen by 44,1% of respondents and 3 stars were chosen by 40,7% of respondents. This means that 44,1% of respondents rarely include word-stress activities in their lessons and 40,7% of respondents occasionally include activities focused on word stress. A small but significant percentage of respondents marked 1 star out of 5, meaning they do not include word stress activities in their English lessons. 4 stars out of 5 were chosen by 6,8% of respondents which means they often use pronunciation activities in their lessons. None of the respondents chose 5 stars which means that none of them includes activities focused on word stress in every lesson.

Question n. 4: How often do you correct pronunciation mistakes of your students?

The figure below displays the frequency of pronunciation mistake correction. The grading scale ranges from 1 to 5 stars, 1 star stands for *never* and 5 stars stand for *every time I notice such a pronunciation mistake.*
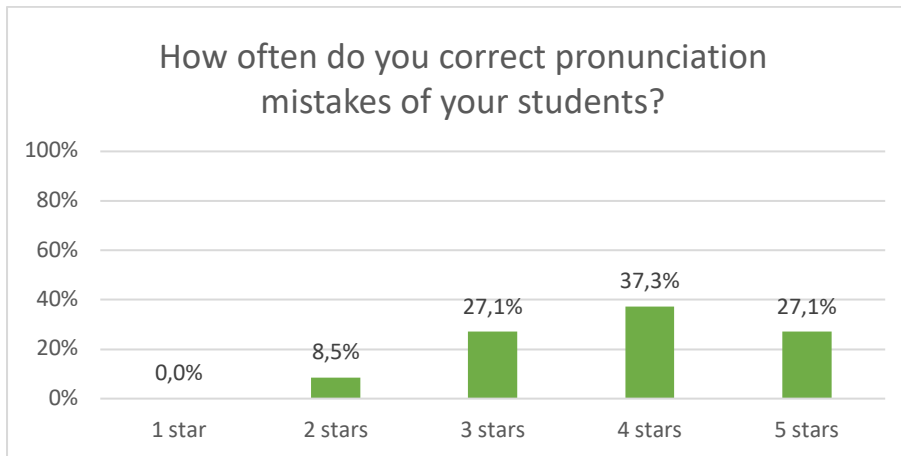

Figure 44: Question n. 4 (How often do you correct pronunciation mistakes of your students?)

Based on the data provided in the figure, 37,3% of respondents chose 4 stars out of 5, which means that they often correct pronunciation mistakes of their students. 27,1% of respondents marked 3 stars out of 5, meaning they occasionally correct pronunciation mistakes of their students. The same percentage of respondents (27,1%) also chose 5 stars, this indicates that every time they notice a pronunciation mistake, they correct it. Additionally, 2 stars out of five were chosen by 8,5% of respondents, meaning these respondents rarely correct pronunciation mistakes in pronunciation of their students. 1 star was not chosen by any respondent.

Question n. 6: How often do you correct pronunciation mistakes of your students in word stress?

The figure below illustrates the frequency correction of mistakes made in word stress. The respondents graded the frequency of their corrections on a scale from 1 to 5 stars, where 1 star indicates *never* and 5 stars indicate *every time I notice a mistake in word stress*.
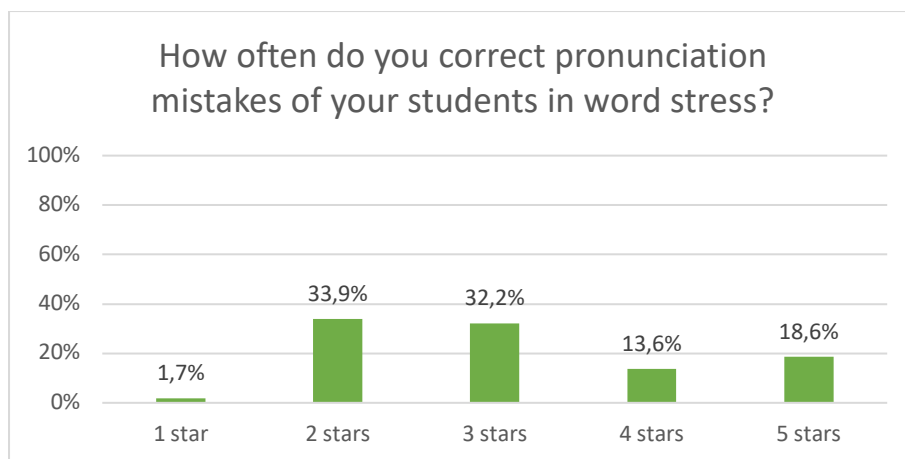

Figure 45: Question n. 6 (How often do you correct pronunciation mistakes of your students in word stress?)

The data above show that 33,9% of respondents chose 2 stars, meaning they rarely correct pronunciation mistakes made in word stress. 3 stars indicating occasional corrections of word stress mistakes were chosen by 32,2% of respondents. 18,6% of respondents marked the maximum, 5 stars, this means that every time they notice a word stress mistake in the spoken form, they correct it. A minority of respondents marked 1 star out of 5, meaning they don't correct pronunciation mistakes of their students made in word stress.

RQ2-2: Which techniques do secondary school teachers of English use to teach word stress?

The second sub-question aims to investigate the word stress teaching techniques used by secondary school English teachers. This question is associated with questionnaire items 9, 10, and 11, which will be presented below:

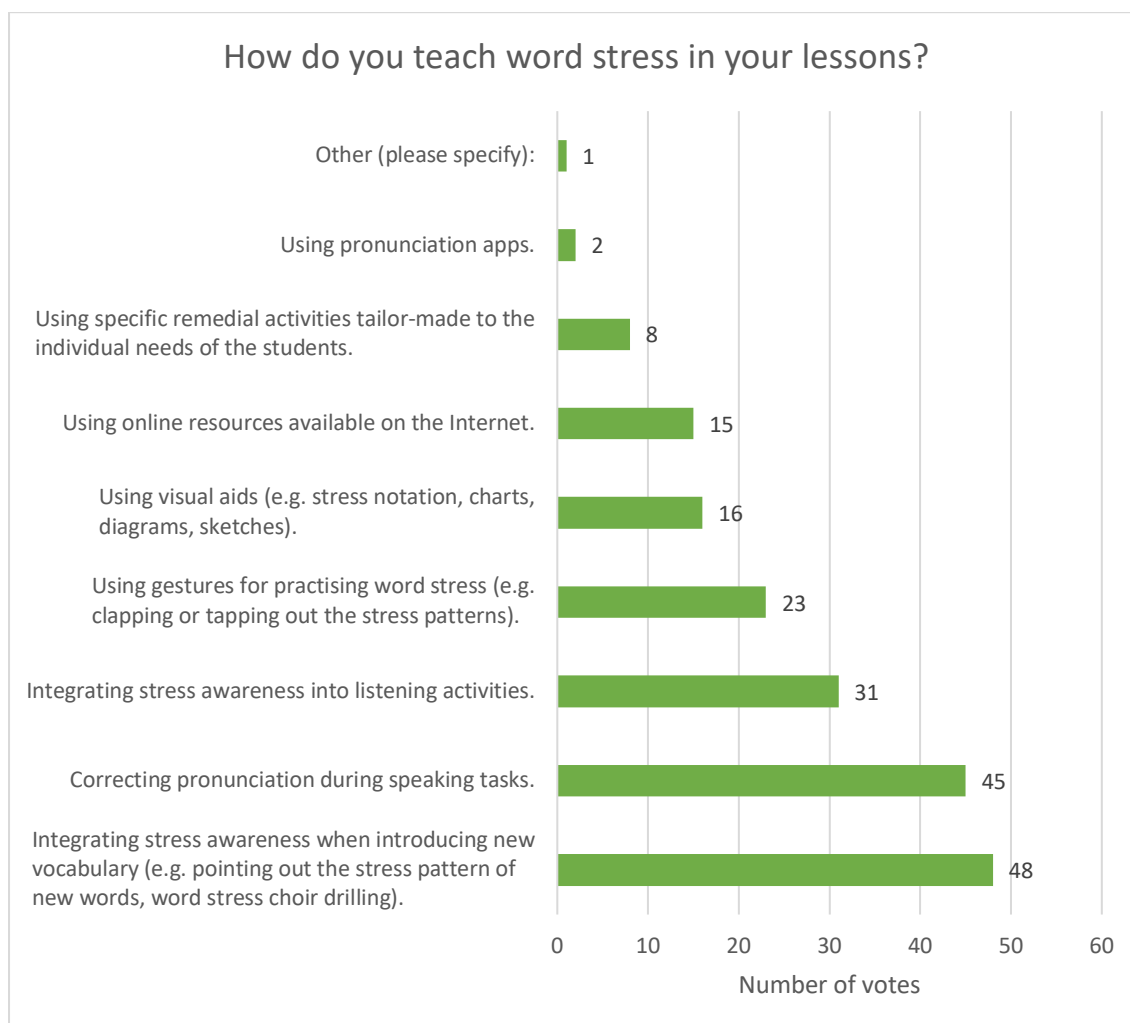**Question n. 9: How do you teach word stress in your lessons?**

How do you teach word stress in your lessons?

Category	Votes
Other (please specify):	1
Using pronunciation apps.	2
Using specific remedial activities tailor-made to the individual needs of the students.	8
Using online resources available on the Internet.	15
Using visual aids (e.g. stress notation, charts, diagrams, sketches).	16
Using gestures for practising word stress (e.g. clapping or tapping out the stress patterns).	23
Integrating stress awareness into listening activities.	31
Correcting pronunciation during speaking tasks.	45
Integrating stress awareness when introducing new vocabulary (e.g. pointing out the stress pattern of new words, word stress choir drilling).	48

Number of votes

Figure 46: Question n. 9 (How do you teach word stress in your lessons?)

Based on the figure above, it is evident that the integration of stress awareness when introducing new vocabulary received the highest number of votes, with 48 votes (25,4%), followed closely by correcting pronunciation during speaking tasks, which obtained 45 votes (23,8%). Integration of stress awareness into listening activities ranked third in popularity, receiving 31 votes (16,4%). Using gestures for word stress practice received 23 votes (12,2%), while the usage of visual aids received 16 votes (8,5%). The usage of online resources from the internet gathered a similar amount of 15 votes (7,9%), and specific remedial activities tailored to the individual needs of the students

received 8 votes (4,2%). Pronunciation apps got 2 votes (1,1%), and 1 respondent (0,5%) chose the option other, mentioning the use of exercises available in the textbook.

Question n. 10: How effective do you think each method for teaching word stress is?

Question number 10 focuses on the effectiveness of each method used for word stress teaching. The respondents rated each method on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being *not very effective* and 5 being *very effective*.
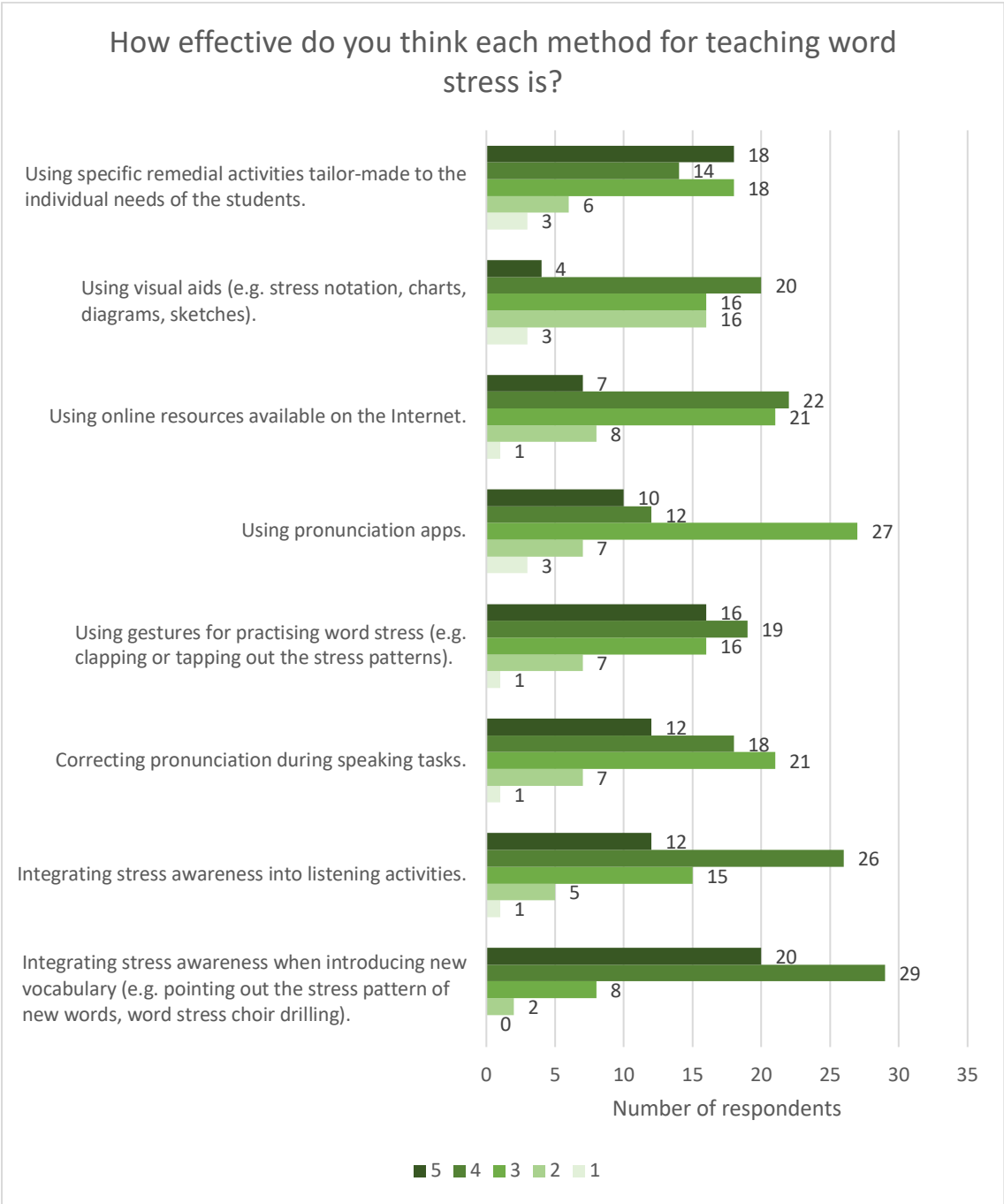

Figure 47: (How effective do you think each method for teaching word stress is?)

Based on Figure 48, integrating stress awareness when introducing new vocabulary was rated by the majority of respondents as effective or very effective. Specifically, 29 respondents rated the method on an effectiveness scale as a 4, and 20 respondents rated it as a 5. Additionally, 8 respondents rated it as a 3, and 2 respondents rated it as a 2.

Integrating stress awareness into listening activities was rated as effective with a score of 4 by 26 respondents. 15 respondents ranked this method as a 3, and 12 respondents as a 5. Additionally, 5 respondents rated the method as a 2, and 1 respondent ranked it as a 1.

Correcting pronunciation during speaking tasks was ranked as somewhat effective with a score of 3 by 21 respondents. 18 respondents ranked it as a 4, 12 respondents ranked it as a 5, 7 respondents as a 2 and 1 respondent as a 1.

The usage of gestures was rated by 19 respondents as a 4, meaning that they consider the method to be effective. 16 respondents ranked this method as a 5, and the same number of respondents ranked it as a 3. Additionally, 7 respondents ranked the method as a 2 and 1 respondent as a 1.

The usage of pronunciation apps was ranked by 27 respondents as a 3, meaning they consider the method to be somewhat effective. 12 respondents ranked this method as a 4, 10 respondents as a 5, and 7 respondents as 2. 3 participants ranked it as a 1.

The usage of resources available on the internet was ranked by most respondents with numbers 4 and 3, indicating that the majority considers the method to be effective or somewhat effective. 22 respondents ranked it as a 4, and 21 respondents ranked it as a 3. Additionally, 8 respondents ranked this method as a 2, 7 respondents as a 5 and 1 respondent as a 1.

20 respondents consider using visual aids to be effective, ranking it with number 4. 16 respondents ranked this method with number 3 and 16 respondents with number 2. Additionally, 4 respondents ranked it as a 5, and 3 respondents as a 1.

The usage of remedial activities tailored to the needs of the students was rated as very effective by 18 respondents, ranking it as a 5. However, the same number of respondents ranked the method as somewhat effective, with a score of 3. Additionally, 6 respondents ranked it as a 2, and 3 respondents as a 1.

Question n. 10: How effective do you think each method for teaching word stress is?

In order to determine the effectiveness hierarchy of the methods, calculations had to be made. The numbers of votes received for each of the methods were multiplied by the corresponding rating amount and then summed up to get the final scores for each method. The results are the following:

Method	Total score
Integrating stress awareness when introducing new vocabulary (e.g. pointing out the stress pattern of new words, word stress choir drilling).	244
Integrating stress awareness into listening activities.	222
Using gestures for practising word stress (e.g. clapping or tapping out the stress patterns).	219
Using specific remedial activities tailor-made to the individual needs of the students.	215
Correcting pronunciation during speaking tasks.	210
Using online resources available on the Internet.	203
Using pronunciation apps.	196
Using visual aids (e.g. stress notation, charts, diagrams, sketches).	183

Table 10: Question n. 10 (How effective do you think each method for teaching word stress is?)

The integration of stress awareness when introducing new vocabulary was ranked as the most effective method, scoring 244 points in total. According to the respondents' ranking, the second most effective method was the integration of stress awareness into listening activities, which scored a total number of 222 points. Another highly effective method is the use of gestures for word stress practice, earning 219 points. Usage of specific remedial activities tailored to the needs of the students scored 215 points in total. Correcting pronunciation during speaking tasks scored 210 points in total. On the other hand, among the less effective methods were the usage of online resources available on the internet, with 203 points; the use of pronunciation apps, scoring 196 points; and the usage of visual aids, with 183 points in total.

Question n. 11: Which techniques of stress notation do you use when dealing with English word stress in your lessons?
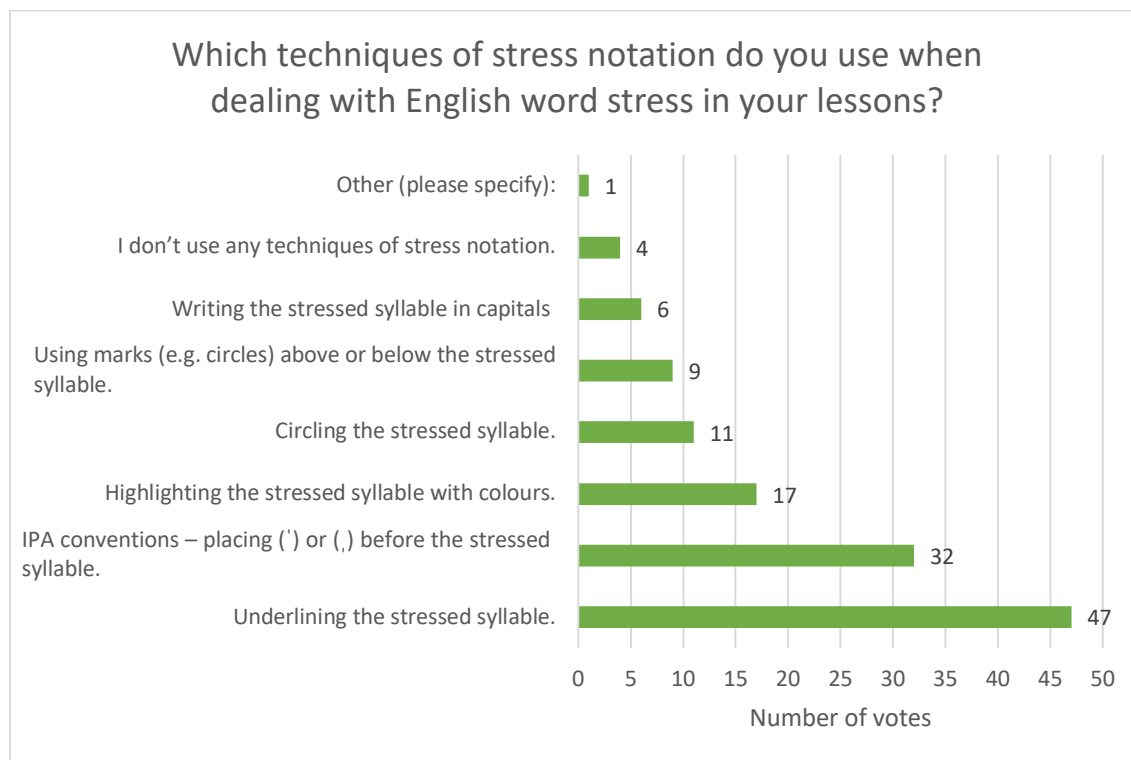

Figure 49: Question n. 11 (Which techniques of stress notation do you use when dealing with English word stress in your lessons?)

According to data presented in Figure 50, the most frequently used stress notation technique is underlining stressed syllables, which received a total of 47 votes (37%). IPA conventions received the second-highest number of votes (32 votes; 25,2%). The technique of highlighting stressed syllables with colours received 17 votes (13,4%). Among the less used techniques were circling the stressed syllables, which received 11 votes (8,7%); using marks above or below the stressed syllables, which received 9 votes (7,1%); and writing the stressed syllables in capitals, with 6 votes (4,7%). 4 respondents (3,1%), based on the data, do not use any stress notation techniques. One respondent (0,8%) chose the option *other*, mentioning a method involving writing the word and emphasizing the stressed syllable when saying it.

RQ2-3: What are the main challenges faced by secondary school English teachers in teaching word stress?

The third sub-question aims to identify the main difficulties encountered by secondary school English teachers in word stress teaching. Questions number 12 and 15 are focused on answering the third sub-question. These questions will be presented below:

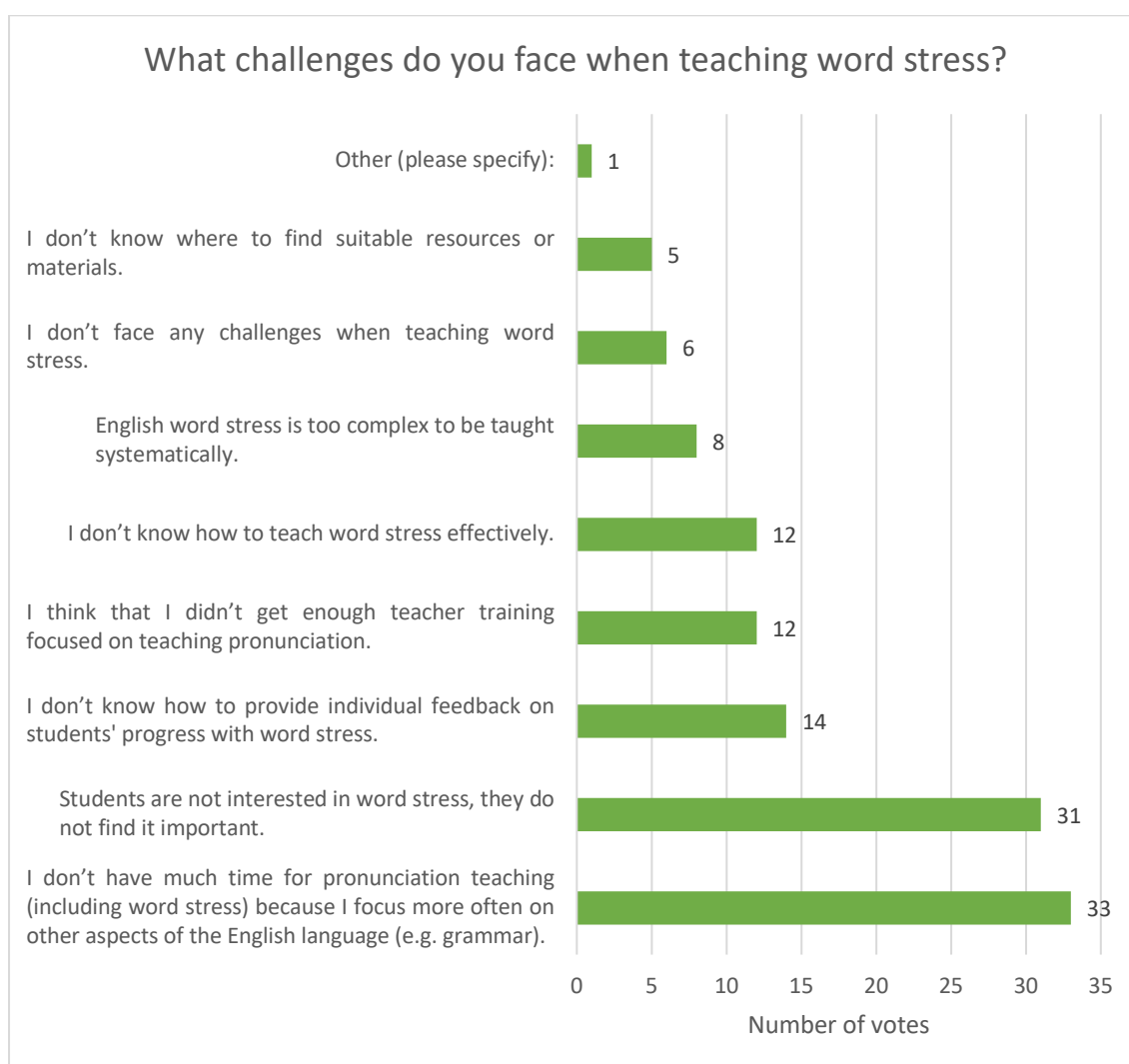**Question n. 12: What challenges do you face when teaching word stress?**

Figure 51: Question n. 12 (What challenges do you face when teaching word stress?)

According to the data provided in Figure 52, among the main challenges faced by secondary school English teachers when teaching word stress is limited time for pronunciation teaching due to conflicting priorities (e.g. grammar), receiving 33 votes in total (27%); and lack of students' interest in the problematics of word stress, with 31 votes (25,4%). With a lower score of 14 votes (11,5%), the next challenge is the difficulty in providing individual feedback on students' progress with word stress. Limited teacher training focused on teaching pronunciation received 12 votes (9,8%), and the same number of votes was assigned to insecurities about being able to teach word stress effectively. The overall complexity of word stress received 8 votes in total (6,6%). 6 respondents reported not facing any challenges when teaching word stress, constituting 4,9% of the total score. The struggle to find suitable resources for word stress teaching received 4 votes (4,1%). One respondent, who chose the option of not facing any challenges, provided a comment in the *other* section.

Question n. 15: Would you be able to find some additional exercises or activities focusing on word stress on the internet?

Question number 15 closely investigates one of the potential challenges in teaching word stress, finding additional word stress-focused activities on the internet beyond those available in textbooks.
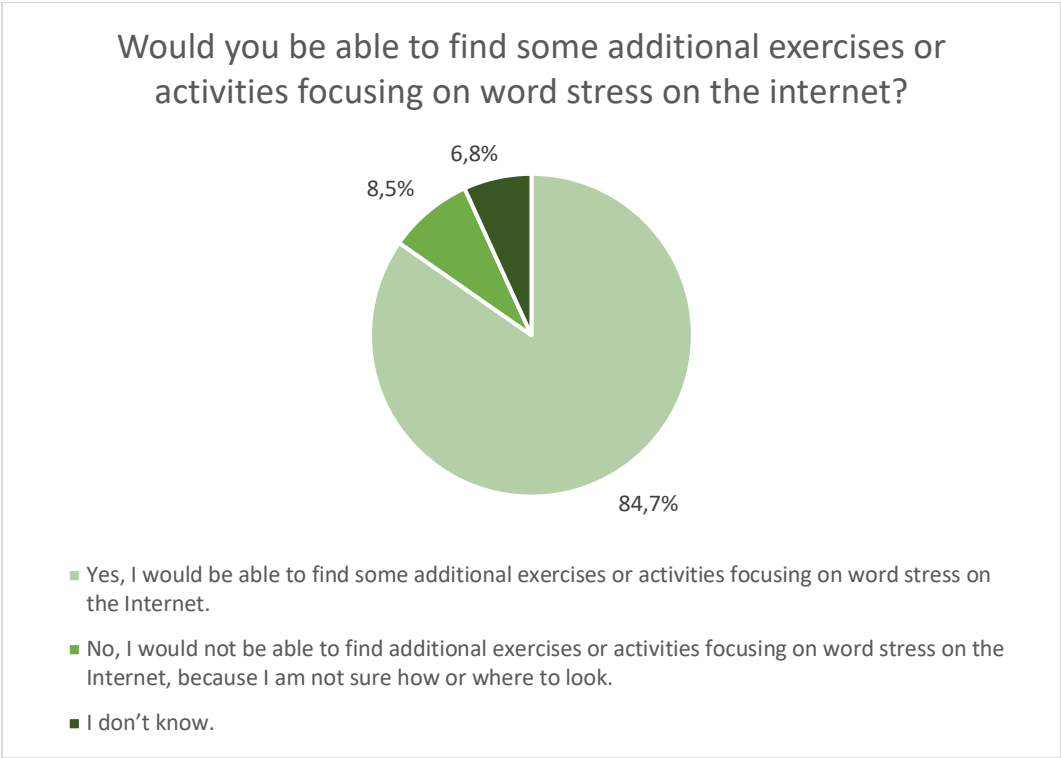
Would you be able to find some additional exercises or activities focusing on word stress on the internet?

6,8%

8,5%

84,7%

■ Yes, I would be able to find some additional exercises or activities focusing on word stress on the Internet.

■ No, I would not be able to find additional exercises or activities focusing on word stress on the Internet, because I am not sure how or where to look.

■ I don't know.

Figure 53: Question n. 15 (Would you be able to find some additional exercises or activities focusing on word stress on the internet?)

From the results presented above, it is evident that the majority of respondents (84,7%) do not struggle to find additional materials on the internet. Only 8,5% of respondents reported that they would have some difficulty finding additional activities to practice word stress. 6,8% of respondents chose the option *I don't know*, indicating their uncertainty.

RQ2-4: What are the perceptions of secondary school English teachers on word stress teaching?

The fourth sub-question aims to explore secondary school English teachers' perceptions regarding the teaching of word stress and related issues. The questionnaire items associated with this sub-question are questions number 2, 7, 8, 13, 14, 16, and 17.

Question n. 2: How important do you think each aspect of pronunciation is?

The figure below focuses on the perceived importance of word stress compared to other aspects of English pronunciation. Respondents rated each aspect on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being *not important* and 5 being *very important*. The number of votes received for each pronunciation aspect was multiplied by the corresponding ranking amount and then summed up to determine the total score for each aspect.
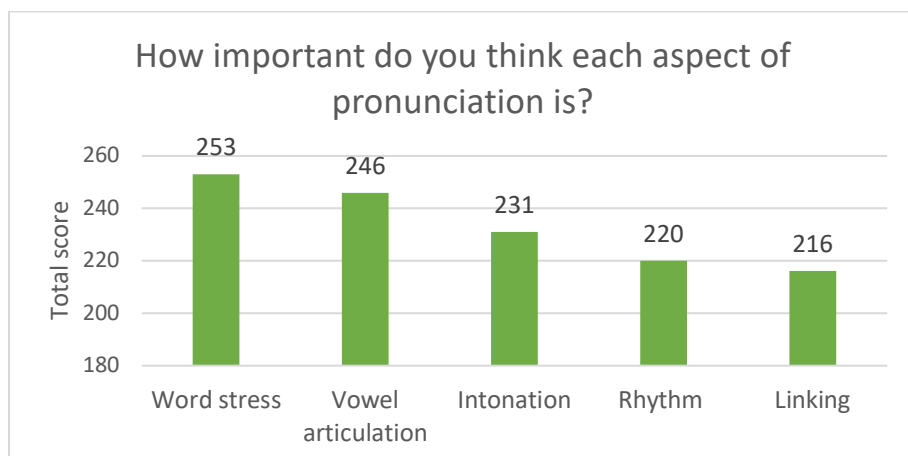
Figure 54: Question n. 2 (How important do you think each aspect of pronunciation is?)

According to the data displayed above, respondents perceive word stress to be a very important aspect of pronunciation, with a total score of 253. Following closely, vowel articulation, with 246 points, is also considered to be a very important aspect. In third place, with a total score of 231, is intonation. Among the less important aspects of English pronunciation are rhythm, with a score of 220 points, and linking with 216 points.

Question n. 7: How confident do you feel about your ability to use word stress in your pronunciation?

In question number 7 respondents rated their confidence in using word stress on a scale from 1 to 5 stars, with 1 star feeling *not confident* and 5 stars feeling *very confident*.
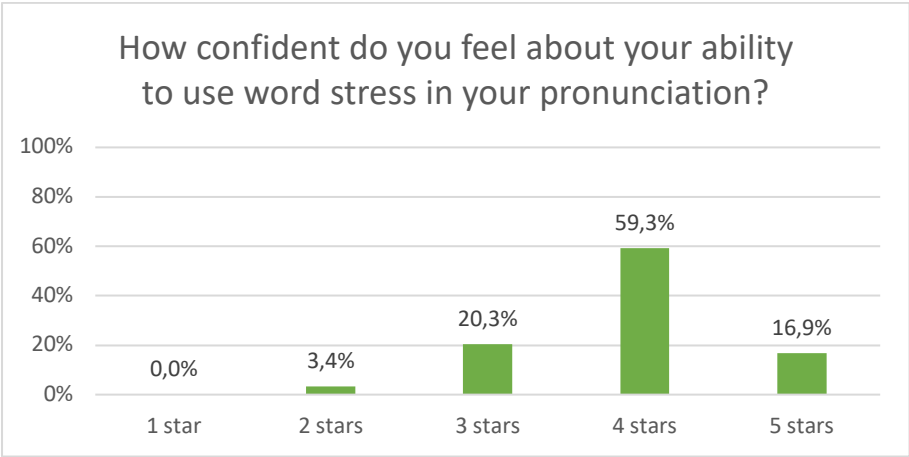

Figure 55: Question n. 7 (How confident do you feel about your ability to use word stress in your pronunciation?)

Based on the figure above, the majority of respondents rated their self-confidence as a 4, indicating they feel confident in using word stress in their pronunciation. A lower but notable percentage of respondents (20,3%) feel moderate confidence, ranking themselves with 3 stars. 16,9% of respondents feel very confident in using word stress in their pronunciation, ranking themselves with a maximum of 5 stars. A minority of respondents feel slightly confident, choosing 2 stars out of 5.

Question n. 8: How confident do you feel about your ability to teach word stress effectively?

Question number 8 examines the ability of secondary school English teachers to teach word stress effectively. The respondents rated their confidence in word stress teaching on a scale from 1 to 5 stars. 1 star indicates feeling *not confident* and 5 stars indicate feeling *very confident*.
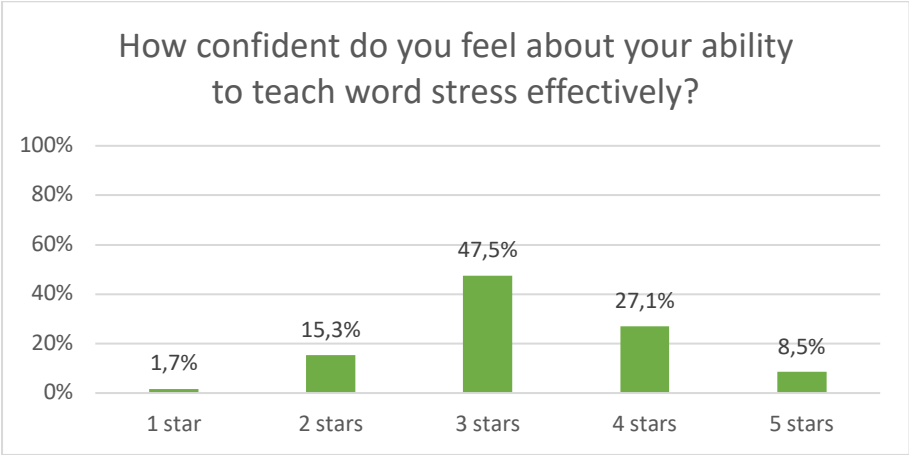

Figure 56: Question n. 8 (How confident do you feel about your ability to teach word stress effectively?)

Based on the figure above, a significant percentage of secondary school English teachers (47,5%) feel moderately confident in their ability to teach word stress effectively, with nearly half of the respondents rating themselves with 3 stars out of 5. 27,1% of respondents rated themselves with 4 stars out of 5, indicating they feel confident. 15,3% of respondents reported feeling slightly confident in word stress teaching, selecting 2 stars out of 5. Additionally, a small percentage of respondents (8,5%) ranked their confidence with 5 stars, meaning they feel very confident in their ability to teach word stress effectively. 1 respondent (1,7%) chose 1 star out of 5, indicating the respondent does not feel confident in teaching word stress effectively. Overall, while most respondents feel a moderate to high level of confidence in teaching word stress, some respondents are less confident.

Questions number 7 and 8 are closely connected, comparing respondents' confidence in using word stress in their pronunciation and teaching word stress to their students. Based

on the data provided in Figures 37 and 38, respondents' confidence in teaching word stress is leaning towards the middle score (3 stars) and their confidence in using word stress in pronunciation is leaning toward higher scores of 4 stars.

Question n. 13: Which textbooks do you use in your lessons?

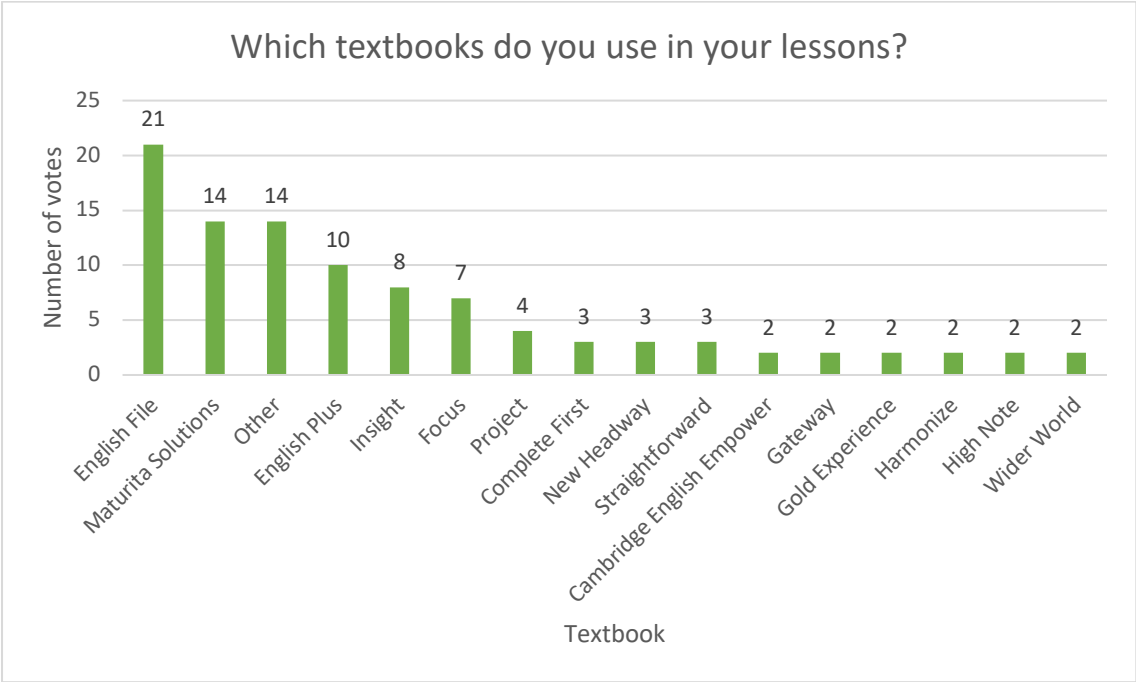There are numerous English textbooks available on the market. The figure below displays those used by the respondents.

Figure 57: Question n. 13 (Which textbooks do you use in your lessons?)

Among the most used textbooks are *English File* and *Maturita Solutions,* with *English File* receiving 21 votes and *Maturita Solutions* receiving 14 votes. The textbook *English Plus* is used by 8 respondents and *Insight* by 7. Among the less used secondary school textbooks are *Project* (4 votes), *Complete First, New Headway,* and *Straightforward* each receiving 3 votes from the respondents. Other textbooks displayed in the figure *(Cambridge English Empower, Gateaway, Gold Experience, Harmonize, High Note, Wider World)* each received 2 votes. The rest of the textbooks, which received only 1 vote, are included in the option *Other,* constituting 14 various textbooks.

Question n. 14: Do you think that the number of exercises focusing on word stress available in the textbooks you use is sufficient?

Question number 14 examines the number of exercises focused on word stress in English textbooks used at secondary schools.
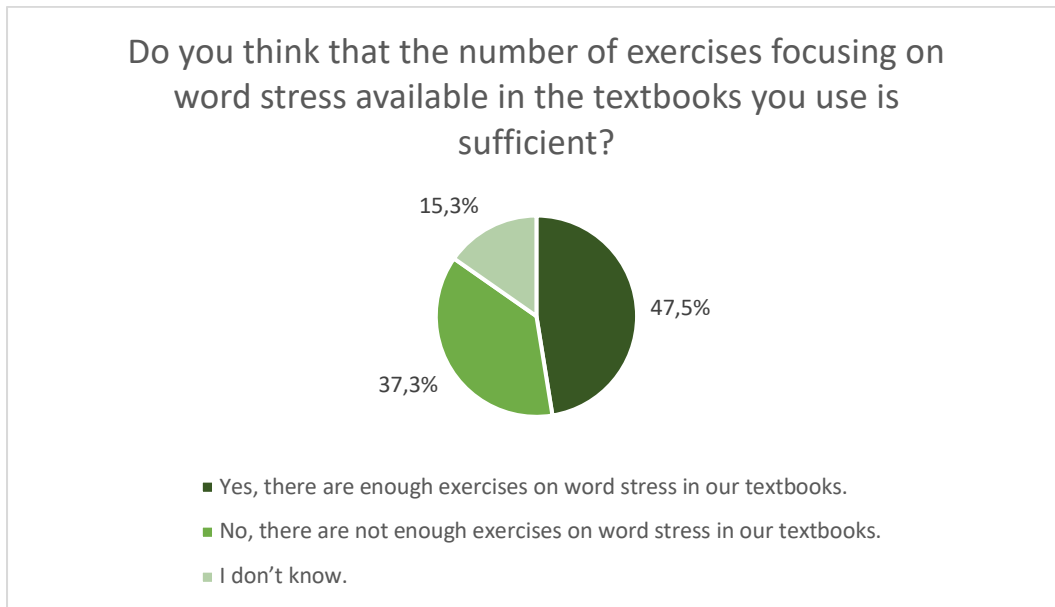

Figure 58: Question n. 14 (Do you think that the number of exercises focusing on word stress available in the textbooks you use is sufficient?)

The figure above displays that 47,5% of respondents believe that the number of exercises on word stress available in English textbooks is sufficient. On the other hand, 37,3% of respondents believe that there are not enough exercises on word stress in the textbooks. Additionally, 15,3% of respondents chose the option *I don't know.*

Question n. 16: Do you think that English word stress is taught effectively at your school?

Question number 16 examines the perception of secondary school English teachers on the effectiveness of word stress teaching at their school.
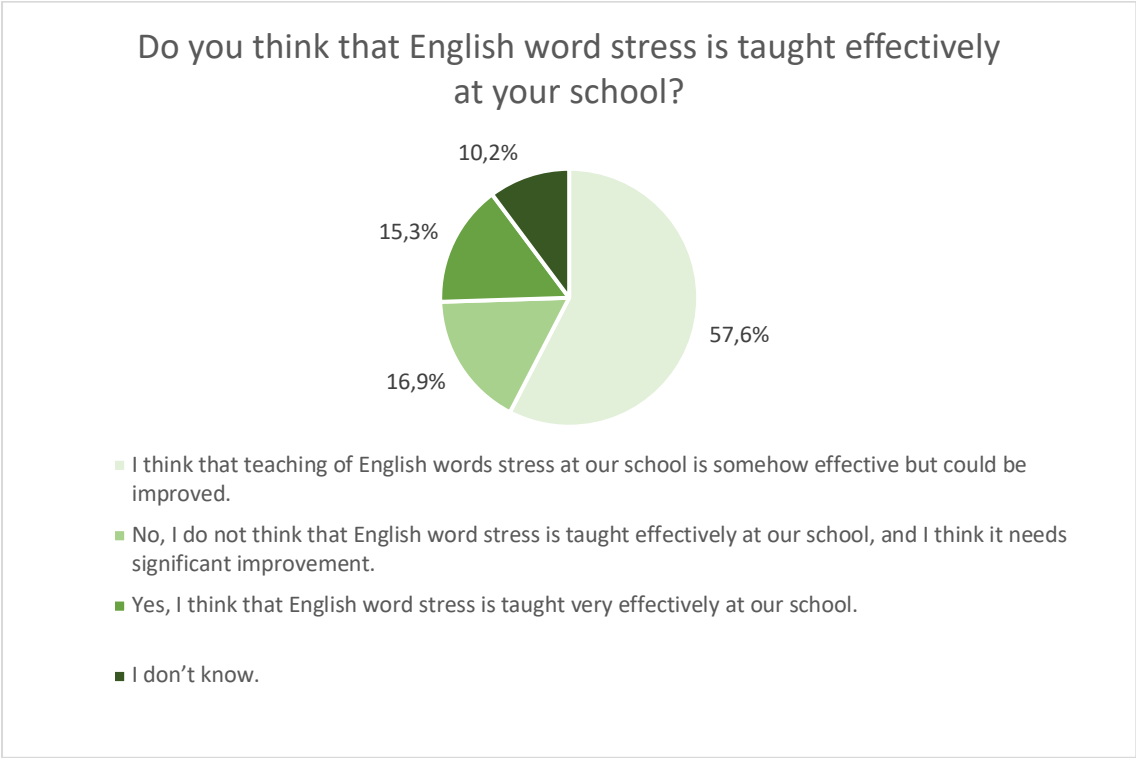

Figure 59: Question n. 16 (Do you think that English word stress is taught effectively at your school?)

According to the figure above, it is evident that most respondents (57,6%) think that word stress teaching at their school is effective but could be improved. 16,9% of respondents think that word stress teaching at their school is ineffective and requires significant improvements. On the other hand, a similar percentage of respondents (15,3%) think that word stress is taught very effectively at their school. A small but notable number of respondents (10,2%) do not feel competent to judge the effectiveness of word stress teaching at their school, choosing the option *I don't know*.

Question n. 17: Which changes would you appreciate as an English teacher to be able to help your students master word stress more effectively?

Question number 17 addresses potential improvements that English teachers would appreciate to enhance their students' proficiency in word stress.
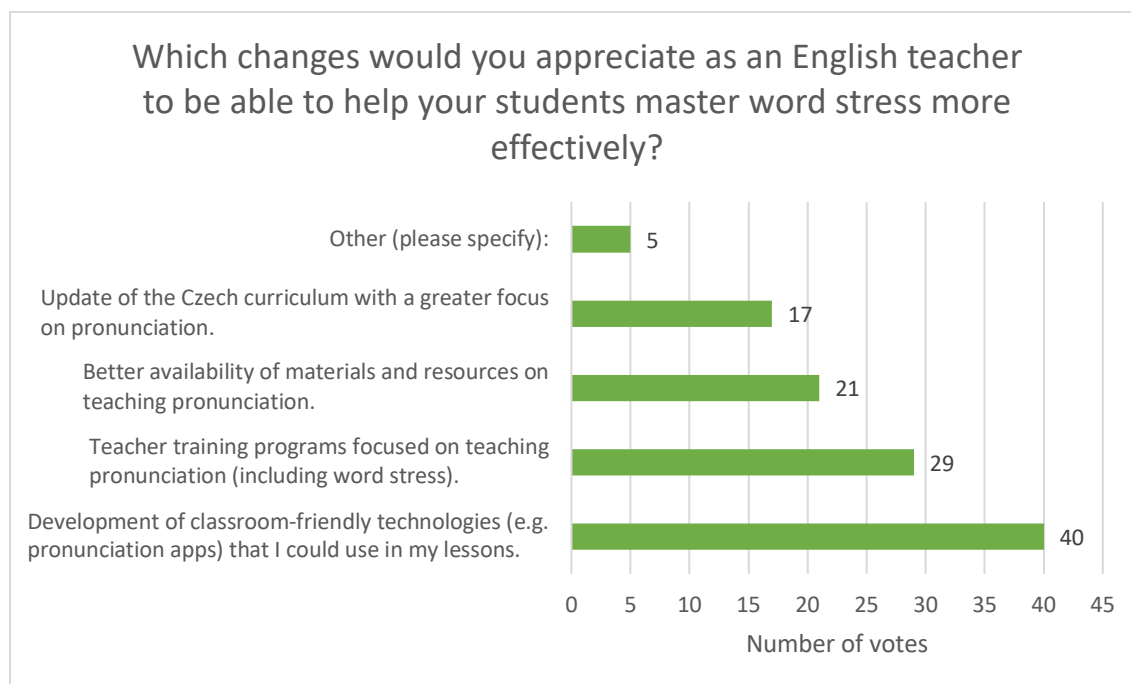

Figure 60: Question n. 17 (Which changes would you appreciate as an English teacher to be able to help your students master word stress more effectively?)

According to the figure above, it is clear that the development of classroom-friendly technologies received the highest number of votes (40 votes; 35,7%). Teacher training programmes focused on pronunciation would be appreciated by 29 respondents (25,9%). Better availability of materials received 21 votes (18,8%), and the update of the Czech curriculum received 17 votes (15,2%). 5 respondents provided specific answers under the *other* option. Out of the 5 respondents, 3 stated that they would not appreciate any changes, and 2 respondents expressed a desire for a greater emphasis on pronunciation teaching during their studies.

7.4   Conclusion

In this section, answers to the research questions will be provided based on the results presented in the previous chapter, along with the presentation of the key findings of the research.

RQ2-1: To what extent do secondary school teachers of English incorporate methods focused on raising word stress awareness in their teaching practice?

In terms of the frequency of using methods focused on word stress, it is clear that the majority of respondents do not include such methods very often. When compared with the frequency of using activities focused on pronunciation in general, the results are very similar. However, regarding pronunciation error correction, the respondents tend to correct pronunciation mistakes more frequently compared to word stress errors.

RQ2-2: Which techniques do secondary school teachers of English use to teach word stress?

We are now moving on to the word stress-focused techniques which respondents most frequently use in their teaching practice. The majority of respondents integrate stress awareness when introducing new vocabulary by pointing out the stress pattern of the word or by choir drilling. This method is considered to be the most effective one, based on respondents' votes. Additionally, many respondents correct word stress errors during speaking tasks, although this method is perceived as moderately effective. Furthermore, half of the respondents integrate stress awareness through listening activities, which is viewed as highly effective. It is important to note that methods such as using gestures (e.g. clapping or tapping out the stress pattern of words) or activities tailored to the needs of students are considered effective but are not commonly used among respondents in practice. Other methods like using visual aids, online resources, or pronunciation applications are not popular among respondents, both in practice and in perceived effectiveness.

RQ2-3: What are the main challenges faced by secondary school English teachers in teaching word stress?

From the results presented in the previous chapter, it is evident that most respondents struggle in some way with teaching pronunciation, including word stress. The main challenges encountered by the respondents in practice are limited time for teaching pronunciation due to the prioritization of other aspects of the English language (e.g. grammar). Additionally, many respondents struggle with students' apparent lack of interest in word stress. Teachers believe that students do not consider word stress to be an important aspect of the English language. Based on the results, these two challenges emerged as the most common in teaching practice. Less common challenges encountered in practice include difficulty in providing individual feedback to students regarding word stress, inadequate training on pronunciation teaching, or uncertainty about the effectiveness of respondents' word stress teaching in practice.

RQ2-4: What are the perceptions of secondary school English teachers on word stress teaching?

An analysis of respondents' perceptions regarding word stress teaching in general has been conducted. The results indicate that respondents consider word stress and vowel articulation to be the most crucial aspects of English pronunciation. This is evidenced by their emphasis on teaching word stress, as they frequently use diverse methods to raise word stress awareness in their lessons. Regarding confidence in word stress, based on the results, respondents feel slightly more confident in their own use of word stress in pronunciation than in teaching word stress to their students.

Furthermore, perceptions regarding the state of English word stress teaching at various secondary schools across the Czech Republic have been examined. The majority of respondents believe that English word stress is taught effectively at their school, although they suggest that there is room for improvement. Some respondents think that English word stress teaching is not effective, and it requires significant improvements, while others perceive the teaching of word stress at their school to be highly effective.

When investigating the presence of exercises specifically targeting word stress in secondary school English textbooks, nearly half of respondents think that there is a sufficient number of exercises focused on word stress in the textbooks they use. Among the most used textbooks in secondary schools are *English File* and *Maturita Solutions*. On the other hand, approximately one-third of respondents feel that the quantity of exercises available in the textbooks is insufficient for effective word stress teaching.

When addressing the potential desired improvements that would be appreciated by the respondents, it is evident that the majority of respondents would appreciate the development of classroom-friendly technologies, such as pronunciation applications. However, based on the results, currently, there are few suitable pronunciation apps, as almost none of the respondents use them in their lessons. Additionally, teacher training programs focused on teaching pronunciation, including word stress, would be welcomed. Furthermore, some respondents would appreciate if the materials and resources focused on teaching word stress were more easily accessible. Interestingly, the curriculum update was chosen only by a few respondents as a desired change, despite the majority previously reporting limited time for teaching pronunciation due to the prioritization of other aspects of the English language. With a curriculum update that places greater emphasis on pronunciation, this struggle could potentially be alleviated.

8   Discussion

The discussion section will delve into comprehensive analysis and interpretation of the findings obtained through the research process. The main research questions will be answered, and the results will be critically analysed and compared within existing research, offering insights into their broader implications on the field.

8.1   Proficiency assessment

The study conducted among secondary school students, aiming to assess their proficiency in word stress placement, brought very satisfying results The students were tested and evaluated in three areas: stress identification in the written form of words, stress identification through auditory perception, and stress placement in pronunciation. In the previous sections of the thesis, the researcher presented the findings and addressed the research sub-questions. In order to offer a clear overview of the most significant results and to answer the main research question number one: *What is the proficiency of secondary school students of Jirásek Grammar School in English word stress placement*?, the results in the three examined areas (written form, auditory perception, and pronunciation) had to be analysed.

The key findings of the research are the following:

- The examination of students' pronunciation accuracy in placing word stress in pronunciation indicates a commendable level of proficiency. The students achieved an overall average accuracy rate of 77%.
- The students demonstrate a commendable level of proficiency in accurately identifying stressed syllables through auditory perception. The average accuracy rate in the identification of stressed syllables reaches 77%.
- The students demonstrate a good level of proficiency in correctly identifying stressed in the written form of words, with an average accuracy level of 70%.
- The overall average accuracy rate in word stress usage reaches 75%, indicating that the students demonstrate a commendable level of proficiency in this aspect of the English language.

Based on findings presented in the previous sections, the best results were achieved in the usage of word stress in pronunciation since the accuracy rates were relatively constant and they never dropped below 60%. Very good results were also achieved in perceiving word stress in auditory perception tasks. The accuracy rates were much more variable, in comparison to pronunciation, but despite this variability, the average results reached the same scores in pronunciation and auditory perception. On the other hand, the worst results were observed in the identification of stressed syllables in the written form of words, where the accuracy rates were highly variable, and students faced difficulties in the identification.

Among the notable trends causing occasional troubles in students' performance were multi-syllable words containing multiple levels of stress, especially in auditory perception students struggled to distinguish between primary and secondary stress. Additionally, a tendency to place stress on the first syllable of words was observed, especially in pronunciation. This suggests that students may have been influenced by the typical stress patterns in their native language. This observation is consistent with assertions made in CEFR (2020) and with the findings discovered by Marešová (2021), as outlined in the theoretical part in Chapter 4.2.

Before the study, it was assumed by the researcher that the accuracy of word stress placement in pronunciation and auditory perception would be higher than in the written form of words. Based on the fact that word stress is an oral aspect of language, the performance in pronunciation and auditory perception was expected to be more intuitive and easier to grasp than recognizing the stress patterns in written form. This assumption was confirmed to be true based on the results of this research. However, the average accuracy rates of word stress placement across all three tasks were proven to be remarkably similar, which indicates a solid understanding of word stress across all investigated areas (written form, auditory perception, and pronunciation).

When comparing the results of our research with other studies carried out in the Czech Republic and discussed in Chapter 4.6, the findings are the following: similar results in word stress pronunciation accuracy were obtained by Mužík (2020). In his research, he examined the students' proficiency in word stress usage in pronunciation. The average scores achieved in word stress placement in pronunciation reached 71%. Furthermore, in the research conducted

by Nováková (2007), the proficiency of word stress placement of secondary school students was examined, the students were able to correctly place primary stress in only 54% of the cases, indicating frequent difficulties in word stress placement in written words.

8.2 Questionnaire

Moving on to the research aiming to draw conclusions regarding the landscape of word stress teaching in secondary English education. For the purpose of the study, a questionnaire was distributed among secondary school English teachers across the Czech Republic. In this part of the thesis, the researcher aims to summarize the key findings and to answer the main research question number two *What is the overall landscape surrounding English word stress teaching in secondary school English education?*

The key findings of the research are as follows:

- The research findings reveal that while word stress is considered important in English language teaching, it faces challenges in its implementation.
- The majority of teachers place a lower emphasis on word stress due to limited time and lack of student interest. However, methods such as pointing out stress patterns during vocabulary introduction and correction during speaking tasks, are used commonly, helping students improve in word stress proficiency.
- While some respondents believe that English word stress is taught effectively at their school, others suggest room for improvement.
- The desired improvements in English word stress teaching include the development of technologies for classroom implementation and increased emphasis on teacher training focused on pronunciation.

The researcher will now provide comments regarding the key findings presented above. As discussed in Chapter 4.3, word stress is a significant aspect of English pronunciation. Celce-Murcia et al. (2010), Roach (2009a.), and Zielinski (2008) claim that incorrect stress placement can lead to misunderstandings. Based on our study's findings, teachers acknowledged the importance of word stress, rating it as the most important aspect of English pronunciation. Additionally, the integration of stress awareness when introducing new vocabulary was

observed to be the most commonly used method for raising awareness of word stress, as indicated by the results. Kelly (2000) emphasizes the necessity of highlighting stress patterns when introducing new vocabulary. Furthermore, the development of technology focused on pronunciation suitable for classroom purposes was voted as the most desired potential improvement. Similarly, the need was also asserted by O'Brien and Levis (2017) in their research discussed in Chapter 4.5.6. Additionally, the desired emphasis on increased training focusing on pronunciation teaching (including word stress), aligns with Murphy's (2014, in Grant, 2014) research findings. He claims that the majority of English language teachers believe that more training in teaching pronunciation is needed.

On the other hand, our findings differ from some of Murphy's (2014) findings, which suggest that teachers lack confidence in teaching features such as stress, intonation or rhythm. According to our results, the teachers feel quite confident in their ability to teach word stress effectively. Furthermore, regarding the curriculum update, Murphy (2014) claims that curriculum development with a greater focus on pronunciation is needed, only a minority of the participants of our research would appreciate such an update.

When comparing the results of our study with existing findings from studies conducted in the Czech Republic, several conclusions can be drawn. Similarly to the results of this study, various approaches to word stress teaching were observed among the teachers participating in Langrová's (2017) study. From both studies, it is evident that the techniques used by teachers for pronunciation teaching are highly variable based on the individual preferences of the teachers. In both studies, participants also claim to provide feedback on pronunciation/word stress errors of their students. However, in Langrová's (2017) research, observations of English lessons revealed that some teachers neglected to provide feedback in practice, despite claiming to do so. This suggests room for further investigation in our research, lesson observations could be carried out to validate the statements made by the teachers in the questionnaire. Additionally, the teachers in our study expressed concerns about students lacking interest in word stress and perceiving word stress as unimportant. Contrary to the results of our study, Nováková (2007) discovered that the majority of students participating in her research lacked the focus on pronunciation practice during English lessons, indicating the opposite results.

CONCLUSION

This diploma thesis addressed various topics related to English word stress and its teaching in English education in the Czech Republic. The aim of the theoretical part was to provide a comprehensive understanding of English word stress and its implementation into educational practice. The practical part aimed to examine the current state of English word stress education in the Czech Republic by evaluating the proficiency of secondary school students in word stress usage. Additionally, it aimed to explore the opinions and perceptions of teachers regarding English word stress teaching.

In the theoretical part, the theoretical background of the topic was presented, beginning with a general description of stress. Secondly, word stress and the principles for its placement in words were explored. Finally, the implementation of word stress in educational practice was addressed. To achieve a deeper understanding of the examined area, the author conducted research presented in the practical part of the thesis. The author assessed the proficiency of secondary school students in accurate word stress placement. Furthermore, questionnaires were distributed to explore the current state of English word stress as perceived by English teachers in the Czech Republic.

The practical part explored the current state of word stress in English education in the Czech Republic through a research study conducted by the researcher. In the proficiency assessment research, the students demonstrated a solid understanding of English word stress in three areas written form, auditory perception and pronunciation, highlighting both strengths and areas for improvement. The study exploring English word stress as perceived by the teachers highlighted the importance of word stress in the English language system. Nevertheless, it also drew attention to the challenges encountered by English teachers when teaching word stress. Additionally, the research offered insights into the perception of the effectiveness of English word stress teaching in Czech secondary schools and identified areas for improvement of English pronunciation teaching as viewed by the teachers.

In conclusion, the findings from the research provide valuable insights into the broader landscape of English word stress education in the Czech Republic, emphasizing the crucial role of English word stress and illustrating the current state of English word stress proficiency

among students, as well as the perception of word stress among teachers. The findings emphasize the need for improvements and further research in English word stress teaching.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Phonological control

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

Appendix 2: Task 1 (Written form)

1. <u>**Podtrhněte slabiku na které je v daném slově nejsilnější přízvuk (slabiku, která je nejvýraznější):**</u>

Příklad: po-<u>ta</u>-to; be-<u>tween</u>

tech-ni-cal	(Adj)
un-der-stand	(V)
phi-los-o-phy	(N)
mag-nif-i-cent	(Adj)
for-give	(V)
op-por-tu-ni-ty	(N)
en-gage-ment	(N)
de-ter-mine	(V)
a-maz-ing	(Adj)
tel-e-phone	(N)
suit-case	(N)
sit-u-a-tion	(N)
tooth-brush	(N)
en-ter-tain	(V)
pho-to-graph	(N)
ba-by-sit	(V)
o-rig-i-nal	(Adj)
ba-na-na	(N)
care-ful	(Adj)
im-prove	(V)

Appendix 3: Task 2 (Auditory perception)

2. <u>**Podle poslechu podtrhněte slabiku na které je v daném slově nejsilnější přízvuk**</u>

<u>**(slabiku, která je nejvýraznější):**</u>

Příklad: po-<u>ta</u>-to; be-<u>tween</u>

ba-na-na	(N)
o-rig-i-nal	(Adj)
tooth-brush	(N)
mag-nif-i-cent	(Adj)
for-give	(V)
op-por-tu-ni-ty	(N)
phi-los-o-phy	(N)
care-ful	(Adj)
en-gage-ment	(N)
en-ter-tain	(V)
de-ter-mine	(V)
a-maz-ing	(Adj)
tel-e-phone	(N)
suit-case	(N)
im-prove	(V)
sit-u-a-tion	(N)
tech-ni-cal	(Adj)
un-der-stand	(V)
pho-to-graph	(N)
ba-by-sit	(V)

Appendix 4: Task 3 (Pronunciation)

1. I think it's amazing how fast children grow up.

2. Just be careful with the suitcase, please.

3. In summer, she often helped babysit the younger children.

4. Can you call me on the telephone later to discuss the details?

5. To improve the quality of our work, we must study carefully and understand the technical aspects of the project.

6. I forgive you for your mistake; let's move forward.

7. The magician's performance was truly magnificent, and he managed to entertain the entire audience.

8. I thought he handled the situation very well.

9. People should be allowed to determine their future.

10. I took a photograph of the sunset yesterday, it was stunning.

11. He studied philosophy in college, and that's why he enjoys discussing deep topics.

12. I always start my day with a healthy breakfast, which includes a banana for a boost of energy.

13. The unexpected job offer came as a great opportunity for him to move on with his career.

14. Their engagement party was filled with original ideas.

15. Don't forget to pack your toothbrush for the trip.

Appendix 5: Questionnaire

1 Are you qualified to be an English teacher?

Nápověda k otázce: *Please select one option.*

☐ Yes, I am qualified.　☐ No, I am not qualified.　☐ I am studying to become a qualified English teacher.

2 How important do you think each aspect of pronunciation is?

Nápověda k otázce: *Please select one option in each line. 1 = not important; 5 = very important*

	1	2	3	4	5
Vowel articulation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Word stress	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Rhythm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Linking	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Intonation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3 How often do you include activities focused on pronunciation in your lessons?

Nápověda k otázce: 1 star = never; 5 stars = in every lesson

☆☆☆☆☆ [   ] / 5

4 How often do you correct pronunciation mistakes of your students?

Nápověda k otázce: 1 star = never; 5 stars = every time I notice a pronunciation mistake

☆☆☆☆☆ [   ] / 5

5 How often do you include activities focused on word stress in your lessons?

Nápověda k otázce: 1 star = never; 5 stars = in every lesson

☆☆☆☆☆ [   ] / 5

6 How often do you correct pronunciation mistakes of your students in word stress?

Nápověda k otázce: 1 star = never; 5 stars = every time I notice a mistake in word stress

☆☆☆☆☆ [   ] / 5

7 How confident do you feel about your ability to use word stress in your pronunciation?

Nápověda k otázce: 1 star = not confident; 5 stars = very confident

☆☆☆☆☆ [   ] / 5

8 How confident do you feel about your ability to teach word stress effectively?

Nápověda k otázce: 1 = not confident; 5 = very confident

☆☆☆☆☆ [   ] / 5

9 How do you teach word stress in your lessons?

Nápověda k otázce: *Please select all options that apply.*

☐ Integrating stress awareness when introducing new vocabulary (e.g. pointing out the stress pattern of new words, word stress choir drilling).

☐ Integrating stress awareness into listening activities.

☐ Correcting pronunciation during speaking tasks.

☐ Using gestures for practising word stress (e.g. clapping or tapping out the stress patterns).

☐ Using pronunciation apps.

☐ Using online resources available on the Internet.

☐ Using visual aids (e.g. stress notation, charts, diagrams, sketches).

☐ Using specific remedial activities tailor-made to the individual needs of the students.

☐ Other (please specify): _____

10 How effective do you think each method for teaching word stress is?

Nápověda k otázce: *Please select one option in each line. 1 = not very effective; 5 = very effective*

	1	2	3	4	5
Integrating stress awareness when introducing new vocabulary (e.g. pointing out the stress pattern of new words, word stress choir drilling).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Integrating stress awareness into listening activities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Correcting pronunciation during speaking tasks.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Using gestures for practising word stress (e.g. clapping or tapping out the stress patterns).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Using pronunciation apps.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Using online resources available on the Internet.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Using visual aids (e.g. stress notation, charts, diagrams, sketches).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Using specific remedial activities tailor-made to the individual needs of the students.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

11 Which techniques of stress notation do you use when dealing with English word stress in your lessons?

Nápověda k otázce: *Please select all options that apply.*

☐ IPA conventions – placing (') or (,) before the stressed syllable (e.g. ba 'nana).

☐ Underlining the stressed syllable.

☐ Highlighting the stressed syllable with colours.

☐ Writing the stressed syllable in capitals (e.g. baNAna).

☐ Circling the stressed syllable.

☐ Using marks (e.g. circles) above or below the stressed syllable.

☐ I don't use any techniques of stress notation.

☐ Other (please specify): [   ]

12 What challenges do you face when teaching word stress?

Nápověda k otázce: *Please select all options that apply.*

☐ Students are not interested in word stress, they do not find it important.

☐ I don't know how to teach word stress effectively.

☐ I don't know how to provide individual feedback on students' progress with word stress.

☐ I don't have much time for pronunciation teaching (including word stress) because I focus more often on other aspects of the English language (e.g. grammar).

☐ English word stress is too complex to be taught systematically.

☐ I think that I didn't get enough teacher training focused on teaching pronunciation.

☐ I don't know where to find suitable resources or materials.

☐ I don't face any challenges when teaching word stress.

☐ Other (please specify): [   ]

13 Which textbooks do you use in your lessons?

Nápověda k otázce: *Please select one or more options.*

- ☐ Maturita Solutions
- ☐ English File
- ☐ New Headway
- ☐ Straightforward
- ☐ Gateway
- ☐ English Plus
- ☐ Insight
- ☐ Focus
- ☐ Gold Experience
- ☐ Interactive
- ☐ Lifestyle
- ☐ Real Life
- ☐ Cambridge English Empower
- ☐ English in Mind
- ☐ Eyes Open
- ☐ New Inside Out
- ☐ Roadmap
- ☐ Success
- ☐ Cutting Edge
- ☐ Face2face
- ☐ Horizons
- ☐ Opportunities
- ☐ Speakout
- ☐ Life Vision
- ☐ Chill out
- ☐ Outcomes
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

14 Do you think that the number of exercises focusing on word stress available in the textbooks you use is sufficient?

Nápověda k otázce: *Please select one option.*

☐ Yes, there are enough exercises on word stress in our textbooks.

☐ No, there are not enough exercises on word stress in our textbooks.

☐ I don't know.

15 Would you be able to find some additional exercises or activities focusing on word stress on the internet?

Nápověda k otázce: *Please select one option.*

☐ Yes, I would be able to find some additional exercises or activities focusing on word stress on the Internet.

☐ No, I would not be able to find additional exercises or activities focusing on word stress on the Internet, because I am not sure how or where to look.

☐ I don't know.

16 Do you think that English word stress is taught effectively at your school?

Nápověda k otázce: *Please select one option.*

☐ Yes, I think that English word stress is taught very effectively at our school.

☐ I think that teaching of English words stress at our school is somehow effective but could be improved.

☐ No, I do not think that English word stress is taught effectively at our school, and I think it needs significant improvement.

☐ I don't know.

17 Which changes would you appreciate as an English teacher to be able to help your students master word stress more effectively?

Nápověda k otázce: *Please select all options that apply.*

☐ Development of classroom-friendly technologies (e.g. pronunciation apps) that I could use in my lessons.

☐ Teacher training programs focused on teaching pronunciation (including word stress).

☐ Update of the Czech curriculum with a greater focus on pronunciation.

☐ Better availability of materials and resources on teaching pronunciation.

☐ Other (please specify): _____