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Thesis

**DIFFICULTIES IN TEACHING SPEAKING SKILLS TO ADULT ENGLISH
LEARNERS**

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Tato stránka bude ve svázané práci Váš původní formulář *Zadáni dipl. práce*

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V Plzni dne 30. června 2013

.....
Martin Matějček

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ABSTRACT

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The thesis deals with the topic of difficulties in teaching speaking skills to adult learners. In the background chapter, the characteristics of adult learners together with differences in teaching them in comparison to the young are explained as well as the theory necessary for further research. The most important part is dedicated to the role of adult learners' experiences and language learning expectations together with the difficulties they may meet while learning English. The theoretical part deals also with the communicative approach and especially with the teachers' and learners' roles in the process of teaching and learning the English language focusing on the differences between young and adult learners. The conducted research in language schools is described in the second part of this thesis. The data collected via questionnaires describe adult learners' attitudes towards language learning and especially towards difficulties they consider significant and influential. Based on the results, it is concluded that the respondents as a sample representing adult learners meet theoretical assumptions about attitude to language learning, their expectations from the teachers or difficulties they meet while learning English, described in various literal sources but their opinions differ in some points.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Probably every person learning foreign languages meets difficulties in some aspects of the language. Some learners find difficulties in pronunciation, others in grammatical differences or spelling etc. Some people may study more foreign languages and some may have to study a foreign language they have already studied in their past and have forgotten, or they may have never studied it before. In every case, adult learners may notice certain difficulties and differences in learning a language in comparison to younger learners. What causes difficulties and what differences may appear when comparing adult learners to the young in speaking skills is one of the topics being discussed in this thesis.

There has been written a huge number of literal works focussing on the matter of adult learners. In various sources, it is possible to find plenty of information about adult learners' characteristics, differences in approaching them, and especially the specific of the way adult learners learn, difficulties they may struggle etc. The purpose of this thesis is to examine whether the information from literal sources meet the praxis or, possibly, in which aspects there appear differences and how significant they may be regarding the results of adult learners' improvement of their speaking skills.

The Theoretical Background Chapter starts with the basic characteristics of adult learners described with the role of their experiences and expectations of the learning process. The influence of adult learners' worries about making mistakes and their motives to learning are also discussed. Next, the differences between second and first language acquisition are explained together with the differences between acquisition and learning, emphasizing age as an individual learner difference. After that, the theory of language learning strategies is briefly described including a description of advantages and disadvantages of each of them. And finally, the principles of the Communicative Approach, together with difficulties, teachers' and learners' roles are described.

In the Results and Commentaries Chapter, data collected via questionnaires given to 43 adult learners of various age and levels of English are analysed and the results are commented on, quantified and supported with several graphs and tables. The questions from the questionnaires are mentioned one by one with careful analysis of the results and comparison to the theory presented in the Theoretical Background. In the Conclusion chapter, the main points and information are reviewed.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The objective of the theoretical part is to present basic information about the topic of adult learners and specifics of the development of their speaking skills. First, adult learner's characteristics are introduced together with a brief list of several facts teachers may meet and deal with while teaching adult learners. Various elements having influence on adult learners' speaking skills are discussed. They are followed by a brief presentation of the theory of Second Language Acquisition compared with learning. Then, a list of language learning strategies is presented with their pros and cons. At the end of the chapter, the theory of the Communicative Approach is introduced with its crucial principles of language teaching.

Adult Learner's Characteristics

This thesis is focused on adult learners and particular difficulties they may face while learning speaking skills. In this part the basic characteristics of adult learners followed by their expectations, motives and motivation are described. Even if there is an extent amount of sources dealing with adult learners, the basic definition of an adult learner tends to be similar. Baker (2004) presents: "the psychological definition is one who has arrived at a self-concept of being responsible for one's own life, of being self-directed" (p.6). Another definition considers the minimum age from 18 to 25 varying from one country to another. Mostly, the definition of adult learners considers their age, social status and different life conditions from young learners. These life conditions are highly individual. Nevertheless, they tend to affect the adult learners' way of studying. As Baker (2004) presents: "Instructors must be aware of these differences with selecting course activities and planning class sessions to better attend to the needs of all of their learners" (p.6).

Andragogy

It is necessary to mention the special part of pedagogical science focused on adult learners which is the andragogy. Andragogy is a relatively young field of pedagogical science. Baker (2004) says that "Malcolm Knowles began working on his andragogy theory of adult learning (and) published his results in his revolutionary book, *The Adult Learner: A Neglected Species* in 1973" (p.7). Baker (2004) further explains the term andragogy as "the art and science of teaching adults" (p.7).

Adult learners' experience

Every adult learner has his or her own experience with learning processes and this experience may strongly affect their expectations of a course. Rogers (1977) comments on this: "Inevitably, these expectations are governed very largely by their experience of education as a child, and these experiences will considerably influence the way tutors are able to conduct the class" (p.21). Baker (2004) says: "Most adults have a fully formed self-image and tend to become resentful when these images are not valued in a learning situation" (p.7). Silfen (2011) adds: "The adult learners' past experience is integrated into their concept and self-esteem. They need to feel their past experience is respected and valued by others" (p.9). If an adult learner has experienced rather inefficient teaching their expectation can hardly differ from such experience. Some adult learners may have experienced lessons full of interesting tasks, variability in exercises, teacher's friendly attitude etc. However, Rogers (1977) mentions that "...many adult students may still feel a teacher ought to be a rather remote, god-like figure. They may consider it rather improper for a teacher to be too friendly" (p.22). So, the friendly atmosphere may seem less important than the other aspects of the teaching process.

Further, Rogers (1977) comments the role of adult previous experience and says:

A student who has been out of touch with education for a long time, or who is under a misapprehension about 'modern' methods, may fiercely resist your attempts to introduce a different kind of education, even though, paradoxically, the 'new' methods may be clearly both more enjoyable and in the long run more effective. (p.23)

The situation described happens because of adult learners' blind belief that the unsuitable methods were applied but their weak effort and learning is the cause of their previous failure. Adult learners would rather blame themselves, but they tend to insist on the methods they are familiar with not to step into unfamiliar environment which may bring more difficulties and a possible failure.

Silfen (2011) further describes the way learners used to be taught and learned a language: "When past experiences can be applied directly to present experiences, learning is facilitated. Older adults tend to rely more on past experience" (p.9). Adult learners tend to build new information on that they have already placed in their inner system of other

information. This makes their learning very systematic. In Baker (2004) it is mentioned: "Adults need to feel as if their life experience is important as it helps them make connections between old and new knowledge" (p.8). This may be considered as an advantage a teacher may use in the class. However, many adults tend to think only in the range of their previous (and reliable) experience which may close the door to a different way of thinking. Rogers (1977) finds adults having: "well-developed ideas about life along with our own systems of ideas and beliefs. To admit that we need to learn something new is to admit that there is something wrong with our present system" (p.12). This is another significant feature which makes adult learners different from younger learners. For instance, secondary-school learners accept changes in their system much more easily and do not even understand this change being their failure. As Baker (2004) further comments, "it is more difficult to unlearn something than it is to learn it in the first place, so adult educators must be prepared for some discomfort in the learning process" (p.9). Therefore a teacher of adult learners should focus on extending adult ways of thinking and opening their minds. Still, as Hayes (2006) writes: "Suggesting that our students need to modify their attitudes can be a danger area" (p.6).

Adult learners' expectations

Probably one of the most important expectations adult learners keep in their mind is to achieve their learning goal. As Hayes (2006) comments: "We should never assume that these (goals) are identical to the course objectives" (p.9). Adult learners wish to put theoretical knowledge from the class into practice and therefore a teacher of adult learners may often face their resistance or lack of interest when dealing with the part of a language which the adult learners consider unimportant or useless. It is very helpful to discuss needs with adult learners to achieve optimal content of their learning. Silfen (2011) says: "Adults learn when they assess their own learning needs, and plan their own objectives" (p.9). According to Thoms (n.d.) "Adults...want a learning outcome which can be put to use immediately, in concrete, practical, and self-benefiting terms" (p.5). In comparison to younger learners, adult learners usually are aware of the goal they are about to achieve. The reason why to learn something is for them as essential as it is for a teacher to find out their needs and goals before the course even starts to achieve the best results. Being aware of this, teachers may then avoid unpleasant questions from their learners: "Is it practical?" (Fogarty, 2004, p.8).

As Silfen (2011) states in her book: "Adults learn best... [when] they feel the instructor accepts and values them as individuals" (p.9). In one to one classes in general, the major advantage for both the teacher and the learner is the possibility to focus directly on the individual needs, e.g. a subject matter, a grammatical feature etc., and mainly the learning tempo is highly individual and depends fully on the learner. Silfen (2011) adds: "Adults tend to learn best when setting their own pace rather than under time constraints" (p.9). This is much more difficult to meet in courses for more adult learners whose only relating feature is their language level. Still, adult learners strongly need to feel an individual approach from their teacher.

Furthermore it is equally important for adult learners to be treated with respect. According to Hayes (2006) "This means we need to manage the classroom so that some students do not dominate... Offensive behaviour...must be dealt with swiftly and effectively" (p.10). Not only teachers should be careful about their students' behaviour and comments but they should also be aware of the comments they pronounce themselves not to sound sarcastic or bitter.

Baker (2004) describes another significant feature of adult learners: "Adults want to learn to solve or address a particular problem, and are more satisfied with their learning if everyday experience is practical, or is current" (p.8). While young learners do not inquire about the usage of a particular subject matter very often, adult learners accept mostly the subject matter closely connected with their everyday life and especially their working needs. Silfen (2011) adds: "Adults learn when they see the direct connection between what is being taught and how it can be immediately used in everyday life, job, or problems" (p.9). It is advisable to use as many materials connected with every day life as possible.

Another expectation of adult learners concerns their teachers. Hayes (2006) writes: "Students expect to be taught by someone they can respect, who is passionate about their subject and inspires them" (p.8). Not only adult learners expect a certain level of proficiency but they also want their teachers to be punctual and prepared for every particular lesson. Even though this expectation does not differ much from younger learners, it is still very important for teachers to realize the necessity of meeting such expectations.

Making mistakes

As mentioned in Rogers' book (1977) : "One of the most striking features of adult students [is]: their anxiety that they might be making themselves look foolish, or that they might be exposing themselves to failure" (p.9). As this author further explains in her book, this anxiety has its origin in "a rise in the level of free fatty acids in the blood as the learning proceeds... Free fatty acids are a good measure of emotional stress, and a high level can in itself prevent people learning efficiently" (Rogers, 1977, p.10). Consequently, the more adult learners tend to feel stressed the stronger influence on their results this stress may have.

Adult learners seem to be obsessed with the idea that making mistakes equals to presenting their poor knowledge for which they can be degraded. "After being tested, older subjects almost always ask how they have done and demand to know how their results compare with the average" (Rogers, 1977, p.16).

However, it is possible to find pros of this higher tendency to feel worried about making mistakes, too. As Rogers (1977) comments: "...some tension is always likely to be present when adults are learning, and that this tension is likely to increase and to be more of a handicap the older the students are and the greater the pressure that is put upon them" (p.12). A bit of stress may help some learners to better performance, regardless of their age.

It is often advised not to correct the learners immediately when they make a mistake. It is suggested not to correct students' mistakes until they finish their speech. However, some adult learners may prefer to be corrected immediately when a mistake occurs. It is good to find out whether the students wish to be corrected immediately or after they finish their speech at the very beginning of a course. Still, it is up to the teachers to inform their learners about the importance of correcting mistakes and to find the optimal way of handling with mistakes.

True or not, to avoid bigger difficulties connected with adult learners' anxiety not to make mistakes, the process of learning should take place in a calm environment and friendly atmosphere. It is up to teachers to provide their learners with as friendly atmosphere in the class as possible. Amanda Hayes (2006) comments: "We need to be

sensitive to situations in which a student may be struggling but is reluctant to ask for help" (p.5). As she further claims, the best layout of the learners' seats is "a circle or a horseshoe" (Hayes, 2006, p.10) to achieve learners' feeling of equality when they are able to see each other clearly. Thoms (n.d.) suggests one of the techniques connected with classroom management: "Let the students work in groups, since they would rather ask other students for assistance rather than ask the course instructor" (p.6). The teachers' attitude to the whole process of teaching including employing various (interesting) techniques and materials for the learners is very important to make their learning as accessible and pleasant as possible. And of course the teacher's personal qualities, e.g. strong responsibility, sense of humour, reliability, education and real interest in teaching etc., are important, too. Rogers (1977) further suggests that "...encouraging remarks from a tutor may have their place, but there is nothing to equal the encouragement students feel when they can see for themselves that they are making progress" (p.19). It is very important to adjust the difficulty of learning so that every student is able to achieve his or her success.

Adult learners' motivation and motives

Motivation is a very important factor strongly influencing the learner's studies, activities and results in general. According to Macmillan Explanatory Dictionary, motivation is: "a feeling of enthusiasm or interest that makes you determined to do something." Oxford Explanatory Dictionary describes this term in a similar way: "a reason or reasons for acting or behaving in a particular way." Wlodkowski (2008) writes: "Motivation is important not only because it apparently improves learning but also because it mediates learning and is a consequence of learning as well" (ch.1). Once an adult learner experiences the success in learning they are more likely to keep learning and succeed in the future, too. Therefore the role of a teacher as a "motivation provider" can-not be underestimated. Hayes (2006) adds: "We need to ensure that students feel stimulated and involved. A good lecturer employs a variety of teaching methods and resources to ensure that all students are actively engaged throughout the session" (p.9).

However, as Wlodkowski (2008) further adds: "...although some degree of motivation is necessary for learning, other factors...are also necessary for learning to occur" (ch.1). The other factors may be of a different kind. Wlodowski (2008) mentions personal skills and the quality of instruction, sufficient knowledge of a topic or a subject may also play its role.

Still, it is much easier to teach motivated learners and to allow them to cooperate on fulfilling particular tasks. They care much more about their improvement. They wish to complete every given task and to achieve better results and also feel much stronger satisfaction when meeting success. Wlodkowski (2008) adds:

People work longer and with more intensity when they are motivated than when they are not (especially if there are obstacles). Motivated learners care more and concentrate better while they expend effort, and they are more cooperative. They are therefore more psychologically open to the learning material and better able to process information. It is much easier to understand what you want to understand. (ch.1)

One of the most significant differences between adult and younger learners is their motives for learning a language. While learning a language is mostly obligatory for young learners, it is important to realize that adults are voluntary learners, even if some of them may attend the course only because their employer made them to. According to Silfen (2011), no matter what motives make them want to study, they attend if they are interested. If they are not interested, they stop attending. They enroll largely in response to pressures they feel from their current life situation.

Baker (2004) divides the circumstances which bring adult learners to learn a language into several sections. 'The category of life (affect) circumstances' include (e.g.) divorce, death of a spouse and retirement. 'The category of work status changes' include job loss or promotion, and finally 'the category of career changes' (p.10). Adult learners may need to improve their language skills e.g. for their promotion or simply to enter a new career in which a language certificate is required. Rogers (1977) adds another motif: "More money may automatically be offered to people who have attended a course or achieved a qualification" (p.30). For all these reasons, adult learners may feel under some pressure, especially when their success in the language course has an immediate effect on their career. In comparison to young learners of school age, adult learners usually have to pay for a language course and that is why there are much more interested in the efficiency of their course. Fogarty (2004) adds:

Time is a priority, and adult learners want to know that the time they spend in a training, seminar or workshop is being well spent. They want a well-

organized, high-level activity that speaks to their immediate, perceived, or "reorganized" need. (p.7)

The issue of time brings another difference between adult and young learners. While young learners wish the time spent at school desks to be as short as possible, adult learners pay attention to the time as to the rate of their improvement. As Silfen (2011) mentions, adult learners more likely tend to understand the time spent in the class as a kind of investment calculating the money they spent with the results they achieve.

Time is also important when considering the individual pace of learning. As quoted above, "Adults tend to learn best when setting their own pace rather than under time constraints" (Silfen, 2011, p.9). Rogers (1977) writes, it is useful to apply self-study techniques in teaching adult learners to support their independence in both pace and topics. (p.45).

To sum up, adult learners rely on their previous experience, in different expectations of the course including achieving their individual goals, feeling of individual approach from their teacher, and meeting the direct connection between what is being taught with their everyday life, in different teachers' attitude to correcting adult learners' mistakes, and finally in adult learners' motives to learn a language.

Second Language Acquisition

When dealing with teaching and learning speaking skills, it is important to explain the basic theory of SLA (Second Language Acquisition) to understand the process of how a second language is learnt to understand the issues (adult) learners may face.

The definition of SLA

Second language acquisitions (SLA) is a process of acquiring a knowledge of a second language which is different from their mother tongue. However, as Ellis (1991) says, it is not a uniform and predictable phenomenon (p.4). SLA The process of acquiring a new language may differ one student from another. Ellis (1991) further comments:

...although the variability and individuality of language learning need to be emphasized, the study of SLA assumes interest only if it is possible to identify aspects that are relatively stable and hence generalizable, if not to

all learners, then at least, to large groups of learners. The term 'second language acquisition' is used to refer to these general aspects. (p.4)

Ellis (1991) explains that SLA "refers to the subconscious or conscious processes by which a language other than the mother tongue is learnt in a natural or a tutored setting" (p.6).

SLA vs first language acquisition

Second language acquisition is often compared with the first language acquisition (L1). While the first language acquisition is the process starting with the first words babies hear from their parents, L2 acquisition starts usually much later (excluding rather rare examples of multi-lingual families).

Ellis (1991) says: "It is a popular belief that second language acquisition (SLA) is strongly influenced by the learner's first language" (p.19). As he further claims, "the clearest support for this belief comes from 'foreign' accents in the second language (L2) speech of learners" (p.19). L1 doesn't seem to affect only the phonetic part of L2 but it also affects its grammar and vocabulary. Ellis (1991) also presents another popular belief that "the role of the L1 in SLA is a negative one" (p.19) because the learners tend to use L2 in the same way they use L1. Such learners may meet lots of problems when acquiring L2 relying only on their knowledge and habits of L1. However, Krashen (1987) claims that the role of L1 in SLA may in many cases present some advantages, too. "One obvious advantage is that the use of an L1 rule allows the performer to 'outperform his competence' to meet the practical need in L2 communication before he has acquired the relevant...rule" (p.27). This reality is described by the term "positive transfer" which reflects the identity of L1 and L2 rule. Krashen further presents that "even if the L1 rule is not the same as the L2 rule,...the performer...can still communicate his point despite the incorrect form" (p.27-28). And he further continues: "Another advantage is that the early production allowed by the use of L1 rules also helps to invite input...and thus more second language acquisition" (p.28).

Ellis (1991) writes that there is no agreement among the authors examining SLA. While some believe in strong influence of L1, other claim there is no connection between L1 and L2. Ellis (1991) argues: "The learner's L1 is an important determinant of SLA. It is not the only determinant, however, and may not be the most important" (p.40) and he explains that "the L1 is a resource of knowledge which learners will use both consciously

and subconsciously to help them sift the L2 data in the input and to perform as best as they can in the L2" (Ellis, 1991, p.40). Krashen (2002) also mentions the role of the first language as "one of several sources of error" (p.64), which is good to keep in mind when dealing with errors learners meet in L2. The strongest errors may be seen e.g. in complex word order, translation word-for-word etc.

Acquisition vs learning

These two terms are discussed as rather different processes even if achieving similar or even the same results. As Ellis (1991) comments: "The term 'acquisition' is used to refer to picking up a second language through exposure, whereas the term 'learning' is used to refer to the conscious study of a second language" (p.6). According to this notion, when a person meets an L2 utterance it does not mean he or she also learns it until it is a conscious process of studying it. Krashen (1987) describes the term acquisition as a "process similar, if not identical, to the way children develop ability in their first language" (p.10). Krashen (1987) stands the same opinion as Ellis when commenting: "Language acquisition is a subconscious process; language acquirers are not usually aware of the fact that they are acquiring language, but are only aware of the fact that they are using the language for communication" (p.10). Therefore, SLA does not equal to learning L2 at school or in a language course. Krashen (2002) further comments to SLA:

Language acquisition is very similar to the process children use in acquiring first and second languages. It requires meaningful interaction in the target language--natural communication--in which speakers are concerned not with the form of their utterances but with the messages they are conveying and understanding. (p.1)

Krashen (1987) claims that "we are generally not consciously aware of the rules of the languages we have acquired. Instead, we have a 'feel' for correctness". Simply, L2 utterances sound correct even if the person acquiring L2 is not aware of any grammatical rules. Further Krashen mentions that some "language theorists have assumed that children acquire, while adults can only learn" (p.10). However, adult learners also tend to acquire a language, so this ability of SLA does not disappear when young learners become adults.

While the rules of using a language in SLA are not so important, to define learning it is necessary to be aware of such rules. Krashen (1987) uses the term learning "to refer to

conscious knowledge of a second language, knowing the rules, being aware of them and being able to talk about them" (p.10). Krashen further simplifies the term "learning" to understand it as "knowing about a language" (p.10).

Krashen (1987) further presents another hypothesis of learning coming "into play only to make changes in the form of our utterance, after it has been 'produced' by the acquired system" (p.15). He explains that conscious learning has only a limited role in SLA: "a performer may not fully utilize his conscious grammar" when they have only insufficient time due to the "normal conversation does not allow enough time to think about and use rules" (p.16). In Krashen (1987) another inevitable condition is mentioned that "the performer must also be focussed on form, or thinking about correctness" and even if the students were exposed to an extend amount of grammatical rules "we know that even the best students do not learn every rule they are exposed to (p.16).

Age as an individual learner difference and SLA

There are many individual learner differences mentioned in various texts. Focusing on the major topic of this thesis, however, age is one of the most important individual differences to discuss. In Ellis (1991), it is possible to read that "age is the variable that has been most frequently considered in discussions of individual differences in SLA" (p.104). A common opinion is to assume "younger acquirers are better at second language acquisition than older acquirers" (Krashen, 1987, p.43). This statement is very popular but it is important to distinguish certain differences. Ellis (1991) mentions the importance of separating "the effect of age on the route of SLA from the effects of age on the rate or success of SLA" (p.105). Most of the linguist studies dealing with SLA were only focused on learners' success when comparing age and period of learning to the level achieved after this period. First, when considering the route of acquisition, earlier studies suggested certain differences. However, Ellis (1991) writes, mentioning several scientific studies: "learners appear to process linguistic data in the same way, irrespective of how old they are" (p.105). Second, considering rate in SLA, adult learners seem to be ahead. Ellis(1991) explains: "if learners at different ages are matched according to the amount of time they have been exposed to the L2, it is the older learners, who reach higher levels of proficiency" (p.105). Krashen (1987) supports this notion when presenting three basic generalizations concluded from "all published studies":

1. Adults proceed through the early stages of second language development faster than children do (where time and exposure are held constant).
2. Older children acquire faster than younger children, time and exposure held constant.
3. Acquirers who begin natural exposure to second languages during childhood generally achieve higher second language proficiency than those beginning as adults. (p.43)

However, Ellis (1991) further adds that even if "age improves language learning capacity, performance may peak in the teens, after which performance declines" (p.105). This notion presents the fact, that not adult but teen-age learners achieve the best results. Another important limitation to this notion is that "age was a factor only when it came to morphology and syntax" (Ellis, 1991, p.105). So, when dealing e.g. with pronunciation or other features of L2, this argument is rather unsatisfactory.

Krashen (1987) presents another interesting fact when describing the way a small child is exposed to a language having a specific characteristics: "caretaker speech...is not deliberate attempt to teach language...(but it) is modified in order to aid comprehension. Caretakers talk 'simpler' in an effort to make themselves understood by the child" (p.22). This is an interesting fact that differs the acquisition of a language of a small baby from adult learners, too.

According to Krashen (1987) another significant difference between young and adult L2 learners is that older learners have more "conversational competence" (p.44). Older learners simply have better tools to regulate their input and as Krashen further explains: "it is likely that older acquirers actually get more comprehended input, and this may be a key factor in their faster initial progress" (p.44).

Teacher's role

It is possible to describe teachers' role from different points of view. From one of them, teachers are providers of knowledge to their students. They decide what to teach when preparing a teaching plan, and which tools to use to make their students learn. They also create conditions in which the process of learning takes place. They choose not only among various activities, but also think about the most suitable classroom management to

achieve cooperation and learning. Briefly said, being a teacher includes a lot of tasks and responsibilities. In SLA, however, it is important to be aware of certain facts. Ellis (1991) says that "unless we know for certain that the teacher's scheme really does match the learner's own way of going about things, we cannot be sure that the teaching content will contribute directly to language learning" (introduction 1). And further Ellis (1991) says that "there is no guarantee that the methodological principles which the teacher chooses to follow will conform to the way in which the learner learns the language" (introduction 2). According to these claims, even if teaching responsibly, the planned result of learning is rather insecure. Due to the difference between learning and acquisition, teacher's role in SLA is mainly to provide their learners with as many examples of the target language as possible and with as many opportunities to use this language as possible.

Language Learning Strategies

The term Language Learning Strategies refers to a set of actions learners use to achieve a success and improvement while learning languages. Rebecca L. Oxford (2003) describes this term as "specific actions, behaviours, steps, or techniques used by students to enhance their own learning" (p.2). As she further mentions, by choosing strategies fitting individual students' learning styles, these strategies become a useful toolkit for active, conscious, and purposeful self-regulation of learning. In fact, choosing a specific learning strategy can strongly influence the way of learning as well as its results.

There are several conditions which make a strategy to become positive and helpful. Oxford (2003) presents three of them: "(a) the strategy relates well to the L2 task at hand, (b) the strategy fits the particular student's learning style preferences to one degree or another, and (c) the student employs the strategy effectively and links it with other relevant strategies" (p.8). With these conditions, learning itself may become much easier, faster and more self-directed. Furthermore, learners may become more independent and autonomous which is important especially for adult learners. Unfortunately, learners may not be aware of an effective usage of learning strategies and therefore it should be up to teachers to help their learners find and use optimal strategies for various situations.

Obviously, learning strategies differ from one learner to another as learners are highly individual. Nevertheless, it is possible to find some similarities according to which

we may classify the strategies into six basic groups. Oxford (2003) classifies the strategies as follows: "cognitive, metacognitive, memory-related, compensatory, affective, and social" (p.2). Furthermore, a similar classification mentions Deepak K. Samida (n.d.) in her article about Learning Language Strategies when dividing these six strategies into Direct (for Memory strategies, Cognitive strategies and Compensation strategies) which "are beneficial to the students because they help store and recover information...[and] help learners to produce language even when there is gap in knowledge" (p.2) And Indirect (with Metacognitive, Affective and Social strategies) which, as Samida (n.d.) writes, "help learner regulate the learning process...[and they] support and manage language learning without direct engagement" (p.3). She adds that "effective listeners [use] three specific strategies: self monitoring, elaboration, and inferences while ineffective listeners [are] concerned with the meaning of individual words" (p.1). Further, a brief description of each group of strategies is presented.

Cognitive strategies

Cognitive strategies are one of the most popular strategies used by language learners. They are used to comprehend the meaning and expression of the target language. As Oxford (2003) claims "the target language is manipulated or transformed by repeating, analysing or summarizing" (p.3). The concrete examples of cognitive strategies are e.g. practising, receiving and sending messages, analysing and reasoning, creating structure for input and output. Oxford (2003) says, that especially "adult learners commonly use analysing and reasoning strategies" (p.3) as these strategies are similar to those used in their real life.

Metacognitive strategies

These strategies are used to coordinate the learning process of language learners to achieve more satisfactory results as they help them to plan their learning efficiently. Oxford (2003) mentions three basic sets of metacognitive strategies. Centring ones' learning describes the situation in which learners pay attention to certain language activities or skills. Arranging and Planning ones' Learning describes the learners' focus on organizing their learning to improve. Evaluating students' learning helps learners to understand their errors or improvement in time. Linguists tend to claim that metacognitive

strategies are used more rarely in comparison to cognitive strategies even if they help to identify one's own preferences and needs when learning.

Memory-related strategies

Memory-related strategies are often used to memorize vocabulary or grammatical structures in the beginning stages of language learning. As written in Oxford (2003), "memory strategies are based on simple principles like laying things out in order, making association, and reviewing" (p.2). Memory-related strategies may be connected with visual images, sounds, motion or touch to help learners remember a specific item. However, Oxford (2003) warns that "as the learners advance to higher level of proficiency memory strategies are mentioned very little" (p.2). This may happen due to the fact that their vocabulary and grammatical knowledge extend.

Compensatory strategies

These strategies take place in cases when learners meet some deficiency in their knowledge of vocabulary, for instance. "When learners do not know new words and expressions, they guess the meaning. A learner brings own life experience to interpret data by guessing" (Oxford, 2003, p.3). Adult learners may tend to rely on compensatory strategies more often as their life experience is richer than of younger ones.

Affective strategies

Affective strategies are very important as they represent the main factor influencing emotions, motivation and attitude to learning in general. Oxford (2003) mentions several basic sets of strategies, such as lowering your anxiety, encouraging yourself, taking your emotional temperature etc. (p.3). She further comments:

Good language learner control their attitudes and emotions about learning and understand that negative feelings retard learning. Teachers can help generate positive feelings in class by giving students more responsibility, increasing amount of natural communication, and teaching affective strategies. (Oxford, 2003, p.4)

As Oxford said, it is good to be aware of positive as well as negative effects of emotions on the results of learning to maximize learners' improvement.

Social strategies

This set of strategies belongs to the most important when dealing with learning communication. Oxford (2003) presents three basic sets of strategies: Asking Questions, Cooperating with others, and Empathizing with Others (p.5). Mentioning these, the first set of strategies seems to be the most important one as it help to understand the meaning and it also helps to go on with communication as it shows one's interest and involvement.

Cooperation among learners brings lots of benefits. Oxford (2003) says that: "the cooperative learning results in higher self-esteem, increase confidence, and rapid achievement" (p.5). Furthermore, in comparison with cooperation, competition as another social strategy may bring rather negative features such as fear and anxiety about making mistakes or performing worse results than one's classmates. As Oxford (2003) claims, "it is important to help learners change their attitudes from confrontation and competition to cooperation" (p.5) to achieve better results. Especially adult learners tend to worry about their performance being watched and listened to by other learners. Cooperation may therefore be the way how to eliminate their worries and anxiety to use the language.

Conclusion

To conclude the theory of language learning strategies, it is helpful to be aware of those influences affecting the way of learning to achieve as sufficient results as possible. This awareness is important for both teachers as well as their learners. To use a suitable strategy for specific purpose helps learners to minimize the negative influences on their language learning and to develop their communicative competence, regardless of learners age. The only influence of learners' age seems to be the more common use of compensatory strategies as adults have simply larger experience available to be used while learning. It also helps to teachers to provide their learners with suitable activities and techniques to make their learning easier. In the practical part of this thesis, various questions are given to find out individual preferences in using specific strategies while learning.

Teaching English as the Second Language - Communicative Approach

Definition

Throughout the history of language teaching, teachers all around the world have faced the issue of finding the most optimal and effective way of teaching. There exist lots of sources dealing with teaching theory comparing specific teaching methods and approaches including many different techniques. This thesis is focused on difficulties in teaching speaking skills and therefore it is important to mention especially the theory of the communicative approach as an example of a modern trend in teaching foreign languages.

The origin of communicative approach is possible to find in late 1970's. As Howatt (2009) says in his book, due to the massive spread of English usage all around the world led to "the need to re-think the underlying assumptions of the pedagogical enterprise itself in order to identify a rationale for relating form to meaning in the real world of language use (p.326). As Diane Larsen-Freeman mentions in her book *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching* (2000):

Educators began to question if they were going about meeting the goal in the right way. Some observed that students could produce sentences accurately in a lesson, but could not use them appropriately when genuinely communicating outside the classroom (p.123).

The result of such re-thinking has been the communicative approach which brought huge emphasis on the practical use of second languages. Howatt (2009) further mentions the term 'functionalism' which refers to the relationship between a language and the language use. It is a fundamental term describing the basics of the communicative approach in language teaching while regarding to the language usage to communicate properly, emphasising the function not a proper content of the particular speech. Larsen-Freeman (2000) calls this effective communication "the communicative competence" which is compared to the linguistic one. As she presents, "being able to figure out the speaker's or writer's intentions is part of being communicatively competent" (p.125).

To conclude, the major difference comparing the communicative approach to the former approaches and methods of L2 teaching is the focus on the communicative correctness rather than the grammatical. For teachers, the main goal is to bring their learners to use and master the language to communicate.

Principles

One of the basic principles of the communicative approach is the authenticity of language used in a real context. It is advised to the teachers to use authentic materials as often as possible. This corresponds to the need of many adult learners to connect the study material and their real life. Especially adult learners evaluate the study material used in their classes according to the chance to use it in their life. From this standpoint, communication is purposeful.

As Larsen-Freeman (2000) further says, "the target language is a vehicle for classroom communication, not just the object of study" (p.125). The higher level or language proficiency the learners achieve, the less their mother tongue should be provided during the lesson. Some experts say the only reason to use a mother tongue, not the target language, is when exposing student to a new grammar item. Some linguists deny using mother tongue even in that case. No matter which opinion is more likely true, the target language should take place whenever it is possible for successful and understandable communication.

It is equally important that language functions are usually emphasized over form. It is out of the question that learning to produce a grammatically correct utterance is important. When discussing the communicative approach, however, the aim of communication: to understand and to be understood is much more important.

An example of the advantage of using communicative approach in teaching is learners' higher motivation to study as they should feel they learn something useful. However, teachers may face some difficulties when teaching, e.g. shy learners'. Larsen-Freeman says that "student security is enhanced by the many opportunities for cooperative interactions with their fellow students" (p.130). So, using the principles of communicative approach brings better opportunities for those who feel more worried or shy when presenting their ideas in front of the whole class.

Learners' and teachers' role

The basic teachers' role is to provide their learners with as many examples of the target language as possible and also to enable their learners to communicate. According to Larsen-Freeman (2000) students with the knowledge of linguistic forms, meanings and

functions should be aware of the fact that "many different forms can be used to perform a function and also that a single form can often serve a variety of functions" (p.128).

Mentioning the communicative competence, it is important to focus not only on various ways how to express similar or the same meanings. It is also important to make learners to be able to choose among these expressions those with the most suitable form due to the particular situation exposed.

As Larsen-Freeman (2000) "during the activities he [the teacher] acts as an adviser, answering students' questions and monitoring their performance" (p.128). There is no reason why not to engage learners' communication and to become one of the communicators. Larsen-Freeman further mentions another fact corresponding to the characteristics of adult learners which is their stronger responsibility for their own learning.

Very important role of the learners is the effort to express their thoughts in the target language as often as possible, even if meeting great difficulties. They should understand the techniques used in communication tasks as a tool helping them to improve and they should not feel annoyed even if struggling with the language. And if struggling, learners should not hesitate to ask their teacher until they fully understand and are able to continue their communication.

Difficulties

An example of difficulty learners can meet is the importance of understanding not only the particular situation in which they are about to use the particular language, but also its social background, to produce a suitable statement, negation or inquiry. Larsen-Freeman (2000) gives an example as follows:

A speaker can seek permission using 'may' ('May I have a piece of fruit?'); however, if the speaker perceives the listener as being more of a social equal or the situation as being informal, he or she would more likely use 'can' to seek permission ('Can I have a piece of fruit?') (p.131).

Social habits and culture in general is a never-ending process reflecting the everyday life of people with their language, too. It is rather difficult or impossible to be aware of every

single change but it is good to keep in mind at least some to achieve as up-to-date communication as possible.

When teaching, it is always rather difficult to achieve a lesson without any learners' mistakes. Larsen-Freeman (2000) comments to students errors: "Errors of form are tolerated during fluency-based activities and are seen as a natural outcome of the development of communication skills. Students can have limited linguistic knowledge and still be successful communicators" (p.132). It is advisable to make notes while dealing with fluency activities and to discuss them later when focusing more on the language form.

There may also appear a specific situation when learners simply refuse to speak the language as they may need a foreign language only to communicate by emails or claim to need the language just to pass a grammar-based examination. As these are rather extreme situations, teachers should be prepared to explain such learners the importance of using spoken language to master it.

Examples of useful techniques and activities

There is a huge amount of various activities designed to help learners to improve their speaking skills. Many activities based on the communicative approach are often carried out by learners in small groups, triads or in pairs. This allows teachers to maximize the talk time of each learner. Individual work is used much less due to the fact that in most of the real-life situations people communicate directly with another person.

Harmer (2007) lists six basic groups of speaking activities (p.348-349). The first group is referred to as acting from a script and it includes playscripts where learners are asked to prepare a short performance presenting a real play. A strong advantage of this activity is the focus on stress, intonation and the speed of learners speech.

Another groups is communication games from which Harmer (2007) mentions information-gap games in which learners use the language to find the missing information, or television and radio games (p.350). Introducing a game into teaching brings always (more or less) positive reaction from the learners no matter what age they are. Larsen-Freeman (2000) highlights that "if they [language games] are properly designed, they give students valuable communicative practise" (p.133). There exist lots of games to practise vocabulary, particular grammatical feature, pronunciation etc. However, when describing the communicative approach, only the games providing a real communication are relevant.

The third group of speaking activities is all about discussion. As Harmer (2007) says, "discussion range from highly formal, whole-group staged events to informal small-group interactions" (p.350). As examples, he mentions buzz groups in which learners discuss a specific topic in pairs or small groups. Instant comment which "involves showing them [learners] photographs or introducing topics at any stage of a lesson and nominating students to say the first thing that comes into their head" (Harmer, 2007, p.350). From another examples belonging to this group of speaking activities are mentioned Formal debates, Unplanned discussion or Reaching a consensus.

Prepared talks present the fourth group of speaking activities in Harmer's (2007) list. These activities are useful especially with adult learners. They are asked to prepare a short presentation focusing on a specific theme, usually relevant to the one being taught and discussed in the class. It allows the learner presenting a topic to use the target language without being interrupted by another student. As learners focus on the topic, they tend to use language intuitively and spontaneously and with a longer practice it may help them to improve fluency and accuracy in their speech. As Harmer (2007) points out "students should speak from their notes rather than from a script" (p.351).

The fifth group of speaking activities is called questionnaires which "may well encourage the natural use of certain repetitive language patterns" (Harmer, 2007, p.352) to improve learners' fluency. These questionnaires may be designed for various purposes, inquiring various areas of the world, focusing on learners' opinions, testing their knowledge of vocabulary or grammar, etc. These activities are usually warmly accepted by learners as they practise language discussing topics they tend to be interested in.

The last group of speaking activities includes simulations and role-plays. A role-play is one of the most important techniques used to practise and experience a real time conversation with various people expressing various occupations, with various intentions, in different social context etc. Learners have only a limited time to present a conversation to reach their objectives. This activity helps learners to experience and practise a specific situation in class before they are about to meet it in their life while travelling, being at work etc. As teachers ask their learners to express thoughts or feelings they do not necessarily share, it brings a significant benefit in giving different opinions, persuading or arguing. As these are the situations adult learners may meet often, these speaking activities are very important and beneficial.

Communicative Approach and Adult Learners

In comparison to young learners, adults more likely tend to think about the techniques teachers use in their classes and learners evaluate these techniques according to their effect in improving their language skills. Since many adult learners need to learn a foreign language to communicate, communicative approach seems to be highly sufficient providing learners with the knowledge of practical usage of a language rather than with the theory of grammar etc. For this reason, adults usually evaluate the communicative approach positively. However, even if the communicative approach belongs to one of the approaches commonly used in language schools today, adult learners may experience rather different teaching as attending various courses, with rather different results. The following part of this thesis focuses on collecting data about adult learners' (positive or negative) experiences with communicative approach in classes, and especially on difficulties adult learners may face while learning.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The practical part of this thesis is focused on collecting data from adult learners about their experience and preferences in the process of learning spoken English, and on comparing these data with the theoretical assumptions and facts.

The first step of the practical part was to collect information gained from questionnaires. The data were collected in the course of two months, January and February 2013. The second step was to sort out the information collected, to group and graph it. And finally, the third step was to evaluate and to quantify the results and to compare them with the theoretical assumptions described in the theoretical part to find out if the theory about difficulties in teaching speaking skills to adult learners meets the praxis.

Research tools

The information necessary for the research was collected via a questionnaire designed for adult learners. In the questionnaire there were 10 questions with mostly scale responses or closed ended questions (see Appendix 1). These types of questions were chosen for better possibility to evaluate, compare and quantify them. There appear no open ended question as they would be hard to quantify. However, at the end of some questions there was space to express comments or other possible answers which were not mentioned in the lists. And in the end of the questionnaire, responders had a chance to comment any area of the questionnaire.

In the questionnaire, there appear three types of questions. The first type of questions collects basic information about the responders - their age, sex and time they have been learning English. These data were helpful to find possible differences in answers between genders and among different generations.

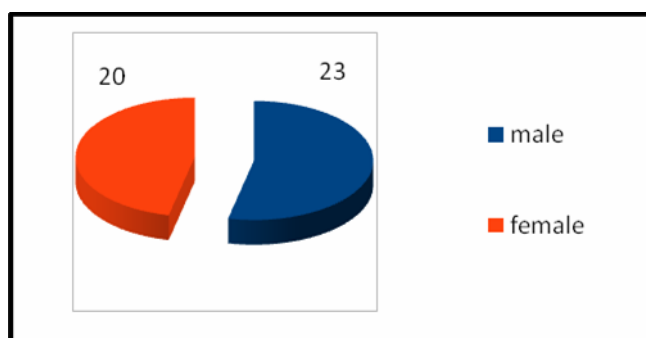
The second type of questions collects information about the responders' experience with English and difficulties they meet while learning languages in general. The scale used allowed the respondents to choose from 5 possible answers according to the particular area being inquired with various options. In every scale, the middle possibility stated for the answer "I do not know" for those areas which the individual respondent has no experience with and therefore can not answer the specific question properly. However, this answer was not used too often.

Finally, the third type of questions collects information about learners' opinions and evaluation of teaching methods, techniques, tools and aids used in their classes. Learners' opinions differ due to several reasons. The main influence is possible to find in the length of respondents' studies of languages, consequently in the experience - positive or negative - they may have to compare with. Therefore this information is highly individual and different across learners.

The questionnaires were designed in Czech to avoid possible difficulties in translation and possible misunderstanding while fulfilling them. All the questionnaires were strictly anonymous to collect as frank answers as possible.

Respondents

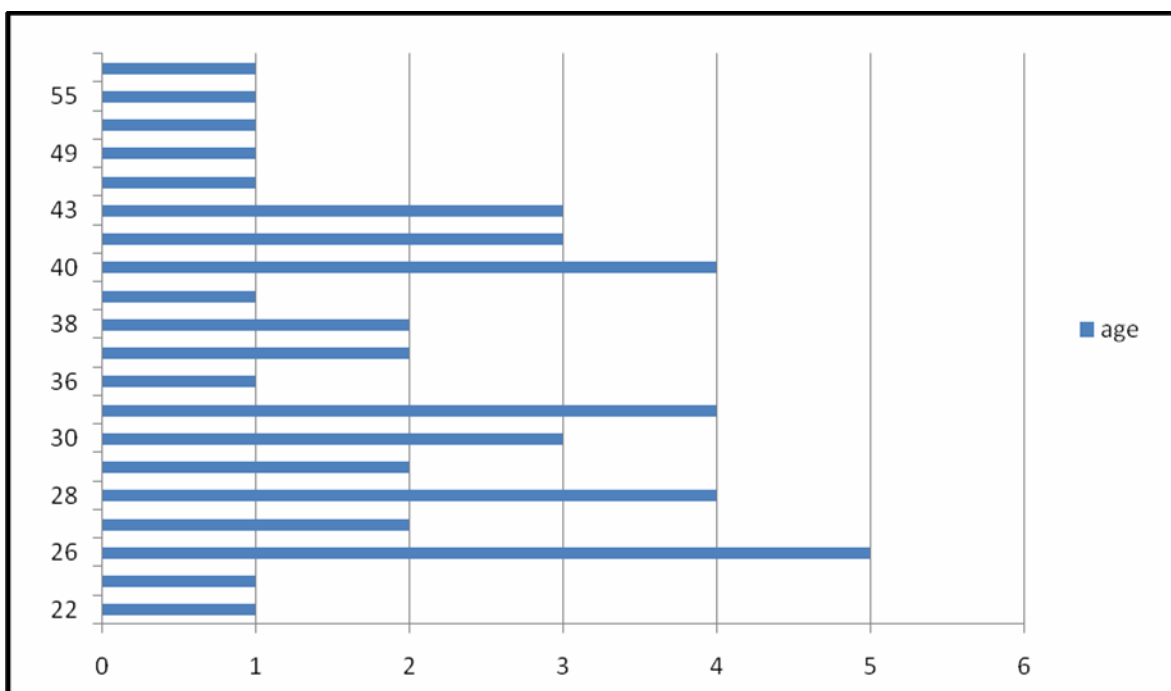
The sample of respondents who were asked to fulfil the questionnaires consisted of adult learners from Pilsen who had attended English courses at a language school or had experienced private tutoring. The following graph (see Graph 1) shows the numbers of males and females who fulfilled the questionnaires. Altogether, 43 questionnaires were



Graph 1: Respondents' gender

collected from the adult learners who were willing to answer all the questions, with 23 males and 20 females. There may appear possible distortion of some of the collected data as the number of respondents is not very high. However, even with a low number of respondents it is possible to gain at least roughly valid information about the areas being inquired in the questionnaires. The returnability of the questionnaires given was around 95%, as 43 out of 45 respondents submitted their questionnaires.

Another graph shows the numerical representation of the particular ages within the responders (see Graph 2). It is obvious that the majority of responders is between 25 to 45 years of age.



Graph 2: Respondents' age

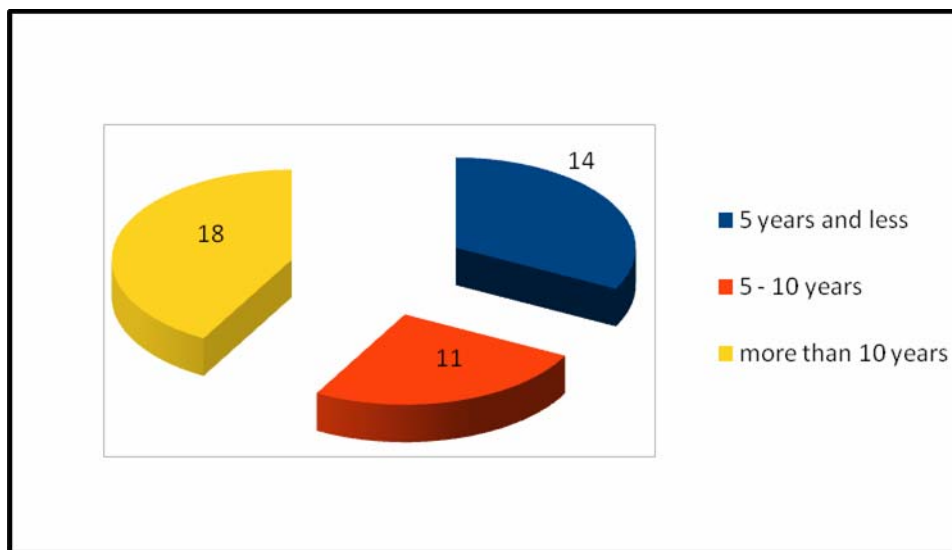
The fact, that there appeared learners of certain ages, may be the result of general needs of specific age groups in the society. The younger generation has usually sufficient experience with learning foreign languages from high schools and universities due to the historical development and modern trends in the Czech education dated from the end of communism. And the older generation aged 55+ who possibly had to study different languages in their school age may much less likely need English at their work and consequently there may be a smaller probability to meet these people attending language courses. There are of course other reasons why to study languages. Still, work and working needs belong to the most common reasons for learning foreign languages.

IV. RESULTS AND COMMENTARIES

In this section, the results of the research focused on the difficulties adult learners meet while learning English are presented and analysed. Even if there were ten questions in the questionnaires, some questions consisted of more parts. The results are structured according to the questions, with one or more areas of data analysed.

Question no.1: How long have you been studying English?

This question was asked to find how much experience the respondents have with learning English. According to the graph below, there appeared three groups of learners who have experienced learning languages for a) 5 years and less, b) 5-10 years, and c) for more than 10 years (see Graph 3). These groups consisted of similar numbers of respondents with 14 learners who studied English for 5 or less years, 11 learners studying between 5 and 10 years and 18 learners with more than 10-year experience.



Graph 3: How long have you been studying English?

It is important to mention that there did not appear any correlation between age of the respondents and the length of their language studies. More-over, it is possible to claim that younger adult learners may have longer experience with learning English than the older ones. Again, due to the historical circumstances, as during communism the possibility of learning English was rather insufficient, older adults may have opportunities to study English much later and with no experience from their school age.

Another problem may be the fact that some of the respondents answered this question unwittingly badly as they described only the length of learning English they have experienced continuously. Unfortunately, this fact was mentioned after all the questionnaires were collected and it was impossible to make any correction of this question.

Question no. 2: Do you find any differences in the way you are learning English now in comparison to the past (e.g. to high-school, basic school etc.)?

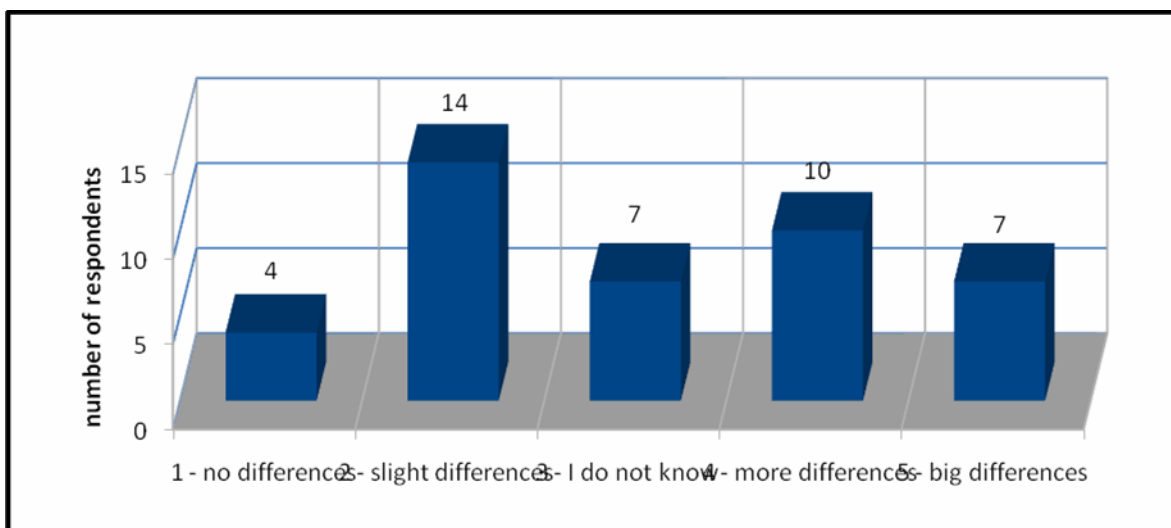
This question was asked to find out in which areas of English language the respondents meet differences when comparing to their previous English studies. There were mentioned 11 areas of the English language: grammar, vocabulary, writing, listening, speaking, classroom management, aids and materials, homework, teaching activities, cooperation and language improvement. The respondents should put their answers according to the significance of differences they meet. These areas of learning English are summarized and numbered in the following chart (see Table 1). The numbers in the top of the chart present answers where 1 is used for "No difference", 2 for "Slight difference", 3 for "I do not know", 4 for "More differences" and finally 5 for "Big differences":

	1	2	3	4	5
grammar	4	14	7	10	7
vocabulary	2	6	8	16	10
writing	4	12	11	7	8
listening	5	7	3	12	15
speaking	1	5	1	12	23
classroom management		9	4	8	21
aids and materials	1	5	2	17	17
homework	11	13	5	7	6
teaching activities		8	3	13	18
cooperation		7	6	14	15
language improvement		11	7	15	9

Table 1: Do you find any differences in the way you are learning English now in comparison to the past?

The areas in which respondents meet rather slight or no differences are especially grammar, writing and homework. Grammar belongs to those areas of English where the

respondents are divided into two relatively same groups of those who find rather slight differences and those who find more differences (see Graph 4).



Graph 4: Do you find any differences in the way you are learning English now in comparison to the past? - GRAMMAR

This may correspond with the respondents' age. To investigate probable differences in answers among the respondents of different ages, the following chart was designed to present such differences (see Table 2).

M vs W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W
answer	1		2		3		4		5	
average age	36,3	22	37,14	29,43	33,25	39,67	30,2	31,2	42,25	47,33
M + W	29,15		33,29		36,46		30,7		47,79	

Table 2: Do you find any differences in the way you are learning English grammar now in comparison to the past? Men vs Women

As it is shown in Table 2, the average age of the respondents who answered to see no difference in learning grammar now from their past was approximately 29. The average age of the respondents choosing "small difference" was approximately 33. Surprising is the lower average age of those choosing "rather different". For those the average age was a little less than 31. Finally, the average age of those seeing big difference is approximately 48. Even if there is some divergence in the average age of both genders, the older, in general, may tend to understand the way of learning grammar far more different as they may compare with techniques being used two or three decades ago, while the younger respondents may see slight differences as they may compare with modern techniques being used till now. This fact, actually, may have a strong influence on all the other areas of learning English.

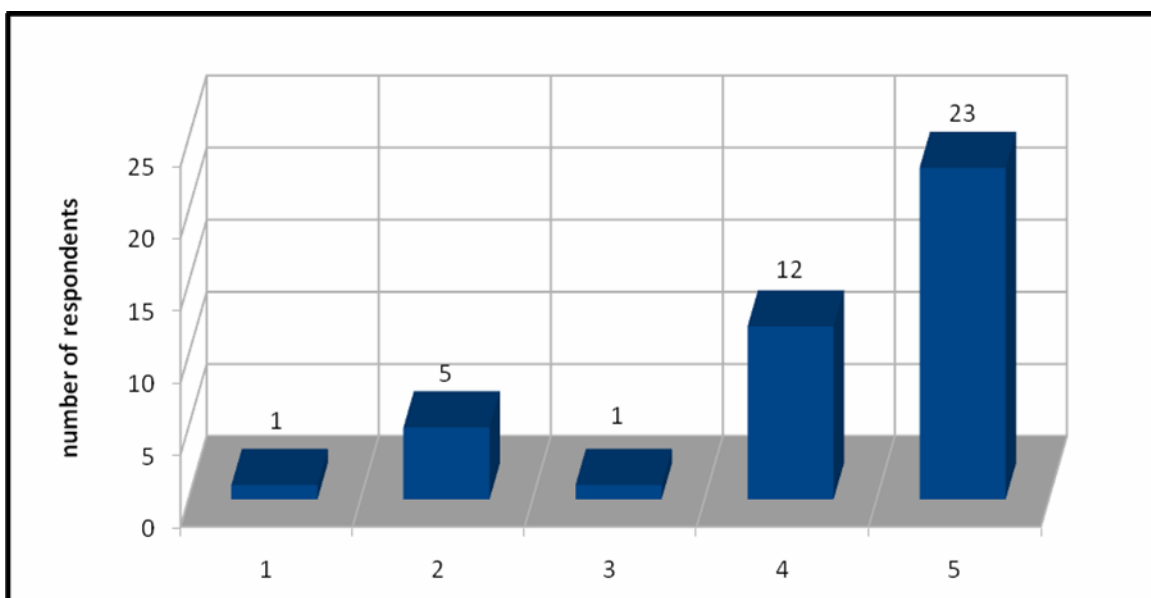
Writing together with (doing) homework was evaluated with rather no differences in learning as the techniques probably correspond to the ways respondents used in the past, too.

On the other hand, there appeared areas in which the respondents tend to meet rather more or even big differences. These areas represent especially vocabulary, listening, aids and materials, teaching activities, cooperation, language improvement and speaking.

Cooperation and teaching activities are the areas in which respondents may see differences mostly for the language-school class environment different from this of the state (secondary-, high-) school or university one. The activities may differ as new techniques and methods come into exist every day. Some respondents tend to connect the differences with their teachers' creativity, which also corresponds to the area of aids and materials.

The differences in listening may be explained by the fact that in modern student books there appear far more listening exercises and records then ever before. Due to the new technologies, cassettes were replaced by CDs which allow users to listen to extend amount of listening, often completed by video clips.

Speaking is the area in which most of the respondents meet more or big differences, as presented in Graph 5 (see below):

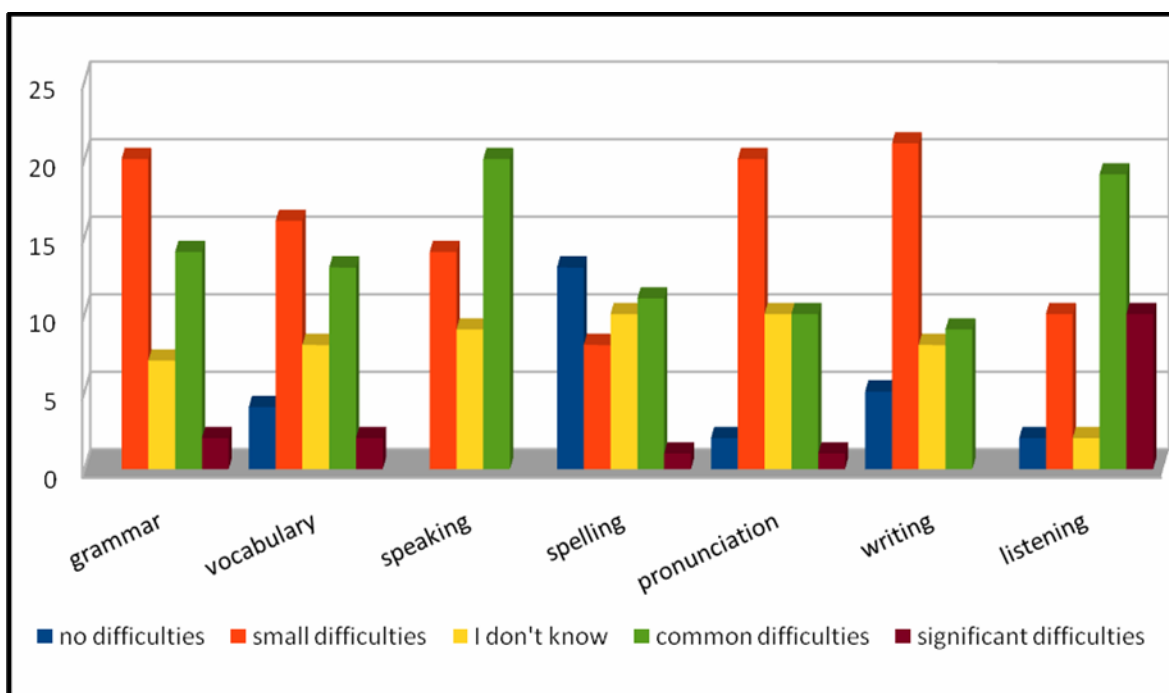


Graph 5: Do you find any differences in the way you are learning English now in comparions to the past? - SPEAKING

While only one respondent claimed to meet no difference and 5 claimed to meet slight differences, 12 respondents claimed to meet rather different way of learning speaking and 23 claimed to meet big differences. This again may be the result of modern techniques and methods being used in classes, to be specific the principles of the communicative approach training and practising speaking skills most of the time. One respondent claimed to have no chance to compare these areas as she did not study English before.

Question no. 3: In which area of English language do you meet difficulties?

The graph below (see Graph 6) describes the areas in which the respondents meet difficulties and which areas they find rather simple.



Graph 6: In which area of the English language do you meet difficulties?

There appeared a group of areas in which the respondents meet no or only small difficulties. These areas represent especially grammar, pronunciation and writing in which the difference in numbers of respondents evaluating this area is significant. For instance in writing, 26 out of 43 respondents claimed to meet no or small difficulties.

There also appeared a group of areas in which the respondents meet common or significant difficulties. Above all, listening definitely belongs to this group as 19 out of 43 respondents claimed to meet common difficulties and 10 claimed to meet even significant

difficulties. This may be the result of common praxis adults meet at work where they commonly use English especially for writing while they may have only limited chance to meet spoken English and to practise their listening skills.

In some areas, there appeared areas with rather ambiguous results, e.g. spelling or vocabulary. Spelling and pronunciation are the areas in which a lot of the respondents chose the answer "I don't know". Still, the rest of the respondents tend to feel less worried about spelling or pronunciation, as it is visible from the graph (see Graph 6). Especially low worries about spelling may be the result of the automatic correction used in modern writing programs, correcting spelling mistakes in documents, emails etc. Pronunciation is one part of English which learners do not consider as important and with paying less attention to its practice, adult learners may feel less worried about it.

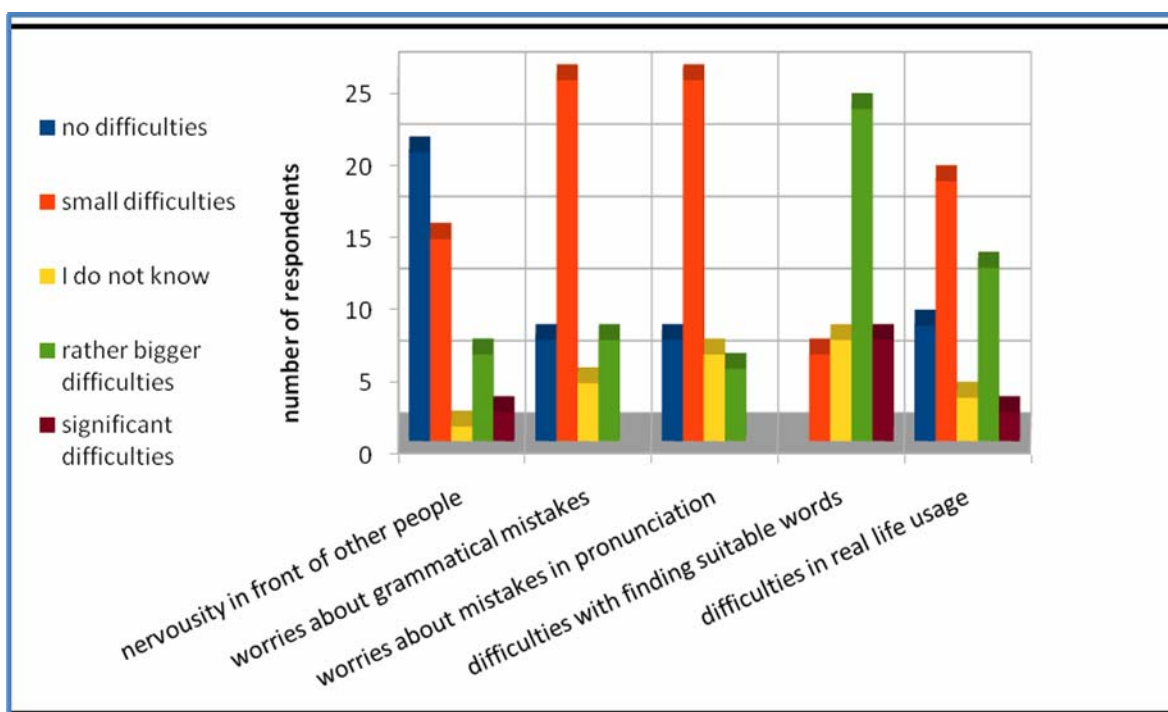
To summarize, in speaking and grammar, all the respondents claimed to meet at least some difficulties. On the other hand, no respondents claimed to meet significant difficulties in writing and in speaking. Due to this fact, speaking, together with grammar, belong to the only areas in which all the respondents claimed to meet at least some difficulties.

Question no.4: Which difficulties do you meet when talking about learning and practising speaking skills?

This question asks respondents about their worries about using spoken English. According to the results depicted in Graph 7 below, there appeared some interesting facts which differ from the theoretical assumptions. In the theoretical part of this thesis, there are several parts in which it is highlighted that adult learners tend more likely to be worried to speak the language not to make mistakes and not to look ridiculous in front of the others. However, in this graph there appeared areas in which the respondents claimed to meet rather small or even no worries. To be specific, 34 out of 43 respondents claimed not to be worried about speaking in front of other learners, their teachers or other people. And similar numbers were collected about worries about grammatical mistakes (32 out of 43) and worries about mistakes in pronunciation with the same numbers.

The theory about making mistakes by adult learners meets the praxis in finding suitable words in spoken English, where 23 respondents claimed to meet rather bigger difficulties, and 7 meet significant difficulties.

The results in the area of difficulties in using English in real life situations are not clear. 14 respondents claimed to meet rather bigger or significant difficulties, while 18 respondents claimed to meet only small difficulties and 8 claimed to meet no difficulties. This ambiguity may be the result of different opportunities the respondents have had. While some need to use English at work or their private life every day, some respondents hardly ever use English except for the classroom environment. This lack of opportunities may cause certain struggling when expressing one's-self.



Graph 7: Which difficulties do you meet considering learning and practising speaking skills?

To summarize the results of this question, adult learners tend to feel nervous and worried about making mistakes more likely when talking in real life situations, especially about finding suitable words to express what they want. But, while learning they do not tend to feel much worried about making mistakes in front of their classmates, which does not confirm the assumptions described in the theoretical part.

Question no.5: Which methods and techniques do you find effective to improve speaking skills? Decide whether the following statements are true (T) or false (F), in your opinion.

This question inquires about the effectiveness of methods and techniques being used in their classes. The respondents expressed their agreement or disagreement with seven statements. The respondents should agree or disagree with statements concerning the usefulness of techniques and exercises in student's books, reading, listening, watching films with and without subtitles, playing computer games and using internet in English to improve learner's speaking skills. The results are presented in Table 3 below.

	true	false
Most of the techniques and exercises in student's books is useful.	27	16
Reading texts and books in English is helpful in improving my speaking skills.	42	1
Listening from student's books are helpful in improving my speaking skills.	39	4
Watching films in English is helpful in improving my speaking skills.	37	6
Watching films in English with English subtitles is helpful in improving my speaking skills.	37	6
Playing PC games in English is helpful in improving my speaking skills.	23	19
Using the internet and computers in English is useful.	39	4

Table 3: Decide whether the following statements are true or false.

In these statements, there appeared practically only two statements, which more than 15 percent of the respondents disagreed with. 16 out of 43 respondents disagree with the statement that most of techniques and exercises in student's books are useful. No student's book is perfect and not every learner is satisfied with the one being used in their class. This was not surprising as there exist common doubts about the efficiency of drill exercises in student's books among language learners. However, the remaining 27 respondents had different opinions and techniques and exercises in student's books still have their irreplaceable position among other materials, techniques and exercises used for language learning.

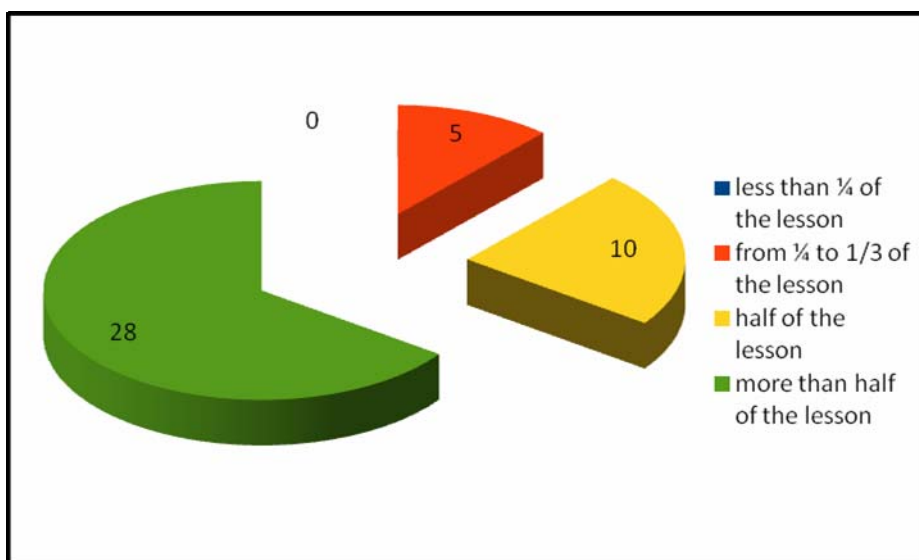
However, there was another, a much more controversial statement about the benefit of playing computer games to improve learner's speaking skills. There were 23 agreements to 19 disagreements. One respondent claimed that she had never played any PC game in English and therefore she could not agree or disagree with this statement. To study this statement more, there is an average age of the respondents who disagreed, together with the difference between genders (see Table 4 below):

Playing PC games in English is helpful in improving my speaking skills			
		WOMEN	
TRUE	FALSE	TRUE	FALSE
14	9	9	10
± age 35,4	± age 37,4	± age 36,7	± age 32,9

Table 4: Playing PC games in English is helpful in improving my speaking skills.

Some would state the assumption that younger respondents, probably men more than women, would more likely agree with this statement. There was a higher percentage of men who agreed with this statement than of women. The average age of women who agreed was a little higher than the one of men, but surprising is the age of women who disagree with this statement, especially in comparison to men. The common assumption would be that younger people are more likely opened to modern trends and methods, which is a bit denied by the results as seen in this chart.

Question no. 6: How much of the total lesson time does your teacher use for practising your speaking skills (on average)?



Graph 8: How much of the total time does your teacher use for practising your speaking skills?

In this question, none of the 43 respondents claimed to be practising their speaking skills for less than 1/4 of the lessons. 5 respondents claimed to be practising speaking skills

for more than 1/4 of the lesson but less than 1/3 of the lesson. 10 respondents chose the answer "half of the lesson" to estimate the time used for practising speaking skills. 28 out of 43 respondents claimed to be practising their speaking skill for more than half of the lessons. These results should reflect the principles of communicative approach used in the classes based on training speaking skills in comparison to the traditional model of grammar-based teaching. The results may be influenced by the respondents' understanding of what is involved in practising speaking skills. For some learners, this may be happening only when focusing on speaking, while for others practising speaking skills may happen also when discussing new vocabulary, grammar rules etc.

Question no.7: What influence, do you think, have the following facts on your speaking skills?

This question deals with the influence various facts may have on learners' speaking skills. There are 22 facts presented and respondents evaluated them with the numbers from 1 to 5, where 1 stands for "no influence", 2 for "small influence", 3 for "I don't know", 4 for "rather influential" and 5 for "strong influence". To obtain clear results, the data collected from the questionnaires are arranged in ascending order of positive answers to the particular facts.

There appeared several areas where most of the respondents claimed to feel no influence on their speaking skills. The fact with most negative answers about its influence on learners speaking skills is student's gender. 39 out of 43 respondents voted for no or small influence of this fact. Only 4 respondents could not decide and voted for "I don't know" (see Table 5 below). Those 4 respondents had probably never considered student's gender being distinguishing when evaluating various influences on learners' speaking skills. The results about this fact were not surprising. The modern believes and opinions consider both genders being equal and therefore it is commonly not taken into consideration when examining influences of various facts on speaking skills.

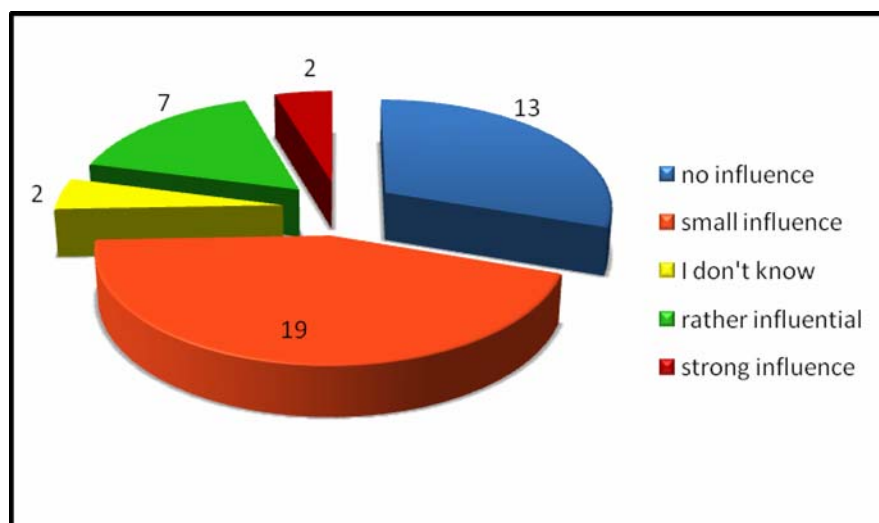
The respondents had similar opinions about the influence of their teacher's gender, as 37 out of 43 voted for no or small influence. There appeared only 1 answer evaluating teacher's gender as rather influential (see Table 5). This corresponds to the previously

mentioned modern opinions rejecting differences between genders to be influential when evaluating speaking skills.

	1	2	3	4	5
student's gender	36	3	4		
teacher's gender	31	6	5	1	

Table 5: The influence of students' and teachers' gender on learners' speaking skills

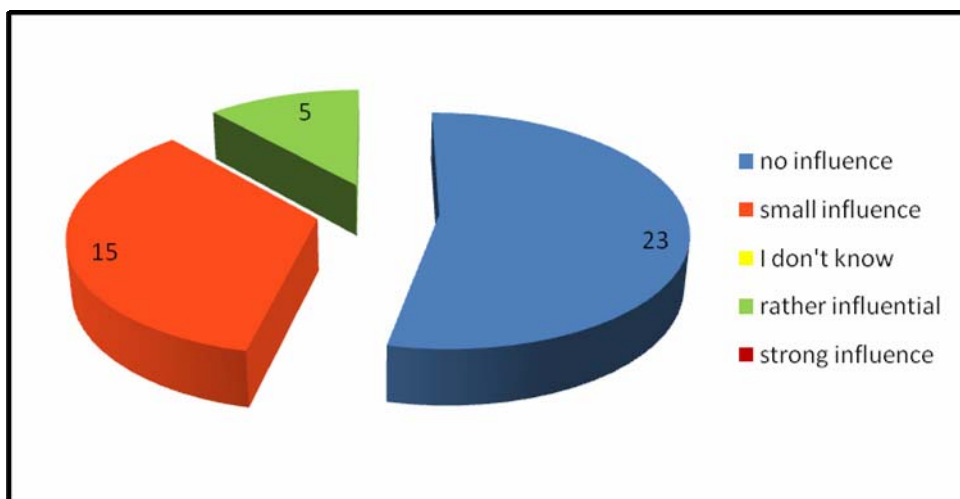
Surprisingly, 32 out of 43 respondents claimed to see no or very weak influence in student's age. 2 respondents could not decide. 7 evaluated student's age as rather influential and 2 respondents decided for a strong influence (see Graph 9). These results are rather surprising because of a common assumption that age belongs to one of the facts of significant influences on the results of learning practically anything. While adult learners consider teacher's age not to be so influential, they tend to be a little more critical about their own age. Rather small percentage of respondents, however, supported this notion while a bigger group of respondents probably did not notice any significant differences. Still, those who claimed that student's age is influential may be of higher age than those who voted for the opposite, as they may more likely experience certain difficulties with language learning.



Graph 9: The influence of students' age on their speaking skills

Teacher's age seems to be even less influential, with 38 negative answers - 23 respondents voted for no influence and 15 for small influence. The 5 remaining respondents, on the contrary, voted for "rather influential" role of teacher's age on their speaking skills. These results may also be a bit surprising as they do not support the common assumption that an older teacher equals to bigger and richer teaching experience

and, consequently, better students' results. However, there may appear another opinion that a younger teacher equals to modern, possibly better, teaching methods and more up-to-date language. By joining these assumptions together, rather ambiguous notions may appear. As both a younger and an older teacher may contribute to good learners' results, teacher's age may seem to be rather minor.



Graph 10: The influence of teacher's age on learners' speaking skills

A bit less definite answers were about the classroom equipment. As Table 6 shows, 24 out of 43 respondents see no or small influence of classroom equipment on their speaking skills (numbers 1 and 2) in comparison to 15 respondents considering classroom equipment influential (numbers 4 and 5). Four respondents could not decide (number 3). The classroom equipment such as thematic posters, a CD-player or dictionaries has a supportive function in the process of learning a language. New technologies and devices such as smartboards are usually appreciated by younger learners and adult learners more likely tend to feel uncomfortable when using them. According to literal sources as well as the data collected by the questionnaires, there are other things of bigger value than classroom equipment considering its influence on speaking skills of adult learners. Still, various classroom equipment may be used to provide learners with real world situations etc. to help them improve their speaking skills and therefore it should not be underestimated, as 15 out of 43 respondents demonstrated to think.

	1	2	3	4	5
classroom equipment	6	18	4	12	3

Table 6: The influence of classroom equipment on learners' speaking skills

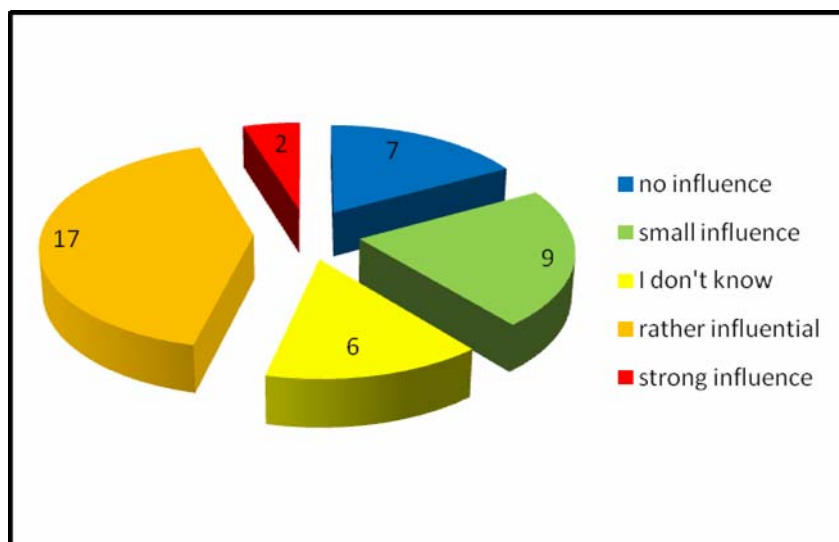
Similar numbers present respondents' opinion about the influence of their occupation on their speaking skills, as Table 6 presents. 25 out of 43 respondents saw no or small influence of their occupation (numbers 1 and 2), 2 respondents did not know, while 11 respondents saw the role of their occupation as rather influential and 5 respondents as even very influential (see Table 7).

	1	2	3	4	5
student's occupation	11	14	2	11	6

Table 7: The influence of students' occupation on their speaking skills

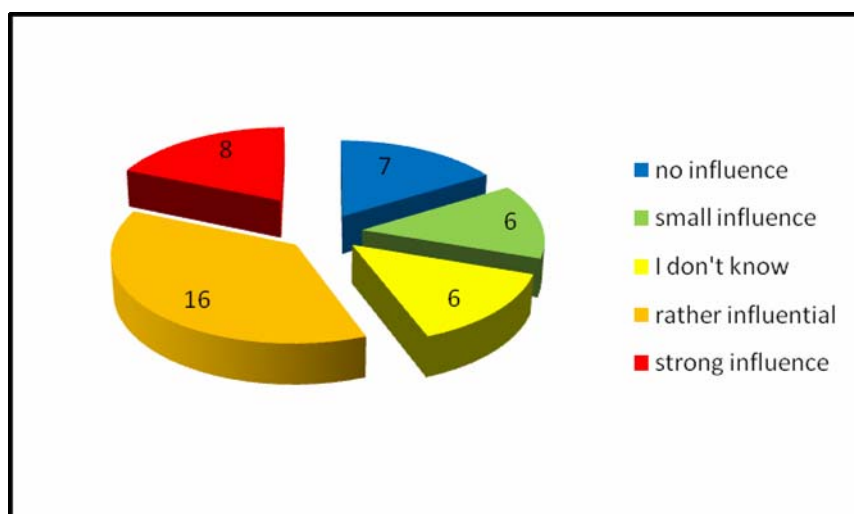
For some of the respondents it may be necessary to use English at work and therefore they more likely understood their occupation being influential as the every day use of language may help them to improve their speaking skills a lot. On the other hand, those who did not have similar possibility did not understand it that way, as the results present.

Student's education was another area in which the results were rather ambiguous. As presented in Graph 11, 7 respondents answered that they see no influence of their education on their speaking skills. 9 respondents voted for a small influence, while 17 consider it being rather influential and 2 even strongly influential. 6 respondents could not decide and voted for "I don't know" (see Graph 11). This may be the results of the respondents' former experience with the language throughout their studies. Those who claimed to see no influence on their speaking skills possibly did not have much experience with language studies in comparison to those who voted for its influence. However, education is not only about languages and when considering e.g. the influence of having a degree on students' speaking skills, the results may differ. The respondents voting for their education to be rather or very influential may understand it to help them express their thought more precisely or in a more sophisticated way.



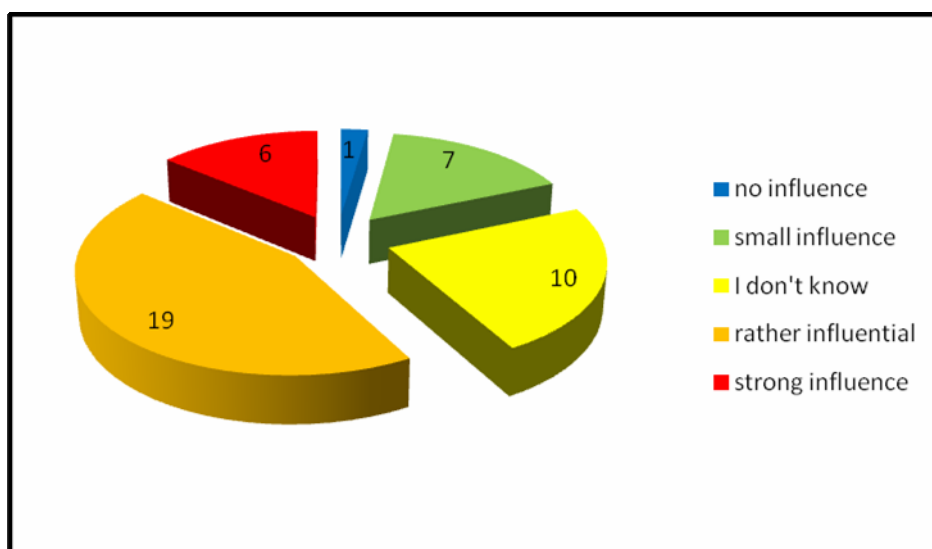
Graph 11: The influence of students' education on their speaking skills

In comparison to the influence of learners' education, the respondents evaluated the influence of teacher's education a little more strictly. As Graph 12 presents, 8 respondents claimed to see strong influence of teachers' education on learners' speaking skills and 16 claimed teacher's education to be rather influential. 6 respondents voted for "I don't know" and 13 saw small or no influence of teacher's education on learners' speaking skills. Still, with 24 positive answers teacher's education seems to be much more important than the one of learners'. As being assumed, the results display the common belief in the importance of teachers' education to guarantee a certain quality of their lessons and disprove the notion that "everybody can teach, no matter what education they have".



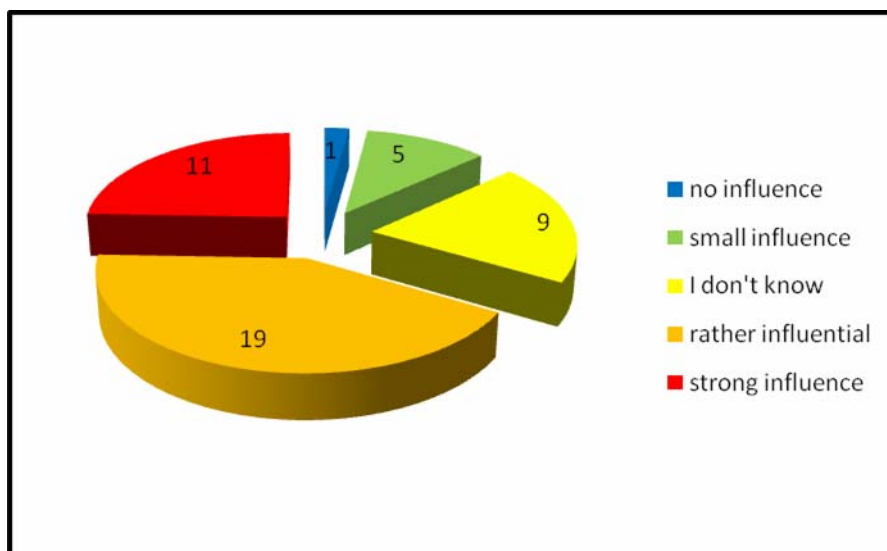
Graph 12: The influence of teacher's education on learners' speaking skills

In the list of facts possibly having influence on students' speaking skills, there appeared two facts for which the respondents chose the answer "I don't know" the most often. The first was student's temperament. Although 25 out of 43 respondents evaluated this fact as being rather or very influential, and only 8 respondents had the opposite opinion, 10 respondents were not sure about this influence and chose the answer "I don't know" (see Graph 13). According to the data collected, the overwhelming majority of respondents are aware of certain influence their temperament may have on their speaking skills even if they may not be sure about its strength. One's temperament is a mixture of various aspects of personalities such as extroversion or introversion and neuroticism or stability. It is well-known that the more extroverted a person is the more easily he or she is able to express him- or herself in public and in front of other people. Therefore it has usually an important role in the development of learners' speaking skills, as more than a half of the respondents proved.



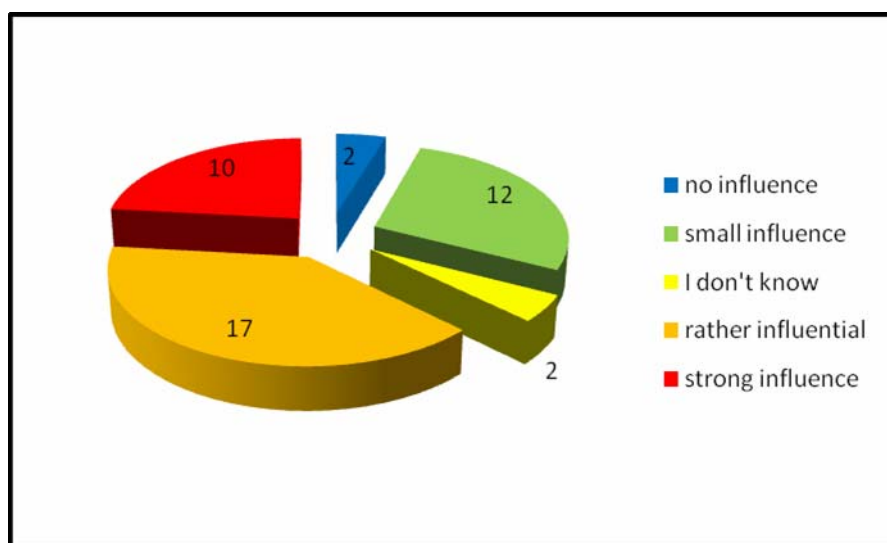
Graph 13: The influence of students' temperament on their speaking skills

The second fact was student's responsibility. Only 6 respondents saw no or small influence in their responsibility, while 30 out of 43 understood it being rather or very influential. Still, 9 respondents chose the neutral answer (see Graph 14). These results are also a bit surprising because it is usually assumed that the more responsible learners are the better and quicker results they may achieve. Responsibility is, of course, only one of many aspects influencing the results of one's studies. Those 9 respondents who claimed not to know may have taken into account the other facts mentioned to have possibly stronger effect on their speaking skills and therefore did not choose a more determined answer.



Graph 14: The influence of students' responsibility on their speaking skills

Nevertheless, even if there were one quarter of all the answers neutral, both facts - students' temperament and students' responsibility - belonged to the group of those facts being evaluated in general as influential.

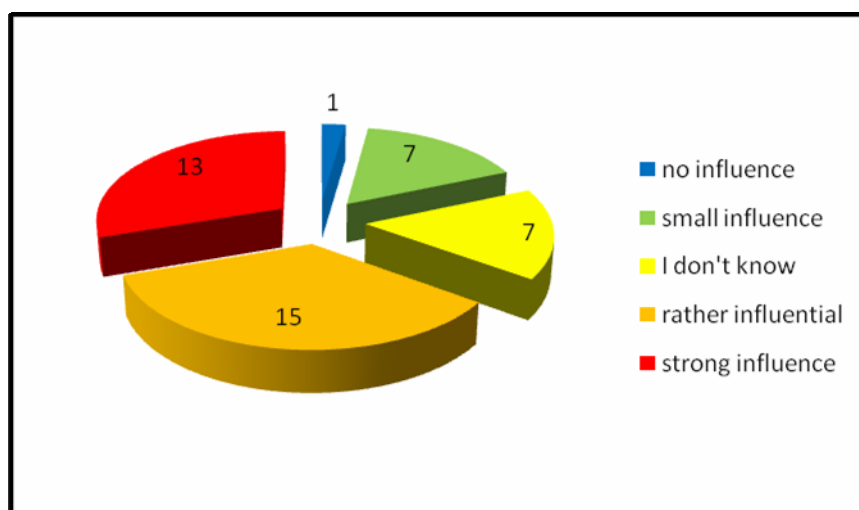


Graph 15: The influence of students' knowledge and experience with other languages on their speaking skills

Another fact possibly having influence on students' speaking skills presented was students' knowledge and experience with other languages. As expected, most of the respondents evaluated this fact as rather or very influential. 10 respondents voted for a strong influence and 17 for rather influential role of their knowledge and experience with

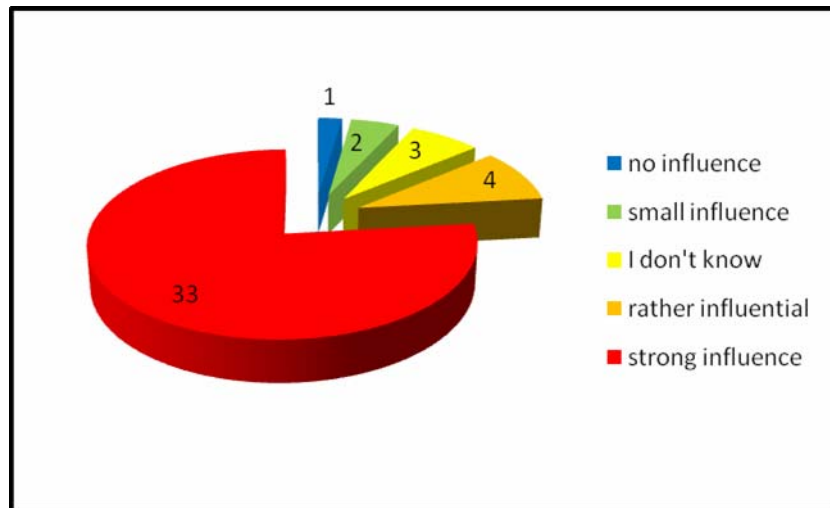
another language (see Graph 15 above). Still, 12 respondents saw a small influence and 2 even no influence. The reason may be, that these respondents had no experience with other languages, or more likely that they had experiences with other languages, but they did not understand it being helpful when learning the English language.

The student's experience is the fact which most of the respondents saw influential, with 28 positive answers, as 13 voted for strong influence and 15 for "rather influential" (see Graph 16). Still, 8 respondents had an opposite opinion with 1 vote for no influence and 7 for only small influence. 7 respondents voted for "I don't know". These results were not surprising as some learners may have bigger experience than others and they may tend to consider their experience being more influential than those of smaller one.



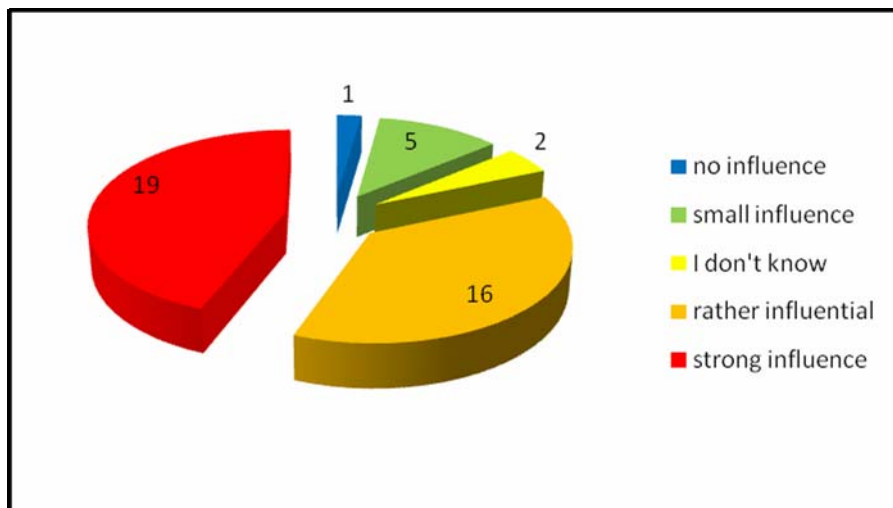
Graph 16: The influence of students' experience on their speaking skills

Staying abroad was one of two areas in which only one respondent did not see any influence. 2 respondents claimed to see only a small influence. However, 37 out of 43 respondents evaluated staying abroad as being rather or very influential with 4 and 33 votes (see Graph 17 below). As some respondents claimed, they can evaluate this due to their personal experience. The main influence of such experience was that they could not afford to be shy and had to communicate with other people in the target language and this helped them to speak much more fluently. This also meets the assumptions from literal sources as it is commonly said that practice makes perfect and staying abroad is one of the most beneficial ways how to achieve a great improvement in one's speaking skills in foreign languages.



Graph 17: The influence of staying abroad on learners' speaking skills

The second area where only one respondent claimed to see no influence was learners' reasons for studies. 5 respondents saw only a small influence, while 35 out of 43 respondents claimed that reasons for studies were rather or very influential (see Graph 18).

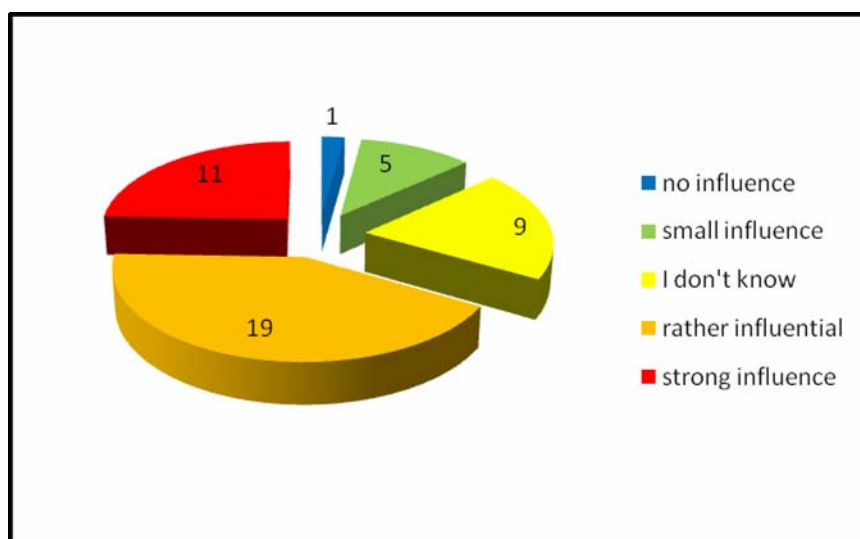


Graph 18: The influence of reasons for studies on learners' speaking skills

The reasons for language studies should have a strong influence on its results. Some learners had to start learning English only in order to meet their employers' expectations, or to be able to fulfil their work duties. If these are the only reasons and adult learners have no other reasons to study a language, their results are often rather poor and unsatisfactory. However, if the learners need the language for subjectively important reasons, they may demonstrate a big effort in their studies, with possibly good results. It is possible to claim

that the more personal the reasons for studies are, the better results the learners may achieve.

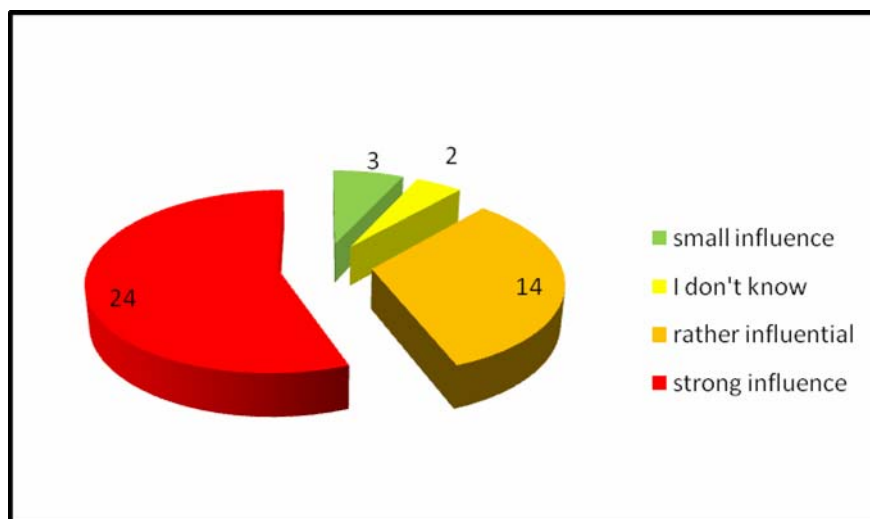
Evaluating teacher's responsibility, none of the respondents voted for "no influence" on learners' speaking skills, and only 3 chose only small influence for this fact. Other 3 respondents could not decide, voting for "I don't know". However, the rest of the respondents claimed to understand teacher's responsibility as being rather or very influential with 19 and 18 votes as shown in Graph 19:



Graph 19: The influence of students' responsibility on their speaking skills

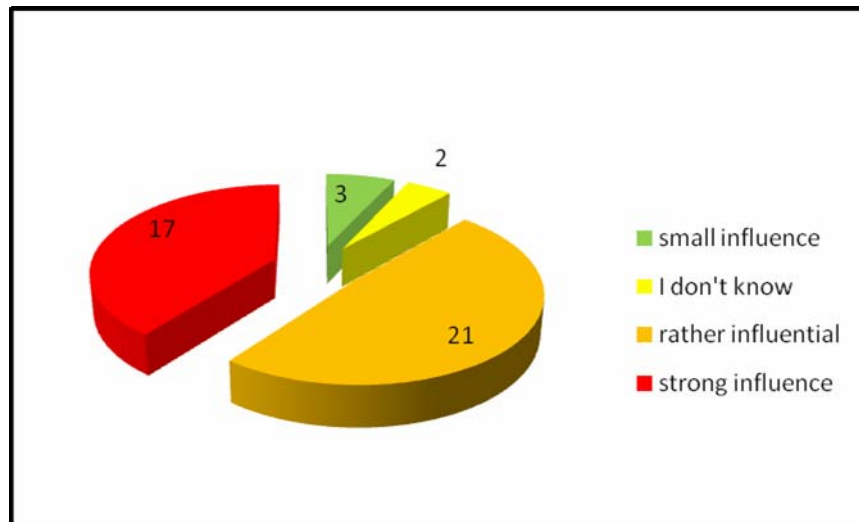
Learners expect their teachers to be well-prepared for every lesson, and they are very sensitive to everything their teachers do or say. Adult learners much more likely than young learners expect their teachers to be well-prepared as they usually pay for their lessons and they tend more likely to understand the importance of what is being taught for their practical life. Therefore teacher's responsibility plays an important role when considering influences on learners' speaking skills.

Another fact being evaluated was the student's level of language. 3 out of 43 respondents claimed to see only a small influence on their speaking skills and 2 respondents did not know. However, 14 respondents saw it being rather influential and 24 even strongly influential on learners' speaking skills (see Graph 20).



Graph 20: The influence of learners' level of language on learners' speaking skills

The results of this evaluation were a bit surprising as one may expect only positive opinions. The common praxis is that the higher level of language learners achieve, the more precise their speech should be. As the results showed, however, some respondents do not think so. This may reflect students' common opinion that they do not have to master a language to be able to communicate and to be understood. Adult learners very often tend to undervalue the more sophisticated ways of communication, especially when they do not need any knowledge of a higher-level language for their work etc. They usually claim that it is not necessary to achieve an intermediate or upper-intermediate level of a language to be able to communicate and survive in a foreign country. This seems to be the reason why the respondents differ this much in their answers.

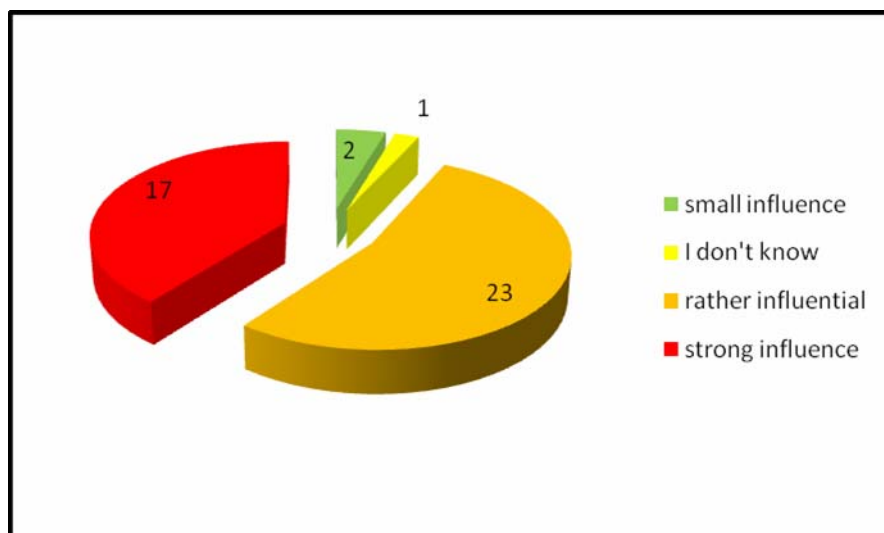


Graph 21: The influence of number of students in the class on learners' speaking skills

Graph 21 presents the respondents' opinion about the influence of the number of students on their speaking skills. As expected, none of them voted for "no influence", and only 3 respondents saw small influence on their speaking skills. 2 respondents did not know, while 21 out of 43 respondents considered number of students being rather influential and 17 voted for strong influence on their speaking skills.

Number of students in a class is, in general, very influential as all the classroom management depends on how many students there are. Those 3 respondents who claimed to see only a small influence of the number of students on their speaking skills probably did not consider bigger groups of students in one class and may have worked on the assumption that the number of students would increase only slightly, so that the influence would not be considerable.

Classroom atmosphere was one of the facts which the respondents evaluated as very influential considering learners' speaking skills, as shown in Graph 22:

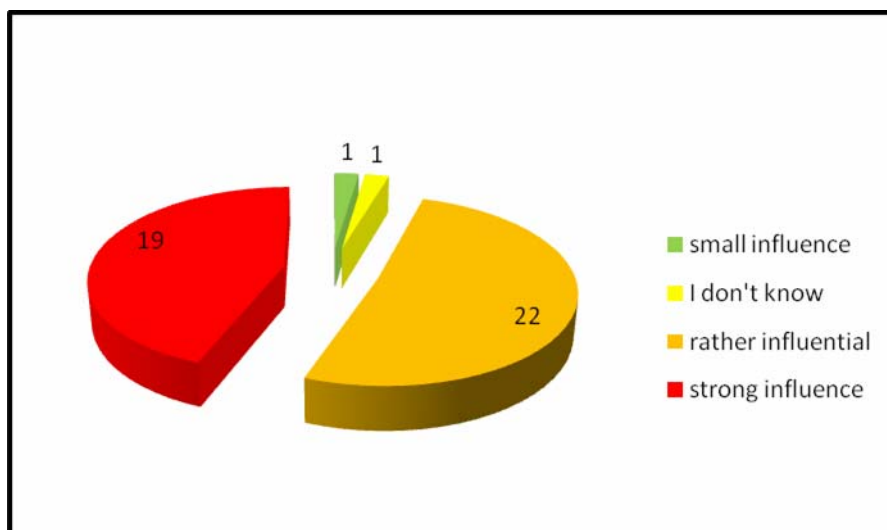


Graph 22: The influence of classroom atmosphere on learners' speaking skills

Not surprisingly, two respondents claimed to see a small influence and only 1 respondent did not know while 23 out of 43 respondents saw the classroom atmosphere as rather influential and 17 voted for strong influence. None of the respondents thought this fact would have no influence on their speaking skills.

The atmosphere among people plays an important role in every group, no matter how big it is. And the relationships among students of a class are very important for their cooperation while learning and fulfilling various tasks from their teacher. Therefore it has rather significant influence on the improvement of learners' speaking skills as the results suggest.

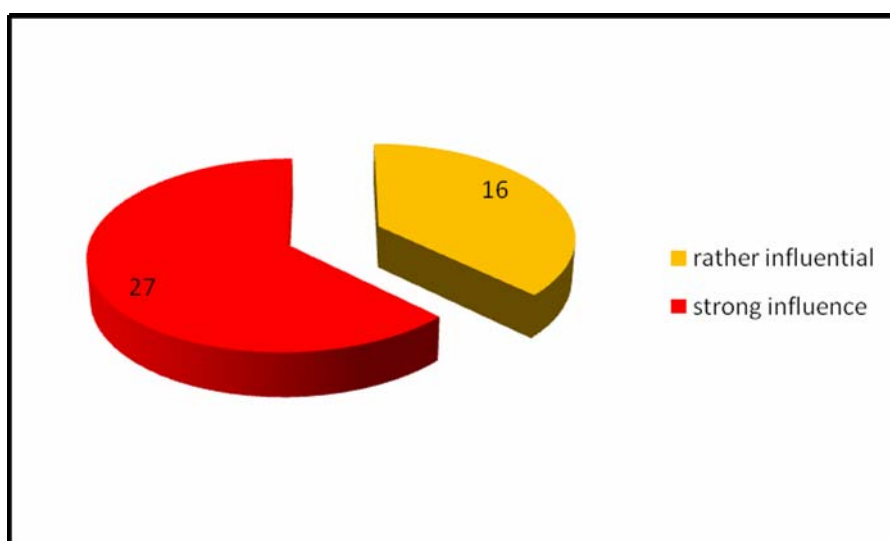
Teacher's experience belongs to the group of facts with unambiguous results, as presented in Graph 23 (see below). With no answer for "no influence", one vote for "small influence" and only 1 respondent, who did not know, 41 respondents evaluated teacher's experience as rather influential (with 22 votes) or even strongly influential (with 19 votes).



Graph 23: The influence of teacher's experience on learners' speaking skills

It is common knowledge that experience makes a master and the teaching profession is no exception. According to the results, the respondents are aware of the importance of the teacher's experience, even if it is only a part of the success in the whole process of learning a language.

The third and last area consists of three facts which results are absolutely clear and unambiguous. The first fact was the teacher's creativity. In fact, there appeared only two answers. 16 respondents evaluated the teacher's creativity as rather influential and 27 remaining respondents voted for strong influence on learners' speaking skills (see graph 24).



Graph 24: The influence of teacher's creativity on learners' speaking skills

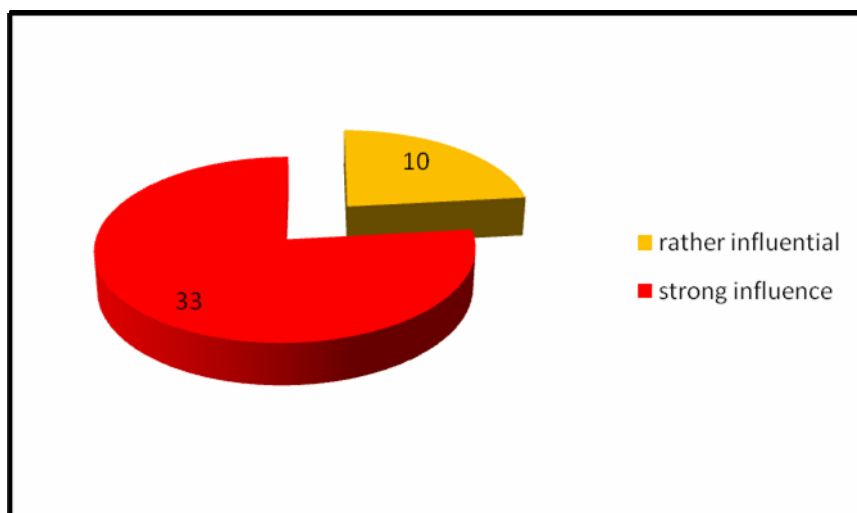
To examine this fact in detail, differences in answers between men and women are presented (see Table 8):

TEACHER'S CREATIVITY									
1		2		3		4		5	
M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W
0	0	0	0	0	0	6	10	17	10
Men and Women together:						16		27	

Table 8: The influence of teacher's creativity on learners' speaking skills - Men vs Women

According to the results from Table 8, men appreciate the teacher's creativity slightly more than women, with 17 men voting for strong influence in comparison to only 10 votes by women. Nevertheless, both genders consider the teacher's creativity being very important to achieve good results while learning languages, as it is usually much easier to achieve improvement in something the learners enjoy studying.

The second fact belonging to the group of facts with unambiguous results was the teacher's level of language. According to Graph 25, none of 43 respondents chose answer 1 ("no influence"), 2 ("small influence") or 3 ("I don't know"). Only 10 respondents evaluated teacher's level of language as being rather influential, while the rest of respondents, 33 to be specific, voted for its strong influence on learners' speaking skills.

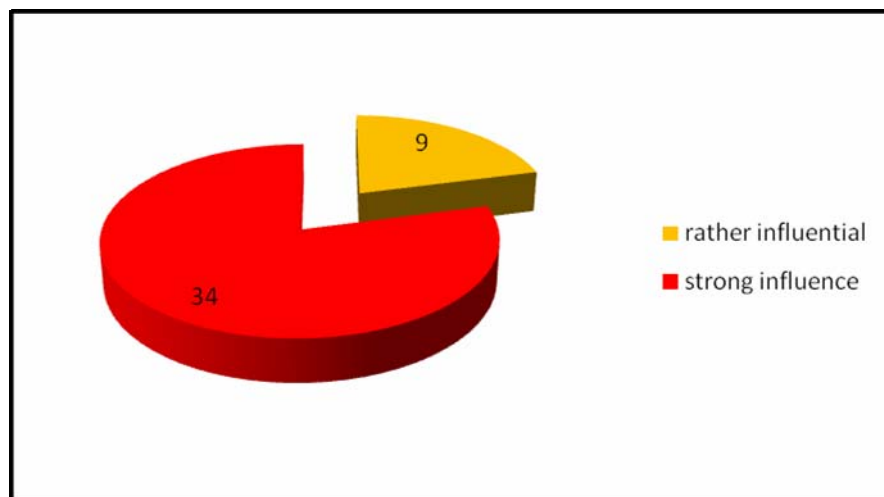


Graph 25: The influence of teacher's level of language on learners' speaking skills

These results correspond with learners' expectation about their teachers, no matter what ages the learners are. This expectation is the teacher to be professional including

classroom management skills, teaching techniques, creativity etc. But one of the most significant attributes of a respected teacher is his or her knowledge of the language he or she teaches.

Finally, teacher's teaching skill is the third fact from the group with clear and unambiguous results. Evaluating the influence on learners' speaking skills, there appeared only 9 votes for its rather influential role, and remaining 34 votes were all for its strong influence on learners' speaking skills (see graph 26).



Graph 26: The influence of teacher's teaching skills on learners' speaking skills

As presented in Table 9, (see below) 4 out of 23 men and 5 out of 20 women voted for a rather influential role of the teacher's teaching skills. To consider proportions between the votes of male and female respondents in percentage, men are more strict when evaluating teacher's teaching skills as only 17 percent of them voted for "rather influential" in comparison to 25 percent of women.

TEACHER'S TEACHING SKILLS									
1		2		3		4		5	
M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W
0	0	0	0	0	0	4	5	19	15
Men and Women together:						9		34	

Table 9: The influence of teacher's teaching skills on learners' speaking skills - Men vs Women

No matter which gender considers teacher's teaching skills being more important, it is possible to claim that the results are in general the same for both genders, and all learners expressed their strong opinion about the irreplaceable importance of the teacher's teaching skills on the results of their learning of a language. This also reflects the common

assumptions from literal sources because the more experience teachers gain by teaching the more skilfully they are able to control the class and expose their learners to new subject matters.

To conclude the influences of various facts on speaking skills of adult learners, there appeared three groups of facts. The first group consists of facts which the respondents evaluated as rather minor. Examples of these facts are e.g. student's and teacher's gender, their age, classroom equipment or, surprisingly, student's age. In the second group, there appeared those facts the respondents evaluated equivocally, or tended to choose the neutral answer. In this group there are for example student's occupation, student's temperament, their responsibility, or their experience and knowledge of other languages and also the teacher's education. The third group then consists of those facts with clear results and which the respondents evaluated as being rather or very influential on their speaking skills. In this group there are the learner's reasons for studies, their previous stay abroad, but also the teacher's responsibility, the number of students in the classroom, and especially classroom atmosphere, the teacher's experience, his or her creativity, and the teacher's level of language and his or her speaking skills.

The results are surprising in some parts or details. Still, the theory meets the praxis in many aspects, as presented above. For instance, adult learners tend to understand their past experience being very important for their further learning as they may rely on it while learning new aspects of a foreign language. Adult learners are usually critical about their teachers and the techniques they use in their class, as they may often refuse new methods and approaches their teachers try to apply. Adult learners also expect a certain level of their teacher's proficiency and therefore teacher's education and teaching skills are evaluated as being very important. And last but not least, the theory about adult learners claims that the reasons for studies are usually also very important and have a strong influence on the results of adult learners' studies. The collected data presents the same results. On the other hand, while the theory claims that for example the classroom atmosphere is very important for learners' language-improvement, the results suggest rather opposite results.

Question no.8: Which techniques mentioned below do you use to improve your speaking skills?

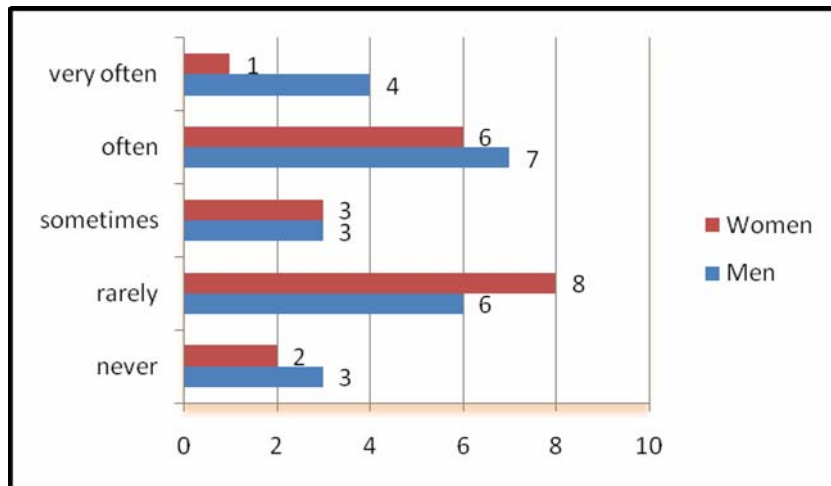
In this question, there were 8 techniques presented for the respondents to evaluate (see Table 10 below). The respondents chose one from five possibilities to say how often they had used a particular technique. The number 1 was for using it never, 2 for rarely, 3 for sometimes, 4 for often and 5 for very often. Apart from these, the respondents could also present other techniques they had used while learning English.

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) techniques and exercises from student's booksb) reading books and other texts in Englishc) listening to the music in Englishd) watching films in Englishe) watching films in English with English subtitlesf) playing PC games in Englishg) using PC and other devices in Englishh) soliloquy in Englishi) other (describe) |
|--|

Table 10: Which techniques do you use to improve your speaking skills?

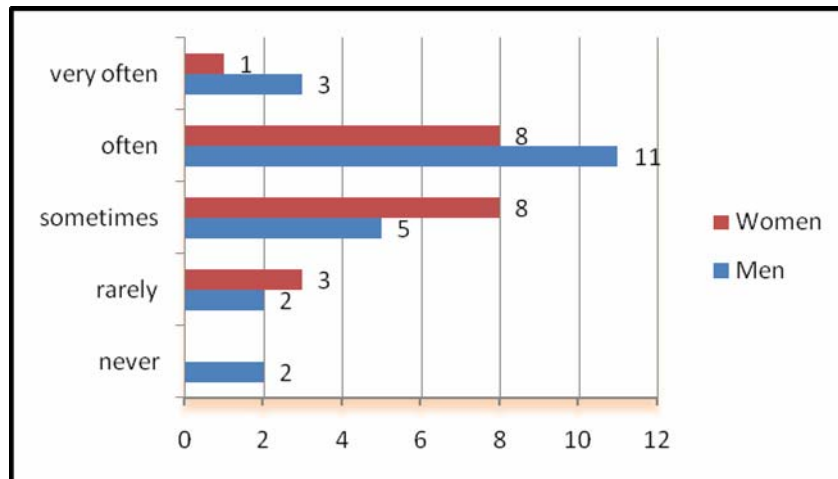
The techniques and exercises from student's books were presented first. As it is shown in Graph 27, 5 respondents claimed never to use these techniques or exercises. The answer "never" was rather strange and improbable, as the respondents should have considered the techniques being used at home but also in their language courses, at school etc. 14 respondents claimed to use these techniques only rarely and 6 voted for "sometimes". 13 claimed to use them often and 5 even very often. The answer between men and women are compared. It is obvious and a bit surprising that men use the techniques and exercises more often than women as 11 voted for "often" or "very often" in comparison to 7 votes from women.

The respondents' answers do not differ from the common assumption about the use of techniques and exercises from student's books. Language learners usually tend to consider these techniques and exercises being boring and monotonous and therefore they do not tend to use them so often, as presented in Graph 27. Still, this notion does not stand for everybody and the results correspond to it, too.



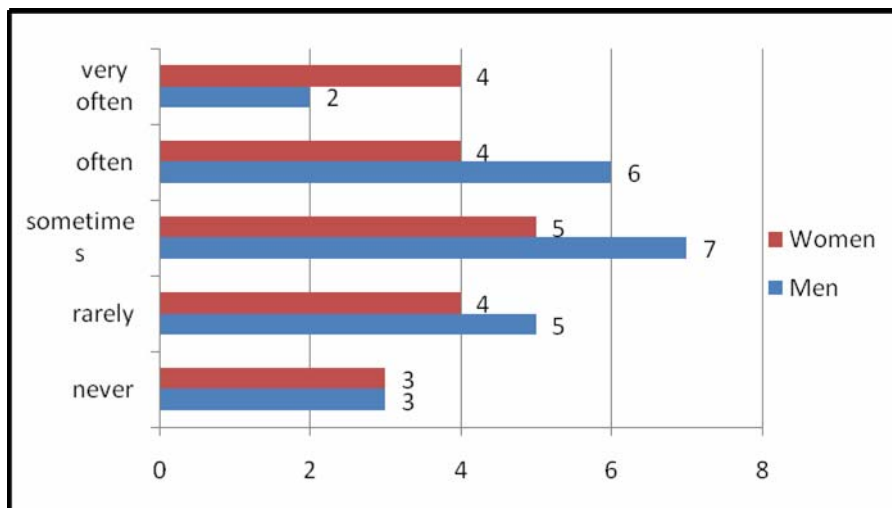
Graph 27: How often do you use techniques and exercises from student's books?

The second technique questioned was reading books and other texts in English to achieve an improvement in speaking skills. As Graph 28 presents, the differences between men and women evaluating this technique were only minor. Only 2 male respondents chose a completely negative answer. 2 men and 3 women claimed to read English texts only rarely while 13 out of 43 respondents chose the answer "sometimes". Finally, 11 men and 8 women claimed to read often in English and 3 men and 1 woman chose the answer "very often". The diversity of these answers may relate to respondents' occupations and opportunities as they may be tasked to deal with English texts at work etc. However, the reason for reading books in English may be much simpler, as some respondents may read for entertainment and to improve their language skills they may choose English texts, too. Still, with 24 out of 43 respondents voting for using reading books and texts in English more than rarely. This is one of the techniques being used quite frequently.



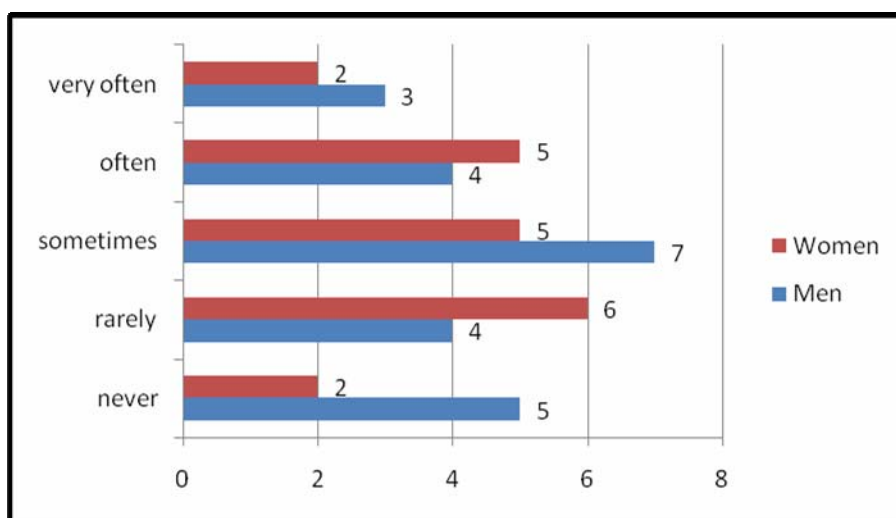
Graph 28: How often do you reading books and other texts in English to improve your speaking skills?

Another technique being evaluated brought a bit more negative results. 3 men and 3 women claimed never to listen to English music to improve their speaking skills. 5 men and 4 women claimed to use it only rarely, and 7 men and 5 women voted for "sometimes". 6 men in comparison to 4 women claimed to use listening to the English music often while only 2 men claimed to use it very often in comparison to 4 women. Music is one of ways of relaxation and some people do not consider it being also a kind of learning tool, as the results confirm. Still, as the results of the previous technique showed, this technique also belongs to those with quite frequent use among the respondents (see Graph 29).



Graph 29: How often do you use listening to the English music?

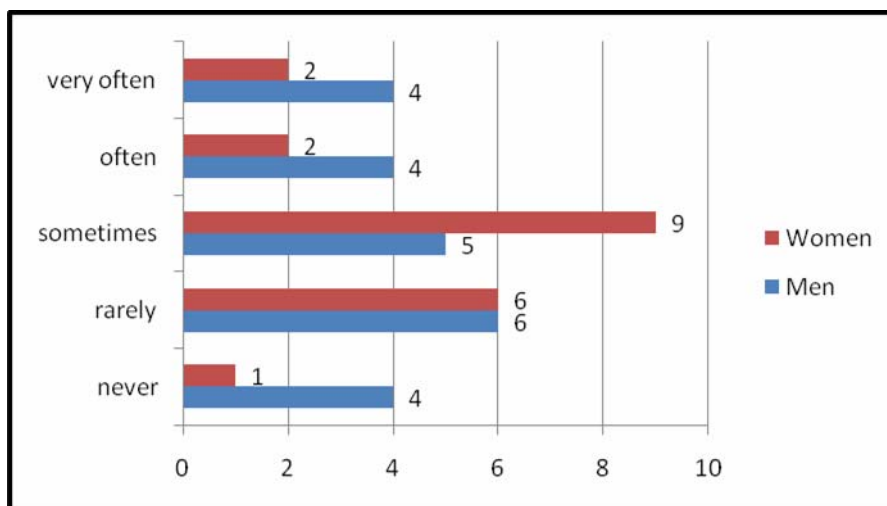
Watching films in English and watching films in English with English subtitles were two techniques with a bit surprising results when comparing the answers between men and women. According to Graph 30, 5 men claimed never to watch films in English in



Graph 30: How often do you watch films in English to improve your speaking skills?

comparison to only 2 women. 4 male respondents claimed to watch films in English rarely and so did 6 females. 7 men claimed sometimes to use this technique in comparison to 5 women. 7 male respondents chose answers "often" or "very often" comparing to 7 female respondents.

Graph 31 presents the respondents' answers about watching films in English with English subtitles to improve their speaking skills. 6 respondents claimed to use this technique very often, and other 6 respondents claimed to use it often. 14 respondents then voted for "sometimes". 12 respondents claimed to watch films in English with English subtitles only rarely, and 5 chose the answer "never".



Graph 31: How often do you watch films in English with English subtitles to improve your speaking skills?

When comparing the results presented in Graph 30 and 31, the results more or less correspond. It is possible to claim that if films in English are used to improve speaking skills, they are more likely watched with English subtitles. This may help the audience to understand the film better as they do not rely only on their ears but also eyes. Nowadays, there is much bigger possibility to watch films in English and with English subtitles, too. Therefore it is possible to assume that adult learners watch them quite frequently even if not for study reasons only. Still, they may learn certain words or phrases and, in fact, improve their speaking skills even unintentionally. According to the results, most of the respondents are aware of using films at least sometimes for study purposes, too.

Playing PC games in English was another technique questioned and the results presented in Table 10 are not surprising. 26 respondents claimed to never use PC games in English to practise or improve their speaking skills, with equal number for both genders.

	Playing PC games in English				
	never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often
Men	13	7	2		1
Women	13	5	2		
M+W	26	12	4	0	1

Table 11: How often do you play PC games in English to improve your speaking skills?

12 respondents claimed to use this technique only rarely, and 4 chose the answer "sometimes". None of the 43 respondents claimed to use PC games in English to improve

speaking skills often, and finally only one male respondent claimed to use it very often. To analyse not only gender but also age differences. Table 11 was designed to present such information (see below).

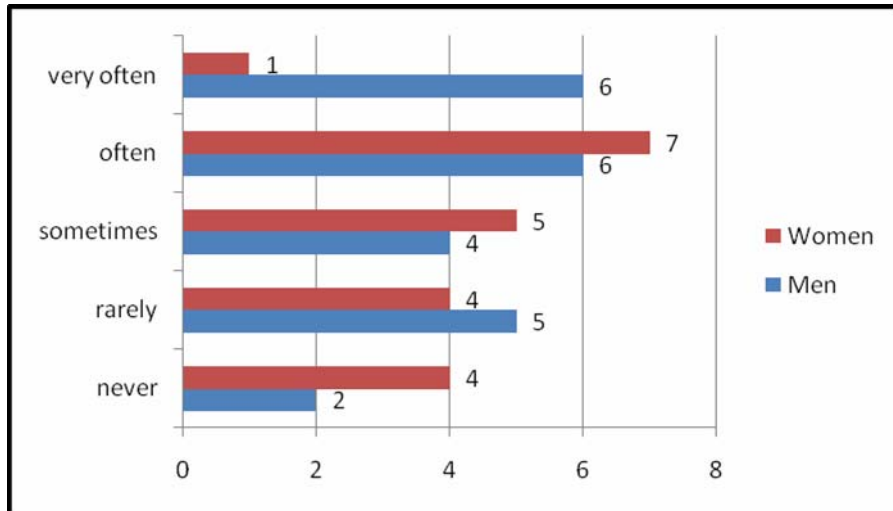
When comparing answers among male respondents, the younger the respondents were, the more positive answers were collected. 2 males between 41 and 50 years of age voted for (at least) "rarely", 1 male between 31 and 40 years of age voted for "rarely" with 1 voting for "sometimes" and 1 for "very often".

	age	Playing PC games in English				
		never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often
Men	20-30	3	4	1		
	31-40	6	1	1		1
	41-50	3	2			
	51+	1				
Women	20-30	7	3			
	31-40	5				
	41-50	1	1	2		
	51+		1			

Table 12: Playing PC games in English - Men vs Women

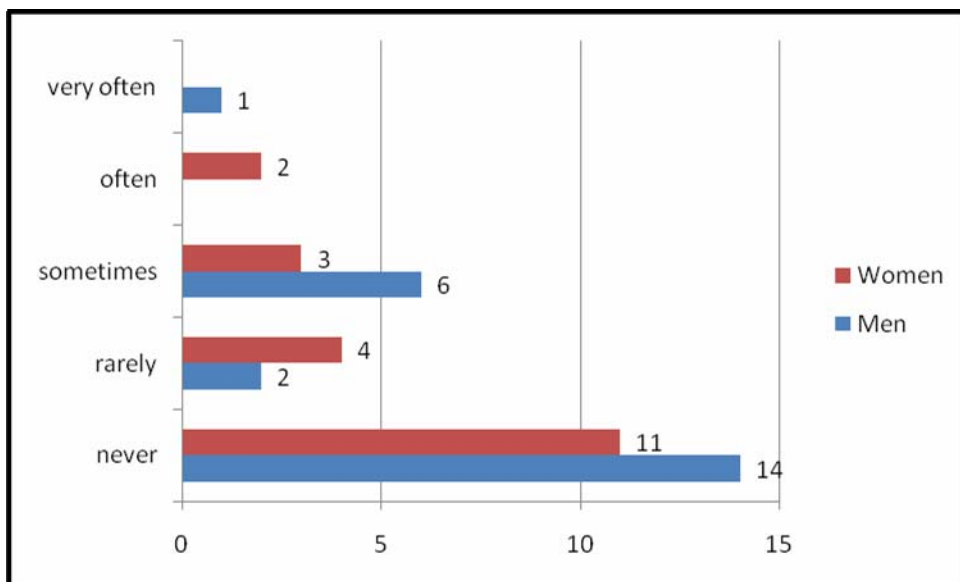
When comparing answers among female respondents, a bit surprising data appeared. While only 3 women aged 20 - 30 years claimed to use PC games rarely, none of the women aged 31 - 40 chose this or any other positive answer. However, 1 female between 41 and 50 years of age voted for "rarely" and 2 female respondents even voted for "sometimes". These results mostly conform the general public assumption about this technique being used while learning, with these a bit less common exceptions.

Using PC and other devices in English was one of the techniques with frequent positive answers. 2 males and 4 females claimed to use devices never in English, and 5 males and 4 females claimed to use this technique only rarely. 4 males and 5 females then chose their answer "sometimes". 6 male and even 7 female respondents claimed to use PC and other devices in English often. Finally, only 1 female respondent voted for "very often" in comparison to 6 female respondents. These results may reflect the common practice of having manuals, operating systems or other programmes of such devices in the original as well as the target language available. Therefore there is practically no need to use PC and other electronic devices in English. That is why the results are a little surprising even if a certain number of positive answers was expected.



Graph 32: How often do you use PC and other devices in English to improve your speaking skills?

The last technique used to improve speaking skills questioned was learners' soliloquy in English. Even if this is a natural part of human life, the results were not surprising. As presented in Graph 33, only one man claimed to use soliloquy in English very often and only 2 women claimed to use it often. Other 9 respondents, 3 women and 6 men, claimed to use it sometimes, and 6 respondents claimed speak to themselves only rarely. Finally, 14 men and 11 women chose the answer "never".



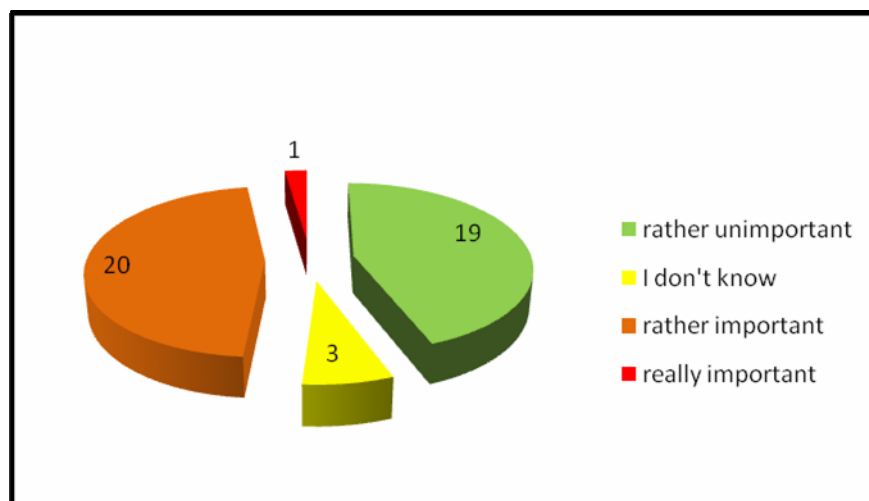
Graph 33: How often do you use soliloquy in English to improve your speaking skills?

To summarize question number 8, there were eight techniques used to improve learners' speaking skills questioned. There appeared in three categories of techniques with

rather rare, common or rather frequent usage among the respondents. According to the results presented above, soliloquy in English together with playing PC games in English are two examples of techniques which the adult respondents claimed not to apply frequently to improve their speaking skills. The second category consists of techniques which the respondents evaluated rather ambiguously with similar figures of positive, neutral and negative answers. Examples of these techniques are techniques and exercises from student's books, listening to the music in English, watching films in English and with English subtitles. The category with techniques often used to improve learners' speaking skills is represented by reading books and other texts in English or using PC and other devices in English, with the biggest figure of positive answers. Except for the techniques presented, the respondents had also opportunity to present any other technique which was not mentioned in the list. There appeared a few examples from several individuals: listening to BBC radio, listening to English colleagues at work, grammar exercises on PC, speaking to teachers or native speakers, and use of English in practical life.

Question no.9: Are the following aspects of a spoken language important for you?

In this part, the respondents were supposed to express their opinion about the importance of 10 aspects of spoken English. Again, they had 5 answers available from the number 1 for "not important" to 5 "really important". The aspects were the following: grammatical correctness, word order, accent, pronunciation, making pauses among words and sentences, intonation, the ability to describe unknown words using familiar ones, knowledge of synonyms and antonyms, fluency, and finally the ability to react.

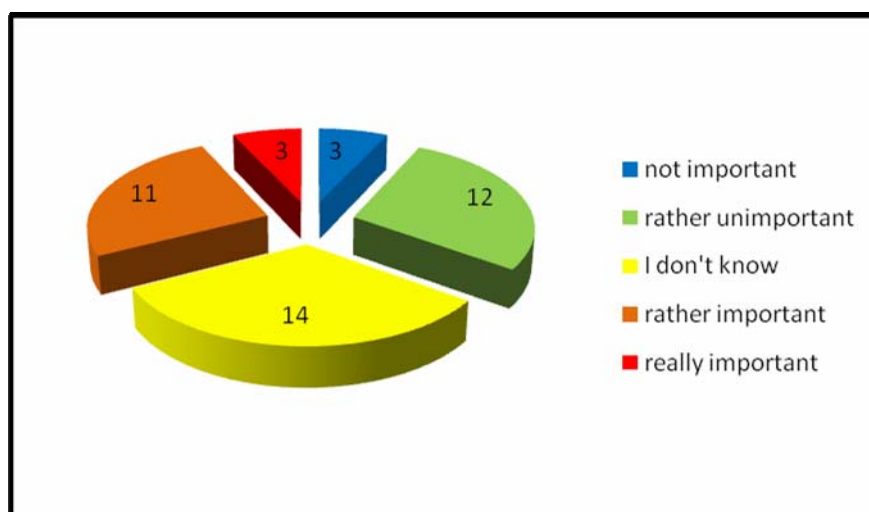


Graph 34: How important is grammatical correctness in spoken English?

The figures gained about the first aspect are shown in Graph 34. The results about grammatical correctness are rather ambiguous. None of the respondents thought that grammatical correctness is not important when speaking English. Men more than women tended to vote for a "rather unimportant" role of grammatical correctness while speaking English with 12 votes from men to 7 votes from women. Almost twice more women than men claimed that grammatical correctness is rather important with 7 votes from men and 13 from women. One man voted for grammatical correctness to be "really important" and three respondents did not know. This result may correspond to the common assumption of some people that it does not matter how they speak but that they speak to communicate. This attitude to grammatical correctness is not typical only for adult learners but it is very often them who try to "resist" grammatical improvement as they tend to think it is not so important. Still, the results proved that grammatical correctness may be important for some adult learners. Probably those who do not use English only in spoken form but also in written form when writing for example business emails etc. may consider grammatical correctness to be much more important than the respondents who voted for its unimportance.

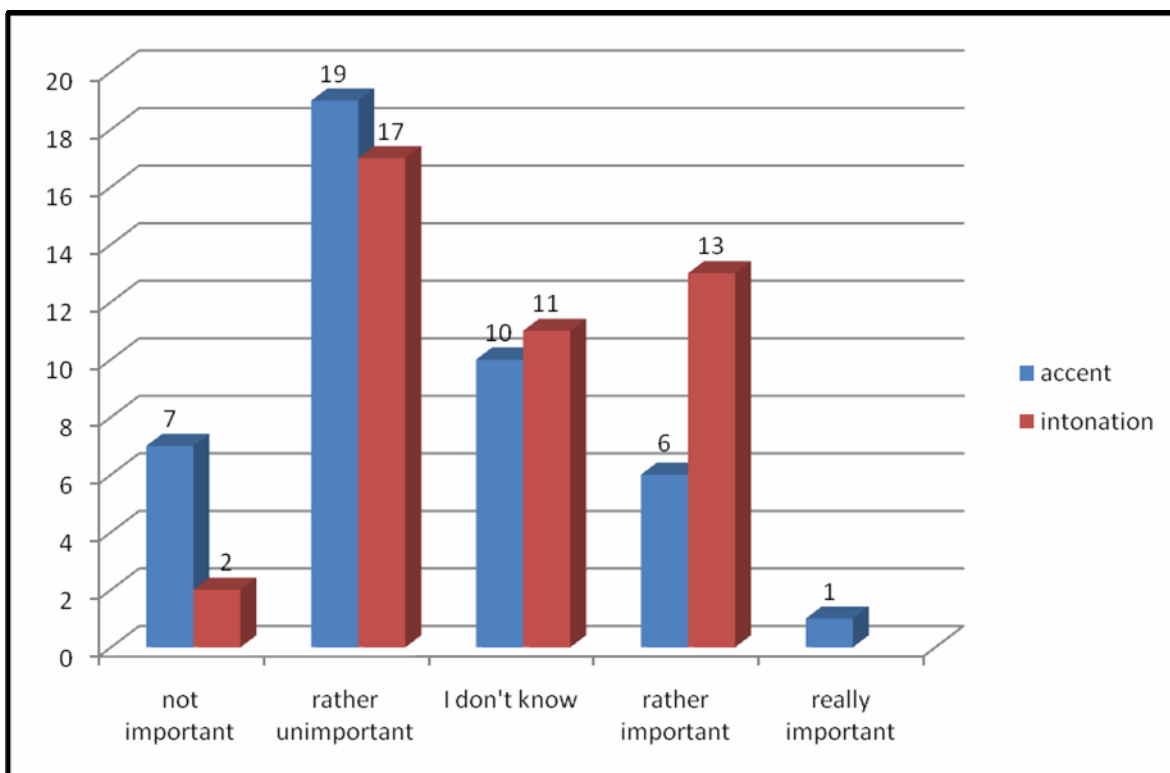
Graph 35 presents the results about the second of two ambiguous aspects of spoken English questioned in the questionnaires - making pauses between words and sentences. Three respondents saw no importance of this aspect, while three other respondents had a completely opposite opinion. 11 respondents claimed that making poses between words and sentences are rather important while 12 respondents chose the answer "rather unimportant". 14 out of 43 respondents did not know. This may correspond to the fact that

learners more likely focus on grammatical correctness or meaning of words they use and care much less about the phonetic part of a language. Still these results are a bit surprising because it should have much more important role for language learners. It is usual that learners regardless of age have usually significant problems with spoken form of foreign languages especially when listening to a conversation of a quicker rate. The respondents who evaluated making pauses between words and sentences to be rather unimportant may consider only their own form of spoken language and did not focus on spoken languages in general.



Graph 35: How important is making poses between words and sentences in spoken English?

Accent and intonation are two aspects of spoken English with mostly negative opinions about their importance (see Graph 36). Only 13 out of 43 respondents understood intonation being rather important and only 7 respondents thought the same about accent with 6 votes for "rather important" and 1 vote for "very important" role in spoken English. Approximately one fourth of the respondents did not know if accent and intonation are important, with 11 votes about intonation and 10 about accent. Considering intonation, 17 respondents evaluated it as rather unimportant while speaking English, and 2 respondents voted for its no importance. Even more negative evaluation was collected about the accent of spoken English with 19 votes for rather unimportant role of accent and 7 for no importance. Accent is represented by number 1 in Graph 35 and intonation is represented by number 2.



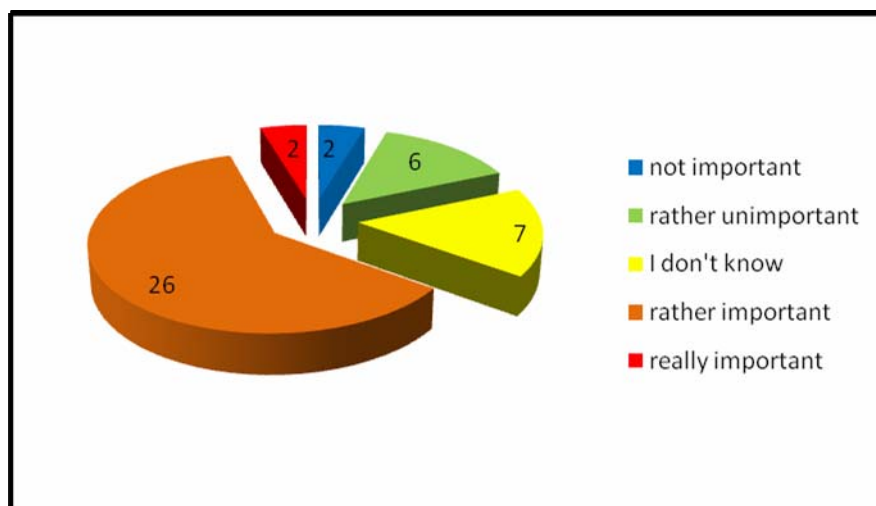
Graph 36: How important are accent and intonation in spoken English?

The results about the role of accent and intonation are not surprising as their roles are usually underestimated by language learners. This may be teachers' mistake, too. Teaching materials used to practise listening to spoken English are mostly and typically in standard British or (less frequently) American English while examples of other accents are difficult or even impossible to find and present to English learners. However, the exercises focusing on intonation are more frequent as they may be much easier to present by teachers to their students. This may be the reason why more respondents evaluated intonation being rather important more often than regarding accent.

The first example of aspects with mostly positive opinions about its importance in spoken English is fluency. Only 2 respondents saw no importance of fluency while speaking. 6 respondents claimed it being rather unimportant and 7 respondents did not know. On the other side, 26 out of 43 respondents understood fluency of spoken English being rather important and even stronger opinion had 2 respondents (see Graph 37). Adult learners are aware of the inappropriate poses they make when trying to find suitable words to express themselves more often than young learners. The results correspond to the assumption that fluency is usually evaluated as being important especially by adult learners as they do not feel happy only if they manage to create a sentence their teachers asked

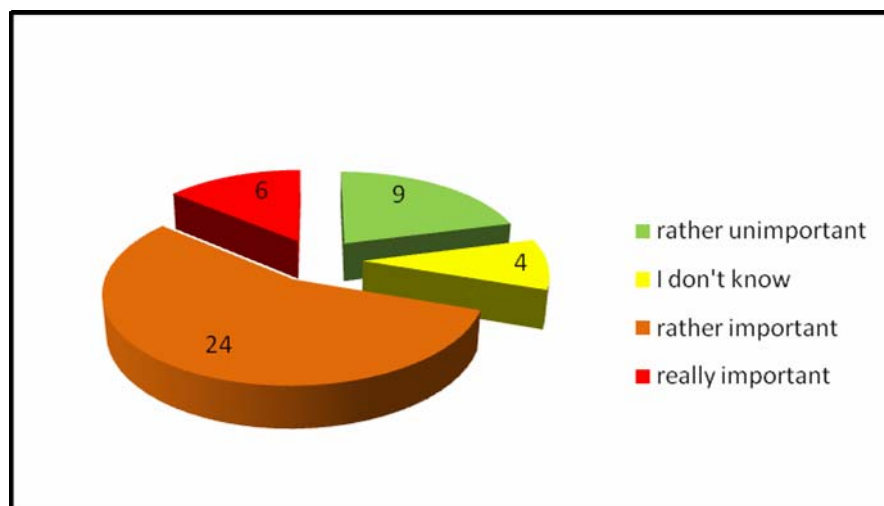
them to say. They want to be understood and to express themselves appropriately to sound as naturally as possible.

The knowledge of synonyms and antonyms was the second aspect of spoken English with mostly positive opinions about its importance, as shown in Graph 38. None of the respondents voted for no importance and only 6 claimed to understand knowledge of synonyms and antonyms as rather unimportant. 8 respondents did not know. 29 out of 43 respondents evaluated it as rather or very important with 25 and 4 votes for these answers. The results about knowledge of synonyms and antonyms are not surprising as adult learners more likely than their young colleagues are not content with using similar but different words from those they need when expressing themselves. Adult learners are more strict to themselves and do not only want to know the ways how to express their thought by words they know but also to use the words they would use in their mother tongue.



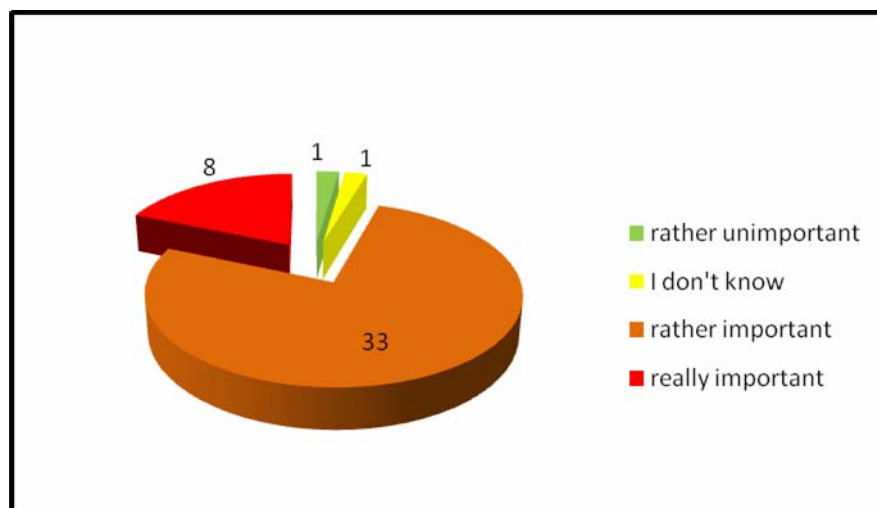
Graph 37: How important is fluency of spoken English?

The third aspect with mostly positive opinions about its importance when considering spoken English is the word order. While none of the respondents voted for no importance of word order in spoken English, 9 of them claimed to understand it as rather unimportant. Only 4 out of 43 respondents did not know. 30 out of 43 respondents then chose positive answers with 24 votes for rather important and 6 for very important role of word order while speaking English (see Graph 38). Not surprisingly, word order is commonly considered to be very important as it is one of the most significant aspects of a language necessary to be understood properly. As the results present, the respondents were aware of it very well.



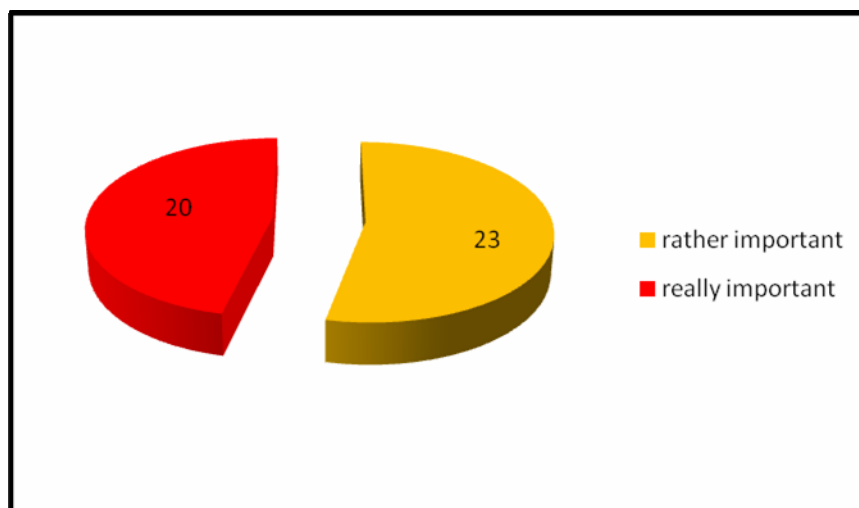
Graph 38: How important is word order of spoken English?

Pronunciation is another aspect with mostly positive opinions about its importance when discussing spoken English. None of the respondents claimed to see no importance of this aspect. One respondent evaluated pronunciation as being rather unimportant and one respondent chose the answer "I don't know". 33 out of 43 respondents claimed to understand pronunciation being rather important and for 8 respondents it was really important (see graph 39). From this result it is obvious that learners tend to pay more attention to the way of pronunciation of particular words than to accent and intonation of the whole sentences and their speech. This may, again, be also the result of teachers' failure when providing their students with plenty of pronunciation exercises and none or very few exercises training intonation sufficiently. It may be also the result of learners focusing more likely on pronunciation of particular words when they have difficulties in fluent speaking. Intonation is usually hard to practise when students pronounce one word after another without any noticeable linking between them. Still, according to the results from the questionnaires the respondents are aware of the importance of correct pronunciation.



Graph 39: How important is pronunciation of spoken English?

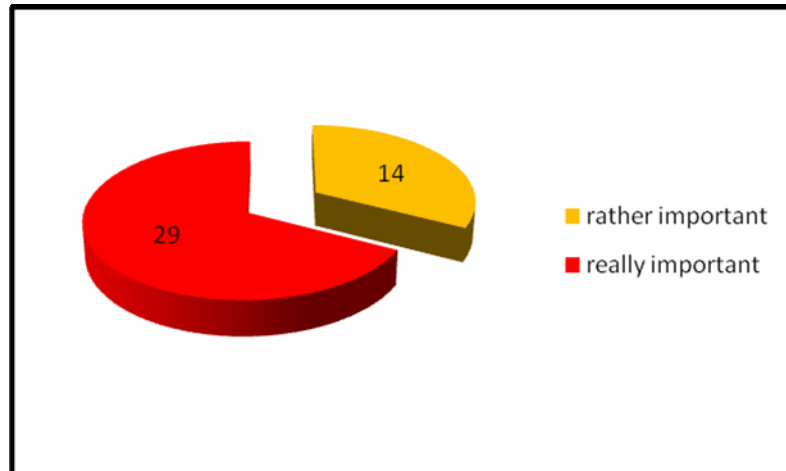
Two aspects of spoken English which were evaluated as being rather or very important the most often were the ability to describe unknown words by using the familiar ones and the ability to react. Both these aspects were evaluated only with positive opinions. The ability to describe unknown words by using familiar ones was evaluated as being rather important by 23 respondents and 20 respondents claimed this aspect being really important when considering spoken English (see graph 39). As literal sources present similar information, these results were not surprising when proving its correctness in praxis. The ability to describe unknown words by using the familiar ones seems to be very important for adult learners as it helps them to express themselves to be understood even if not using the most appropriate words. This fact is highly evaluated especially by those who have to use a foreign language in everyday communication at work etc.



Graph 40: How important is the ability to describe unknown words using familiar ones in spoken English?

This knowledge also help learners to gain a certain fluency in their speech and therefore to help them to improve their speaking skills. The results about this aspect present the respondents awareness of its great importance in spoken language.

The ability to react, the last aspect being questioned in question number 9, was evaluated as being the most important when considering aspects of spoken English. As shown in Graph 40, again there appeared only a positive answer with 14 votes from the respondents who claimed to see this ability as being rather important and 29 respondents anked this ability as really important (see Graph 40 below). This ability is very important because any speaker of foreign language may happen to be in a situation when he or she has to react to another speaker without any time for preceding preparation. Most of learners of foreign languages need the languages at work or at least for basic communication while travelling. Both cases are full of situations when this ability is a key one to communicate what the speakers need or want. The respondents proved to have the same opinion about this aspect of spoken language.



Graph 41: How important is the ability to react in spoken English?

To summarize the data collected about the aspect of spoken English, there appeared three groups of aspects evaluated similarly. When considering spoken English, the group of aspects with the least positive opinions about their importance were accent and intonation. The second group consisted of the aspects with mostly neutral or ambiguous answers. There was the aspect of making pauses between words and sentences and of grammatical correctness with a similar number of positive, neutral and negative opinions. Finally, the third group consist of those aspects with mostly positive opinions. These are the aspects which the respondents understand being the most important about spoken English. Broadly speaking, adult learners may tend to think that their intonation and accent are not really important when speaking. They tend to think similarly about making pauses and grammatical correctness. However, adult learners may much more likely appreciate their own fluency, knowledge of words to express themselves, correct word order and mainly the ability to react using the words they are familiar with. Simply, grammatical and phonetic correctness is much less important than the ability to communicate, to understand and to make oneself being understood.

Question number 10 was not a real question but only an opportunity for any other comments about this topic. There appeared practically no respondents willing to comment except for one respondent complaining about the lack of time for studies at home, and two other respondents comparing old ways of teaching to the modern ones. They expressed their positive attitudes to the modern way of teaching and one of them appreciated supporting activities making learning easier and more entertaining.

V. IMPLICATIONS

Implications for Teaching

The data analysed in the practical part of this thesis may help the teachers to understand better the differences in the approach to adult learners and various rarities (when comparing to young learners) they should keep in mind when working with them. According to the research, adult learners are more critical of their teachers and the activities and techniques being used, as they compare their time spent in the language class to their improvement in communication in the target language. Therefore it is very important to carefully evaluate and consider every technique and activity teachers use in their classes. It is also advisable to include adult learners in the process of teaching, especially when completing teaching plans. Adult learners more likely than young learners care about everything which is done in their class including particular grammar and vocabulary topics, apart from teaching techniques etc. Teachers should also keep in mind the reasons why their adult learners are studying a foreign language and consider these reasons when preparing teaching plans to make sure that they meet adult learners' expectations and needs. The teacher's approach to correcting mistakes their adult learners make is especially important. Even if adult learners may tend to feel more anxious and nervous when using foreign languages in practical situations, such as communication at work or on holiday, they do not have to feel more relaxed in the class either.

The data may help adult learners too as they may understand the difficulties teachers working with adult learners face better. Adult learners who are aware of the different approach from their teachers to them in comparison to young learners may become better students. It may be so as they more likely designate their expectations from the language courses and their needs.

Limitation of the Research

There are several aspects limiting the results gained from the research. Even if the number of respondents is sufficient, the quantification of the results gained may be a bit distorted. This distortion may be caused by the sample of respondents who are all from the same region - the Western Bohemian city of Pilsen and its close suburb. Another distortion may be caused by respondents' education as most of them have degrees from universities. With a higher number of respondents from different regions and with different education,

the results may possibly change in some aspects. Age may be another aspect limiting the results of the research. The respondents were of different ages from 26 to 56. On one hand, this rather wide range of ages may guarantee more objective results than those of specific age groups. However, with larger numbers of respondents of different ages there could appear further differences among them, especially when focusing on differences between genders.

Suggestions for Further Research

One of the further research possibilities may be the correlation between learners' improvement in English language and the length of their studies. In the questionnaires used, the first question examined the length of respondents' English studies. However, it may be interesting to study the differences in learners' improvement regarding to the length of their language studies throughout their life compared to the improvement achieved only when considering the continuous language studies.

Another possibility for further research may be the issue of phonetic aspects of spoken English and their importance to adult learners. According to the results of the questionnaires used, adult learners do not understand these aspects being important and may tend to underestimate them. The possible further research of this topic may focus on the reasons why adult learners evaluate the phonetic aspects this way and on the time given to practise intonation, pronunciation etc. in their classes

The third question of the questionnaire used collected information about several areas of the English language in which adult learners meet difficulties. For further research it may be interesting to focus on these areas in depth and name various sub-areas to find out, which areas and sub-areas cause most of the problems adult learners may face.

In the seventh question of the questionnaire used, the influences of several facts on adult learners' speaking skills are examined. If focusing on these facts more closely, interesting information may be collected when giving respondents more space to describe the reasons why they think these facts are or are not influencing. However, in such case the data gained may be very difficult to generalize and quantify as there may possibly appear a big amount of various ideas and opinions.

In question number eight, there were several techniques used to improve learners' speaking skills described. For further research, it may be interesting to ask respondents to

mention concrete examples of these techniques (e.g. which English songs, books or films they found useful for their studies) as the collection of such examples may be helpful both for teachers and learners to use in their further teaching and studies.

Or, there may be similar questionnaires designed for teachers and also for young learners. Comparing the results gained from the questionnaires for adults and young, we may collect data about different preferences or difficulties among different generations. And when comparing the adult and young learners' points of view with teachers' ones, more interesting or even surprising information may be gained.

To summarize this chapter, there were several benefits of the results gained from the questionnaires mentioned. First in implication for teaching, there are various tips mentioned such as teachers' careful consideration of every activity and technique to be used when teaching, or teachers' attitude to their adult students and the correction of mistakes they make. Second, limitations of the research are mentioned regarding the respondents, the area they come from, and their age. Third, there are several ideas for further research suggested to study some of the aspects and areas mentioned in the questionnaires.

VI. CONCLUSION

As described in the theoretical background section of this thesis, there are lots of factors which make adult learners be significantly different students from their younger colleagues, especially when considering learning speaking skills. Among those factors there are adult learners' experiences and expectations or the reasons for studies. Their attitude to learning English also differs as the adult learners understand English to be rather a tool for successful communication than only a school subject.

The data gained via questionnaires were compared to the theoretical assumptions about adult learners to find out if the theory meets the praxis, and if not, to determine the areas of possible differences together with commenting on their probable reasons. The theory meets the praxis in most of its assumptions. For instance, results from the questionnaires proved that adult learners find lots of positive differences in the teaching styles they used to meet in their past in comparison to the modern ones, especially connected with practising speaking skills. They seem to meet difficulties in spoken English and in listening to it more likely than in grammar etc. Adult learners also strictly assess their teachers, their education, techniques and aids their use in their classes and they especially assess the ways how teachers behave to them. In general, most of the theory was supported by the data collected through the questionnaires.

Still, there appeared several areas in which the praxis showed a few different facts. The most significant difference between the theoretical assumptions and the practical results are in the difficulties when considering speaking skills. The respondents disproved the assumptions that adult learners are nervous when speaking in front of other students or their teachers as they are usually used to speaking to other people. Adult learners are also not afraid of making grammatical mistakes or mistakes in intonation. The results showed that adult learners tend more likely to meet difficulties in finding appropriate words while speaking or in using spoken English in real life. In general, adult learners tend to evaluate the importance of particular aspects of English according to their importance of a day-to-day use. The surveyed adult learners also do not consider classroom atmosphere being so influential while the theoretical assumptions claim the opposite. And last but not least, the theory claims that some adult learners may resist the modern ways of teaching. However, the results from the questionnaires did not support this statement.

The techniques dedicated to improving speaking skills were also questioned. As the data collected from the questionnaires showed, for instance using PC and other devices in English, reading books and other texts in English or watching films in English with English subtitles belong among those techniques of bigger importance and usefulness. Some techniques were rather underestimated, e.g. playing PC games in English or soliloquy in English.

English teachers may use the information collected and described in this thesis to improve their attitude to adult learners and the techniques teachers use in their classes according to their adult students' preferences and needs. The data may also help English teachers to understand their adult students better when dealing with mistakes and difficulties in their spoken English. Adult learners may then gain interesting information about their own studies and better understand the difficulties they meet themselves.

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APPENDIX 1: Questionnaire - Adult Learners (Czech version)

Problémy ve vyučování anglické konverzace dospělých studentů

- DOTAZNÍK - (adult learners)

Informace získané z tohoto dotazníku budou použity jako podklad k praktické části mé diplomové práce, která se zabývá obtížemi výuky anglické konverzace dospělých studentů. Prosím, snažte se na uvedené otázky odpovídat pravdivě. Dotazník je anonymní.

Pohlaví: muž žena

Váš věk:

1. Jak dlouho studujete anglický jazyk?

- a) méně než 5 let b) 5-10 let c) více než 10 let

2. Nacházíte rozdíly ve stylu, jakým se učíte anglický jazyk dnes, oproti minulosti (např. na ZŠ, SŠ apod.)? Označte následující oblasti od 1 do 5 (1 = žádné rozdíly, 2 = mírné rozdíly, 3 = nevím, 4 = spíše rozdílné, 5 = rozhodně rozdílné) :

	1	2	3	4	5
gramatika	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
slovní zásoba	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
psaní	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
poslech	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
mluvení	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
uspořádání výuky	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
využívání materiálů	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
domácí úlohy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
výukové aktivity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
spolupráce	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
zlepšování se v jazyce	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Ve které oblasti anglického jazyka se potýkáte s obtížemi? Zakřížkujte (x).

(1 = bez potíží, 2 = malé potíže, 3 = nevím, 4 = znatelné obtíže, 5 = výrazné obtíže)

	1	2	3	4	5
gramatika	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
slovní zásoba	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
mluvený projev	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
spelování	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
výslovnost	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
psaní	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
poslech	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Jakým obtížím čelíte, mluvíme-li o učení konverzačních dovedností? (1 = žádné potíže, 2 = drobné, 3 = nevím, 4 = spíše větší potíže, 5 = podstatné potíže):

- | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) nervozita před ostatními studenty, případně před učitelem či dalšími lidmi | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) obavy z gramatických chyb | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) obavy z chyb ve výslovnosti | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) problémy s nacházením vhodných slov | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) problémy s použitím v praktickém životě (v zaměstnání, na dovolené atd.) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f) jiné (popište): | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

5. Které postupy považujete za přínosné pro zlepšení komunikačních dovedností? Rozhodněte, jsou-li uvedené názory pravdivé (P) nebo nepravdivé (N):

- a) Většina technik a cvičení v učebnicích je užitečná. P / N
- b) Myslím si, že čtení anglických textů a knih mi pomáhá ve zlepšení vlastní komunikace. P / N
- c) Myslím si, že poslech anglických rozhovorů mi pomáhá ve zlepšení vlastní komunikace. P / N
- d) Myslím si, že sledování anglicky mluvených filmů je přínosné pro učení AJ. P / N
- e) Myslím si, že sledování anglicky mluvených filmů s AJ titulky je přínosné. P / N
- f) Myslím si, že počítačové hry, ve kterých se objevuje angličtina, jsou přínosné. P / N

g) Myslím si, že využívání internetu a počítače v angličtině obecně je přínosné.

P / N

6. Jakou část hodiny věnuje Váš učitel angličtiny procvičování mluveného projevu? (průměrně)

- a) méně než 1/4 hodiny b) 1/4 - 1/3 hodiny c) polovinu hodiny d) více než polovinu hodiny

7. Jaký vliv mají, dle Vašeho názoru, následující fakta na Vaše komunikační dovednosti? Ohodnoťte každý bod číslem od 1 do 5 (1 = žádný vliv, 2 = slabý vliv, 3 = nevím, 4 = spíše ovlivňující, 5 = velký vliv):

	1	2	3	4	5
1. pohlaví studenta	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. věk studenta	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. zaměstnání studenta	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. vzdělání studenta	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. zahraniční pobyt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. jazyková úroveň studenta	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. důvody k učení se jazyku	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. zkušenosti studenta	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. studentův temperament	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. zodpovědnost	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. studentova znalost a zkušenosti s jinými cizími jazyky	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. počet studentů ve třídě	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. atmosféra ve třídě	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. třídní vybavenosti (rádio, PC...)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. pohlaví učitele	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. věk učitele	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. vzdělání učitele	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. výukové dovednosti učitele	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. jazyková úroveň učitele	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. zkušenosti učitele	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. kreativita učitele	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. učitelovazodpovědnost	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. jiné (popište):					

8. Které techniky popsané níže využíváte (ve výuce i mimo ni) k vlastnímu učení mluveného projevu? (1 = nikdy, 2 = zřídka, 3 = někdy, 4 = často, 5 = velmi často)

	1	2	3	4	5
techniky a cvičení z učebnice AJ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
čtení knih a textů v angličtině	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
poslech anglické hudby	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
sledování filmů a seriálů v angličtině	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
sledování filmů a seriálů v angličtině s AJ titulky	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PC hry v angličtině	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
používání PC a jiných zařízení v angličtině	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
samomluva v cizím jazyce	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
jiné (uvěďte):					

9. Jsou podle Vás důležité následující aspekty mluveného projevu? Do jaké míry? Ohodnoťte následující aspekty mluveného projevu čísly od 1 do 5 (1 = nedůležitý, 2 = spíše nedůležitý, 3 = nevím, 4 = spíše důležitý, 5 = rozhodně důležitý) :

	1	2	3	4	5
(1) gramatická správnost	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2) slovosled	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3) přízvuk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4) výslovnost	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(5) pauzy mezi větami či slovy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(6) intonace	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| (7) schopnost popsat neznámé výrazy slovy
mluvčímu známými | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (8) znalost synonym a antonym | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (9) plynulost | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (10) schopnost reagovat | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

10. Zde můžete uvést další komentář k čemukoliv vztahujícímu se k některé z částí dotazníku nebo jeho tématu - Problémy ve vyučování anglické konverzace dospělých studentů:

.....

.....

.....

Děkuji za Váš čas!

APPENDIX 2: Questionnaire - Adult Learners (English version)

Difficulties in teaching speaking skills to adult English learners

- QUESTIONNAIRE - (adult learners)

The results of this questionnaire are to be used as a basis for the practical part of my diploma thesis dealing with difficulties in teaching speaking skills to adult English learners. Please, take your time with answering the questions honestly. The questionnaire is anonymous.

Your gender: male female

Your age:

1. How long have you been studying English?

- a) for less than 5 years b) 5-10 years c) for more than 10 years

2. Do you find any differences in the way you are learning English now in comparison to the past (e.g. basic school, high school etc.) Mark the following areas with numbers from 1 to 5 (1 = no difference, 2 = slight difference, 3 = I don't know, 4 = more differences, 5 = big differences) :

	1	2	3	4	5
grammar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
vocabulary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
writing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
listening	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
speaking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
classroom management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
material used	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
homework	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
teaching activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
cooperation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
language improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. In which areas of English do you meet difficulties? Cross (x):

(1 = no difficulties, 2 = small difficulties, 3 = I don't know, 4 = common difficulties, 5 = significant difficulties)

	1	2	3	4	5
grammar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
vocabulary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
speaking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
spelling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
pronunciation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
writing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
listening	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Which difficulties do you meet considering learning and practising speaking skills? (1 = no difficulties, 2 = small difficulties, 3 = I don't know, 4 = common difficulties, 5 = significant difficulties):

	1	2	3	4	5
a) nervousity in front of other students, the teacher, or other participants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) worries about grammatical mistakes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) worries about mistakes in pronunciation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) difficulties with finding suitable words	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) difficulties in real life (e.g. at work, on vacation etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) other (describe):					
.....					
.....					

5. Which methods and techniques do you find effective to improve speaking skills? Decide whether the following statements are true (T) or false (F), in your opinion:

- a) Most of the techniques and exercises in student's books are useful. T / F
- b) Reading texts and books in English is helpful in improving my speaking skills. T / F
- c) Listening from student's books are helpful in improving my speaking skills. T / F

- d) Watching films in English is helpful in improving my speaking skills. T / F
 e) Watching films in English with English subtitles is helpful in improving my speaking skills. T / F
 f) Playing PC games in English is helpful in improving my speaking skills. P / N
 g) Using internet and computers in English is useful. P / N

6. How much of the total lesson time does your teacher use for practising your speaking skills (on average)?

- a) less than 1/4 of the lesson b) from 1/4 to 1/3 of the lesson c) half of the lesson
 d) more than half of the lesson

7. What influence, do you think, have the following facts on your speaking skills? Evaluate from 1 to 5 (1 = no influence, 2 = small influence, 3 = I don't know, 4 = rather influential, 5 = strong influence):

	1	2	3	4	5
1. student's gender	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. student's age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. student's occupation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. student's education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. staying abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. student's level of language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. reasons for language studies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. student's experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. student's temperament	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. student's responsibility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. student's knowledge and experience with other foreign languages	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. number of students in the class	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. classroom atmosphere	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. classroom equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. teacher's gender	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. teacher's age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. teacher's education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. teacher's teaching skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. teacher's level of language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. teacher's experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. teacher's creativity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. teacher's responsibility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. other (describe):					
.....					
.....					

8. Which techniques mentioned below do you use to improve your speaking skills? (1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, 5 = very often)

	1	2	3	4	5
a) techniques and exercises from student's books	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) reading books and other texts in English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) listening to the music in English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) watching films in English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) watching films in English with English subtitles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) playing PC games in English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) using PC and other devices in English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) soliloquy in English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) other (present):					
.....					

9. Are the following aspects of a spoken language important for you? Evaluate the following aspects of spoken English with numbers 1 - 5 (1 = unimportant, 2 = rather unimportant, 3 = I don't know, 4 = rather important, 5 = very important):

	1	2	3	4	5
1. grammatical correctness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. word order	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 3. accent | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. pronunciation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. pauses between words and sentences | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. intonation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ability to describe unknown words using the familiar ones | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. knowledge of synonyms and antonyms | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. fluency | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. ability to react | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

10. Now, you can express your comments to anything connected with any part of this questionnaire or its topic:

.....

.....

.....

Thank you for your time!

SHRNUTÍ

Diplomová práce s názvem Problémy ve vyučování anglické konverzace dospělých studentů si klade za cíl porovnat teoretické předpoklady vztahující se k výuce dospělých studentů s informacemi získanými z průzkumu mezi několika jejími zástupci pomocí dotazníků.

V teoretické části diplomové práce je popsána charakteristika dospělých studentů. Zejména jsou popsány zvláštnosti v jejich přístupu k jazykovému vzdělávání, rozdílné preference, ale také problémy, se kterými se dospělí studenti při studiu jazyka potýkají. Zmíněna je také role mnohých faktorů, které ovlivňují průběh či výsledky jejich studia, např. role motivů k učení, role očekávání a potřeb dospělých studentů, ale také jejich obavy z chyb apod.

Praktická část popisuje a hodnotí informace získané z dotazníků. Deseti otázkami s mnohými podotázkami byli respondenti dotazováni na věk, délku studia, oblasti, ve kterých se potýkají s obtížemi, nebo na techniky, které považují za přínosné nebo nepřínosné pro zlepšování svých komunikačních dovedností v anglickém jazyce. Dále byl zkoumán vliv různých faktorů na mluvený projev dotazovaných, a následovalo hodnocení důležitosti jednotlivých aspektů mluvené angličtiny. V některých otázkách či podotázkách byl zkoumán i vliv pohlaví respondentů na jejich odpovědi.

Ve většině teoretických předpokladů došlo ke shodě s výsledky z praxe. V několika případech došlo nicméně k odlišnostem většího či menšího rozsahu. Mezi sporné body patří např. nervozita během mluveného projevu před ostatními studenty či učitelem. Dle výsledků z dotazníků toto nehraje velkou roli. Respondenti uvedli, že mnohem větší obavy pociťují v situacích každodenního života, ať už v zaměstnání či na dovolené při řešení různých problémů v anglickém jazyce. Velké potíže zde pociťují při nalézání vhodných slov pro co nejpřesnější vlastní vyjádření. Dospělí studenti také mají tendenci podceňovat význam fonetické stránky jazyka a kladou mnohem větší důraz na gramatickou a sémantickou správnost. Stejně tak atmosféra třídy není dospělými považována za rozhodující. Mnohem více důležitosti je přikládáno učiteli a způsobu, jakým řídí výuku. Oproti teoretickým předpokladům, respondenti nepovažují moderní metody výuky za nepřijemné nebo zbytečné. Naopak mají tendenci je hodnotit velmi kladně.