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**A SURVEY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE NEEDS IN CZECH
COMPANIES**

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Plzeň 2014

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

Plzeň, duben 2014

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Bachelor's thesis concerns the progressive penetration of the English language into the Central Europe, particularly in the Czech Republic. It analyses its evolution from the very beginning, when the ancient Celtic language was used in the British Isles and also other languages that contributed to its contemporary form. Further, it deals with the position of English among other world languages through the eras until the 21st century. The theoretical part is supplemented by the information about the language skills of the Czech nation – and predominantly English skills together with the problems that can occur during studying English by Czech people – it states the difficulties which Czech students often encounter as they are influenced by their own mother tongue. The analysis is comprised of the grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and other.

Besides that, the important part of the thesis represents the research which investigates the necessity of English language use and the range of its knowledge within the Czech companies. However, it is focused not only on the use of English but also on other languages; especially nowadays when it is assumed that English is so widespread and used that mere knowledge of this language is sufficient in all spheres and all corners of the world.

2. EVOLUTION OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Graddol (2000) presents the individual developmental stages of English which were abridged and described in the following chapter.

2.1. Pre-English Period (–5th century)

The British Isles were originally inhabited by the Celts who used their own ancient language. Certain form of this language still remains on the territory of present-day Ireland, Wales and Scotland. In general, Celtic languages are characterized by very complex spelling and reading. The Isles were invaded several times by different nations that brought along various languages. The Romans, as the first, conquered England around 55 BC and pushed through the usage of Latin. It survived for a long time thanks to the expansion of Christianity and it enriched the language with many expressions. Thus, that was one of the influences on the indigenous language.

2.2. Old English (5th–12th century)

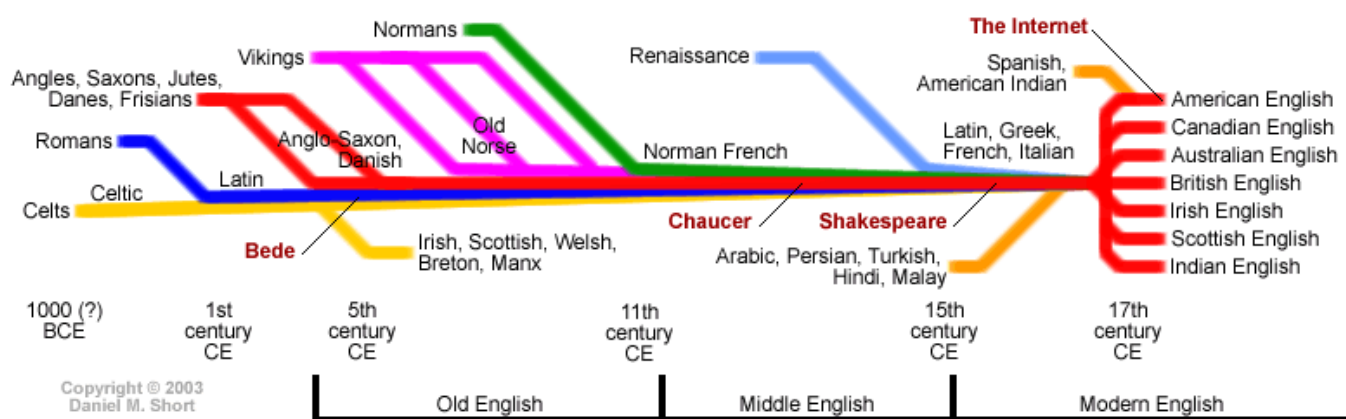
Approximately in the fifth century after the Roman withdrawal from England, the Celts took the reign but they had to deal with the same problem like the Romans – how to defend the territory against the Picts (autonomous Celtic tribe living in eastern and northern Scotland). The Celts weren't able to protect their land like the Romans, so they asked for help another people. It was Anglo-Saxons. Britain appealed them and they decided to settle there. When the Celts discovered that they were losing the territory, they pushed the Anglo-Saxons out to the smaller regions like Wales, Scotland and Cornwall. Their Germanic language is the foundation of contemporary English.

2.3. Middle English (12th–15th century)

As the Middle English period we consider the Norman Conquest of Britain in 1066. This event brought many changes to the existing language. English vocabulary was strongly affected by French expressions because of the fact that French became the official language. There were also huge differences in grammar – in Old English, grammatical relations were expressed through the cases and inflections which were progressively simplified and many word endings disappeared completely. Instead of the prefixes and suffixes, the fixed word order was established. The pronunciation was the same as before until 1450 when it arrived to the Great Vowel Shift. It means that there were significant changes in pronunciation of the long vowels which resulted in the form of English that we know today.

2.4. Modern English (15th century–present)

Since the 15th century, the position of Church and Latin started to weaken slowly. On the other hand, English came to the fore thanks to the commercial growth of Britain. And it was because of the new British colonies that English language expanded to different parts of the world (e.g. to America or India). Together with the first printed books – dictionaries and grammars, English gained a fixed form. As a foreign language it was taught for the first time in the 16th century in Holland and France. As Nekula (2005) gives out, it was Vilem Mathesius, founder of English Studies, who became in the 20th century the first professor of English at the Charles University.



Picture no. 1. History of the English language

Source: <http://www.danshort.com/ie/timeline.htm>

3. NEW LINGUA FRANCA IN EUROPE

Among the other significant European languages (e.g. French or German), English has become the most widely used. Průcha (2010) points out that its eminent position is the outcome of several aspects. As it was said above, the historical events are the first reason. In the 17th century, England was the leading maritime superpower in the world and it expanded its colonial domination. In this way, it established many English speaking communities around the world.

Next event which strengthened the use of English was the industrial revolution. It was the period of great inventions between the 18th and 19th century due to which English became the language of advertising, industry, education and social media.

Thirdly, there were political causes. The result of World War II was decisive. After the war, USA monitored an extensive growth and became the most powerful and industrialized country. Thanks to the economic power, USA exercised their interests and language in various international organizations like UNESCO, OECD, NATO and others. The influence of the outcome of the war is described also by U. Eco:

“Had Hitler won World War II and had the USA been reduced to a confederation of banana republics, we would probably today use German as a universal vehicular language, and Japanese electronic firms would advertise their products in Hong Kong airport duty-free shops (Zollfreie Waren) in German.”¹

Fourthly, there are cultural reasons. English arrives to all the continents due to the adoption of the British and American culture and style through popular music, films, leisure activities and primarily through the Internet. This type of spreading of the language is nowadays very intensive and probably the most essential.

¹ ECO, U. The Search for the Perfect Language. Oxford: Blackwell, 1995. p. 331.

As the next point, we can mention educational causes. Because of the expansion of English during the past decades, it became the compulsory foreign language in schools in many countries. As a consequence of this development, more and more young people have some English knowledge and this fact contributes again to its spreading.

Finally, there is the linguistic factor according to which English is considered to be easy in comparison to other languages; therefore its great expansion was more likely. However, this statement is unsubstantiated because none of the natural languages can be called simple. When learning the language, it depends on the fact if the mother tongue of the speaker belongs to the same language group or not. Thus, the English knowledge is more common among the people from Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands, i.e. the users of other Germanic languages.

All of these impacts are very helpful for English to remain the lingua franca; nevertheless, its leading position is not certain in the long term, especially because of the growing influence of Chinese or Spanish.

4. PENETRATION OF ENGLISH IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Nekula (2005) describes that English started to emerge in the Czech territory already in the Middle Ages (approximately 5th–15th century). In these times, commercial and political relations with Anglophone countries were built by the Přemyslid and Luxembourg royal dynasties. The establishing of these relationships with other European countries helped the main representatives of each country to calm the situation during the war period. English gained the importance also in the area of religion. Thanks to the gatherings of English Catholic and Protestant Church Members in Prague, the contacts with English were more frequent.

In the nineteenth century, Czech countries were in contact not only with England but also with the USA. The reason was the revolution in the central Europe in 1848 which was caused by the effort for sovereignty and the resistance to Germanization. Thus, many Czech people looked for a shelter and immigrated to the USA. According to the official records, at the turn of the 19th and 20th century, the number of Bohemian and Moravian emigrants achieved almost 350 thousand.

On the contrary, in the 20th century, the influence of Anglophone countries was reduced because of the World War II when Soviet Union seized the reign over the Czechoslovakia. In these times, Russian was quite important and it became the first compulsory foreign language in all kinds of Czechoslovak schools. In most of secondary schools, there was no opportunity to learn any second foreign language. This situation lasted until the Velvet Revolution in 1989. It was the milestone of the great use of English by Czech people; then they could choose among the foreign languages (English, French, German, Russian or Spanish) already during their elementary studies and mostly often they opted for English which was popular mainly because of the origins and expansion of the Internet in 1990's. Although there was a great lack of qualified English teachers, an increasing number of students chose English as their first foreign

language, so that already since the school year 1997/1998 English has become the most preferred language in elementary and secondary schools.

5. LANGUAGE KNOWLEDGE IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

5.1. General language knowledge

“Language skills of the population belong to the symptoms of education of each country.” (“Translation mine”)² Průcha (2010) points out that in this regard, Czech people can be considered as well educated because in the Czech Republic, the great emphasis has been always put on the teaching of foreign languages. The main reason is the fact that Czechs feel the need to learn foreign languages as they create less numerous nation and want to communicate with those from different corners of the world without barriers and to equal them.

As it was indicated above, according to this view, Czech people can speak foreign languages at a relatively high level. However, the language knowledge is of course influenced by several factors like the age – Průcha (2010) states that more than 80 % of people from 18 to 29 can speak some foreign language; or achieved education – about 98 % of all university students know a foreign language. No significant differences were recorded between the language skills of men and women.

5.2. English knowledge

According to the survey “Průzkum jazykové vybavenosti obyvatel ČR” performed by Universitas agency³ among 1255 inhabitants of the Czech Republic, English was on the first place in terms of the quality of language knowledge. 1/5 of the respondents stated that they spoke English fluently. Nevertheless, the results are distorted owing to the subjectivity of the responses.

² Průcha J. Interkulturní komunikace, Grada Publishing, 2010. p. 120.

³ Results were presented by P. Kuchař and J. Buriánek (2002)

The integral part of this thesis - the questionnaire - which was focused on the English knowledge amongst the Czech working people, sought to avoid this problem of inaccuracy. Instead of the demand for self-evaluation, it examined the English knowledge on the basis of obtained certificates.

5.2.1. Common mistakes of Czech students

The following subchapters briefly comment on the selected mistakes that often occur in different levels of language.

5.2.1.1. Mistakes in grammar

5.2.1.1.1. Word order

The first relevant problem is the word order. English is the analytic language in contrast to synthetic Czech so it has a very strict word order. Czech language is abundant in various inflections thanks to which the words in a sentence can be distributed in multiple possible ways. However, the Czechs forget that this can't be done in English.

In linguistics, we distinguish a theme and a rheme. Theme is the given information; on the contrary, the new information is called rheme. In English, theme tends to come at the beginning of the sentence and rheme at its end. At the same time, the basic pattern of English sentence is subject – verb – object. We can present a specific example. In Czech, the sentences “*Zajíc spatřil psa.*” and “*Psa spatřil zajíc.*” say the same thing. On the other hand, if we compare “*The hare saw a dog.*” and “*The dog saw a hare.*”, it is clear that the exchange of subject and object reverses the meaning of the sentence. It is similar to the front position of the attribute; we can see that “car race” is something different from “race car”.

Also the use of the indirect question may lead to the wrong word order. Whilst by means of the direct question we ask for example “*Where is the main station?*”, when using indirect question, we have to say “*I don’t know where the main station is.*” and not “*I don’t know where is the main station.*” like many Czechs do. Indirect questions begin with phrases such as “*I was wondering...*”, “*Could you tell me...*”, “*I’d like to know...*”, etc.

Next issue is the position of the adjective. In Czech language, it is possible to place the adjective on the beginning of the sentence; Sparling (1989) states an example: “*Zajímavá je také jeho autobiografie.*” However, in English, we cannot say: “*Interesting is also his autobiography.*” but it is necessary to modify the sentence: “*Another interesting work is his autobiography.*”

The last common problem related to the word order can be found in the sentences with phrases *there is/there are*. Czech native speakers tend to say for example: “*On the table is a book.*” because this word order is correct in their language. In English, it is important to use the phrase *there is/there are* either on the beginning: “*There is a book on the table.*” or at the end: “*On the table, there is a book.*”

5.2.1.1.2. Tenses

Czech students have difficulties with the use of English tenses because in the Czech language, there is only one tense for each temporal sphere (past, present, future). Mistakes are made especially in the cases below.

One of the problematic matters is the use of present progressive instead of present perfect progressive. For example: “*I’m learning English for three years.*” instead of “*I have been learning English for three years.*” We have to use perfect tense because the action started in the past and it lasts up to present. If we used the present progressive, we would express “*Učím se anglicky na 3 roky.*”

The difference between English and Czech is also in the sequence of tenses. In Slavonic languages, there is usually no backshifting in case of using reported speech. Czechs can say for example: “*Řekl, že potřebuje pomoci.*” – The first verb is in the past but the second one is in present. However, this can’t be done in English. Second verb has to be shifted to the past: “*He said that he needed help.*”

Similar tense shift can be found also when we speak about future in the past. The auxiliary verb *will* changes to *would* so we have to say “*He said that he would need help.*” instead of the incorrect form “*He said that he will need help.*”

5.2.1.1.3. Negation

When using the negation with verbs *think, believe, suppose, etc.*, Czech students often make mistakes by saying for example “*I think he won’t come.*” or “*I want her not to go home.*” In such a case, the negation has to be placed at the beginning: “*I don’t think he’ll come.*” and “*I don’t want her to go home.*”

On the other hand, when expressing the polite questions, the negation is not used like in the Czech sentence; for example: “*Nevíš, kde je nemocnice?*” but in English, we say “*Do you know where the hospital is?*” The question with the negation – “*Don’t you know where the hospital is?*” expresses the surprise or the criticism.

5.2.1.2. Mistakes in vocabulary

Regarding vocabulary, Czech students have troubles predominantly with the expressions known as false friends. These are such words that sound similar in Czech and English (in our case) but their meaning is totally different. In the following paragraphs, we will mention several of them.

One of the most frequently incorrectly used words is “*actual/ly*” which means “*real/ly*”. Czech people often use it like “*current/ly*” so they wrongly say for example “*This is a very actual problem.*”

The word “*eventually*” causes problems too because it sounds like Czech “*eventuálně*” but its real meaning is “*finally*”.

As a final example of these words, we can state “*a billion*” which does not stand for “*bilion*” but “*miliarda*” in Czech. Of course, there exist many more of these words and it is important to be careful to avoid misunderstanding with English native speakers.

5.2.1.3. Mistakes in pronunciation

The pronunciation is the next area where Czech students make many mistakes because they cannot rely on the fact that the words are pronounced as they are written, as it is in Czech, Slovak and other Slavonic languages. Although there are rules for the correct pronunciation, there exist plenty of exceptions (primarily with regard to words borrowed from other languages). In addition, several words with bad pronunciation are generally extended among the Czech students. Below, there will follow few specific examples with the wrong pronunciation (according to Czech people) and the correct one.

- event [i:vənt] [ɪ'vent]
- early [i:əɪ] ['ɜ:lɪ]
- occur [əkju:] [ə'kɜ:]
- beard [be:d] [bɪəd]
- fruit [fruit] [fru:t]

5.2.1.4. Mistakes in punctuation

Rules for writing of the English punctuation are distinct from the Czech ones, that's way this area is not clear for many Czech students, even after the years of study. Significant difference is mainly in the use of comma. Below, some guidelines are mentioned.

- When there is a complex sentence (main clause + dependent clause), the comma is used if the dependent clause is on the beginning. Otherwise, the comma is not written; for example: *“If we earned a lot of money, we would buy a new car.”* but *“We would buy a new car if we earned a lot of money.”*
- In case of using specific linking words like *however, therefore, indeed, obviously, etc.*; for example: *“John is, however, fully right.”*
- For separation of dates, names of places and first names if they stand after the surname; e.g. *“Smith, A. P., is from England.”*
- For separation of the adverbials either on the beginning or in the middle of the sentence; e.g. *“Mr. Black, after the session, had a private talk with the speaker.”*
- For separation of the compound sentence with the use of the conjunctions *and* (not in every case), *but, for, nor, or, neither* and *yet.*; e.g. *“John studies English, but his knowledge is not sufficient.”*
- There is no comma in case of these types of dependent clauses: nominal, attributive and adverbial – if they follow after the main clause; e.g. *“She went away because there was no one there.”*
- There is no comma between the personal, relative or demonstrative pronouns and it does not substitute for the

missing pronoun or conjunction; e.g. *“The book you want is not available.”*

The use of other punctuation marks comprising full stop, exclamation mark, quotation marks, semicolon and further is very similar in English and Czech so the more detailed analysis is not needed.

6. ENGLISH IN CZECH COMPANIES

When a man is looking for work nowadays, it is very important to know at least one foreign language – primarily English – to have success. This language knowledge is slowly becoming a standard requirement in a variety of positions and it does not depend on the fact if the company is seated abroad or in the country of the candidate. The ignorance of the foreign languages reduces the opportunities to get a job and at the same time, it may have detrimental impact on the remuneration.

6.1. Reasons

The reason that leads the employers to seeking after the linguistically equipped personnel is as follows: If their company has the intention to rise, it should not only operate in the Czech Republic but also concentrate on the export. In such a case, it is necessary to consider the adaptation of its products and services for the foreign market and communicate with the foreign business partners. Some companies got used to adjust also their own names or logos and they offer their products on English websites. This trading across national boundaries is easier now, thanks to the fact that the technology links people faster and more efficiently and more people are on the move than ever before – they are globally active and became the part of the international labour force.

However, the company which has decided to become a multinational organization has to face to managing the diversity between the inside and the outside of the company. This global structure comprises the abilities to understand and integrate different cultures and the responsibility for coordination of these objectives. The intercultural involvement commences with the individuals and teams and can result up to the global alliances.

6.2. Survey data

According to the information which was published by the Internet portal *Profesia.cz*, up to 75 % of all Czech employers who offered a job in the first half of 2010, required the knowledge of the foreign language. In seventy per cent of cases, they demanded English. German was asked for only by 18 % of employers. Although English is the most widespread foreign language among the candidates (57 % of them stated some English knowledge), their knowledge level often ranks among the beginners' or intermediate. Besides, it was found out that the employers in the Czech Republic are more demanding with regard to the language requirements in comparison to those from Slovakia or Hungary. Only about 60 % of local employers require some foreign language from their employees.

Another survey conducted by the *GlobalEnglish* company whose results were mentioned on the Czech website *byznys.ihned.cz*, was investigating the language skills in the area of business English among the different nations. 77 countries from all around the world participated in the survey. The position of the Czech Republic was not very favourable; it took 49th place – just after Slovakia. Among the all European countries, Bulgarians and Romanians have achieved the best results. This evaluation is carried out annually. In 2013, 212 thousand of tests were filled in. 30 % of all respondents were only on the level of beginners. The employees in engineering, aerial industry and financial services have demonstrated the best skills, on the other hand, those in the public sector and media haven't succeed that much.

The provider of the printed and online advertisement *Annonce* stated the findings that resulted from its survey related to the demand for new employees. They say that the ideal type of Czech employee is the one that has completed secondary education in the technical field, can prove some experience and speak English. These three aspects are needed

most after the job seekers. It means that the experience in the field along with the ability to communicate in English is much more important than university education. Many university graduates remain unemployed in the long term. Four of ten recruiters refuse a candidate if he or she cannot speak at least one foreign language, most commonly English. Communication level of English is required by almost one third of employers. However, German knowledge is demanded only by 7 % of human resources officers.

6.3. Point of view

The penetration and frequent use of English language in the Czech Republic sometimes encounters the opposition of the local population. This subchapter will present the point of view of a man who is quite sceptical about this fact. It is Zdeněk Hlízničkovský, one of the readers of the Czech websites *Britské listy*.

The author of the article entitled “*A proč jen anglicky?*” agrees with the chief editor’s opinion that the Czech society does not have high-quality background for teaching English so in this regard, it cannot equal to other European nations. At the same time, he speculates about the fact why everything is connected still only with English. He understands that we live in the rapidly developing modern world where the English need is perceived as very important. He asks himself a question why English constitutes the international language – if it is due to its relative simplicity or because it is represented by the largest percentage of users on our planet. He does not like the current situation when English slowly substitutes the individual national languages. According to him, some words cannot be expressed in other languages properly and there lies a beauty in the heterogeneity of the national dialects. In addition, each language is supported by its own culture. In other words, the world should not be linguistically unified.

The prevailing reason for the international expansion of English is rather the fact that Britain received many colonies in the past. Therefore, the author has doubts that English has the right to be the most widely used language provided that it has the imperialistic history. It is good to think about the fact whether English poses a threat or if it just provides the natural transformation of other languages. Hlznikovský is afraid that the simplified form of language – unified language – leads to the simpler view of the world. *“It is the truth that English simplifies the international communication to us but it is at the expense of the skipping of some elements that it cannot express. I dare to say that English language extended beyond the Anglo-Saxon territory is primarily focused on the economic aspect of life and after that on the interpersonal communication. And perhaps that’s way the details of our lives that we can describe in our national language aren’t important for English.”* (“Translation mine”)

7. QUESTIONNAIRE

In order to evaluate the knowledge and necessity of the English language use in Czech companies, the short questionnaire was compiled (appendix number 1). It was written bilingually due to the fact, that it is interested also in people who use English words or phrases but don't have sufficient language knowledge to understand merely English questions.

The questionnaire is composed of 15 questions. Some questions allowed to respondents to choose one answer only (questions no. 1, 7, 8, 11 and 13), others offered more alternatives (questions no. 4, 6, 9 and 14) and in some cases, it was possible to express oneself and give practical examples (questions no. 2, 3, 5, 10, 12 and 15). This system combined closed questions which substantially facilitated practical assessment of the survey with open questions thanks to which the respondents could comment on particular point.

The first part of the questionnaire was focused on the personal info – data about gender, age, position in the company and knowledge of languages. The questions 5–10 were related to the professional info – the possession of language certificates, languages used in one's profession, the importance and frequency of the occurrence of English along with the particular examples of words. The third set of questions dealt with the basic information about the company (questions 11–13) – its size, sector and location. The final two questions concerned the relation of the company to English language – the intention of using English for the purposes of promotion and the effort to improve English language skills from the side of an employer.

The questionnaires were distributed to the respondents in electronic form. Total number of delivered questionnaires was 200. 72 people visited the sent link, from which 18 just displayed it, 7 didn't complete it

and 47 filled in all questions successfully. From this number, 17 of them were eliminated and 30 samples were randomly chosen for the analysis.

7.1. Personal info

The first inquiry mentioned in the questionnaire concerned the gender. From the 30 selected respondents, 60 % (18) of them were men and 40 % (12) women.

Further, the respondents were asked about their age. In the range of 18-35, there were 12 respondents, 9 respondents were found between 36 and 45, 5 respondents fell into category from 46 to 55 and 4 remaining were older than 56 years.

Third question investigated the post in the company. The vast majority (21 respondents) stated that they were working on leading positions, 4 of them held the administrative functions and 5 were the owners of the company. This question, however, is unlikely to contribute to the objectivity of the research because in case of electronic distribution of the questionnaires, it is clear that mostly the managers or owners will be contacted.

The last question of this section was focused on the general language knowledge. Respondents could mark more languages or mention some another in the box. The answers showed that most people speak English. This finding is not much surprising. On the other hand, none of them chose Spanish. Among the languages that respondents stated moreover, Polish was represented most frequently. Other languages cited included Bulgarian, Slovak or Arabic. Only one respondent (42-year-old man) quoted that he didn't speak any foreign language. Detailed responses are depicted in the chart no. 1 below.

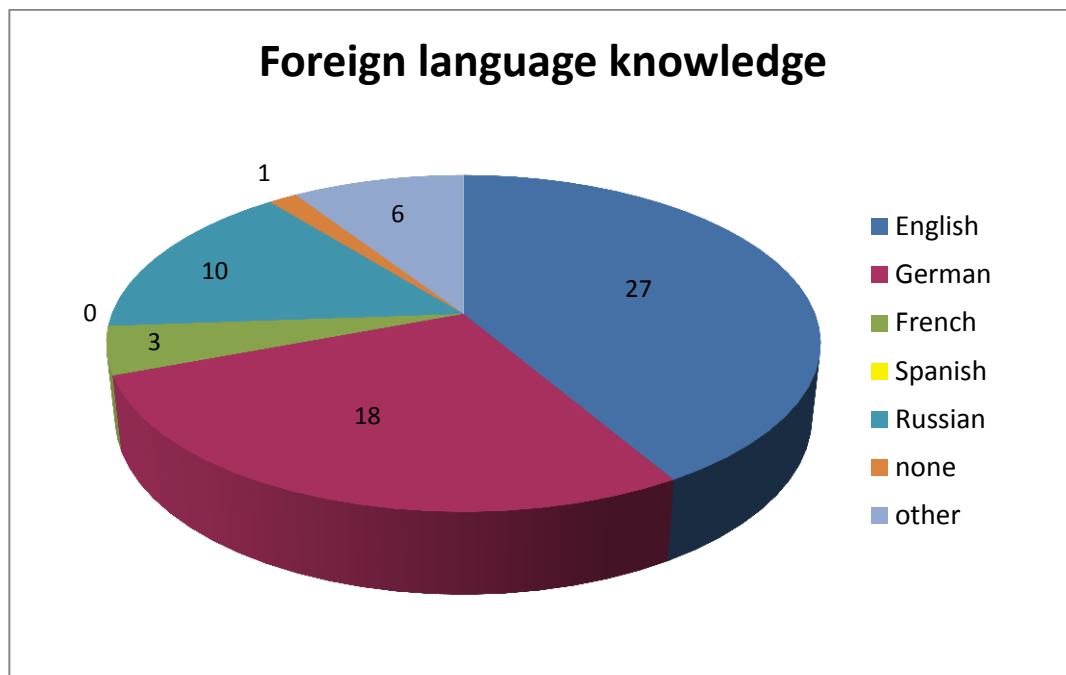


Chart no. 1. Foreign language knowledge in Czech companies

7.2. Professional info

This set of questions already referred directly to the knowledge and use of English in the working environment. At first, respondents should state whether they owned some certificate of English knowledge. In such a case, they were asked to provide its level. Of all 30 respondents, 7 people (23 %) had the state exam in English, however, only five of them wrote the level – B2.

The next question examined what language do respondents use for communication with their business partners. It was possible to choose more than one answer or to add another language. As it might be expected, Czech occupied the first place with its 25 votes (83.33 %). But English was also often used for the communication in business relations – it was mentioned by 21 companies. Other options were insignificantly represented. German was marked by 8 companies and 2 respondents added other languages – Polish and Russian. The results emerged from this question may be somewhat surprising. The Czech Republic shares

more than half of the total length of the borders with two German speaking neighbours; nevertheless German language is sporadically used in business communication. Maybe it is more a case of the borderline companies.

Following question surveyed the necessity of English knowledge for performance in the profession. According to the answers, English seems to be essential for nearly the half of the Czech companies (43 %). Next 40 % of respondents described English as being important or advantageous in their daily work. All the responses are clearly visible in the following chart no. 2.

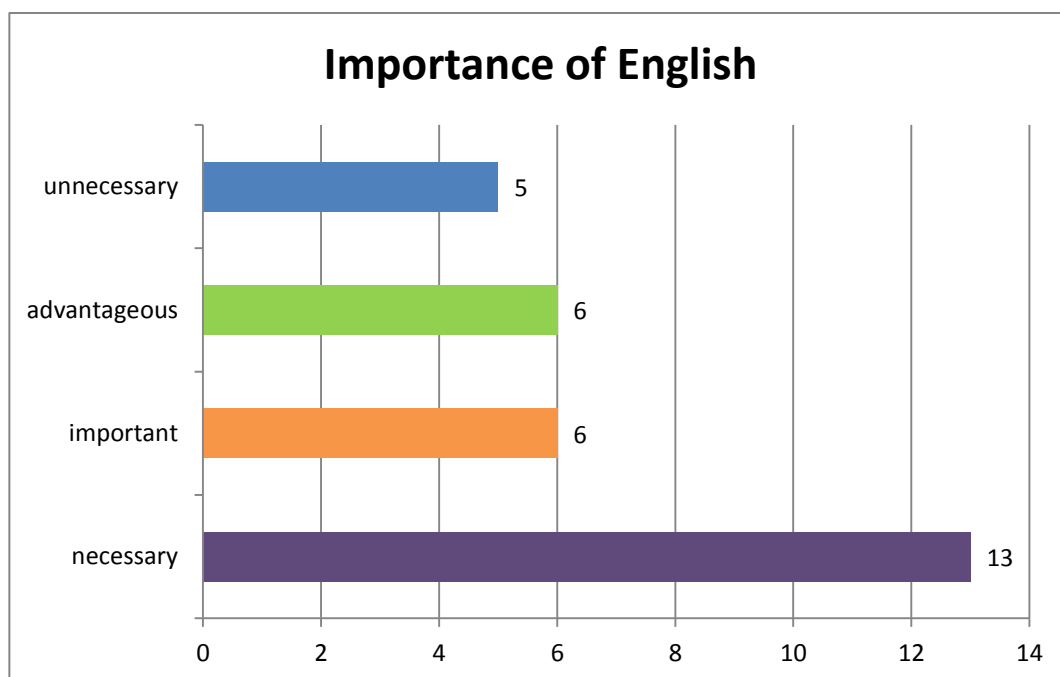


Chart no. 2. Importance of English knowledge in Czech companies

The question no. 8 looked into the fact how often the respondents encounter English in their profession. The answers were as follows: 10 people (33 %) meet English every day, the second place was held by 8 respondents who meet it several times a month, 6 persons stated that they encounter it several times a week, 5 of them answered that only exceptionally and the last remaining claimed that she didn't meet English

at all. This statement can be considered quite questionable because the field in which her company operates are the computer courses for adults. However, it is necessary to give all the answers as they were provided.

In the ninth question, respondents were tasked to tell on which occasions they encounter English. There could be more than one possible answer. The results showed that most often, people come into contact with English during communication with the business partners (60 %) and owing to the everyday performance in the profession (63 %). According to the survey, 11 people meet English during the negotiations. Some respondents wrote other options – in case of search for information, communication with the parent company, visit of interesting guests from abroad and placing orders. One respondent once more stated to the open answer that she didn't encounter English.

Furthermore, the respondents had to indicate whether they use the English terms in their profession. In the case of positive response, they were requested to enumerate some specific examples. 17 people stated that they employed some English words but not all of them were willing to mention any. Some of the respondents only put the sphere in which the English terms occur – information technology or communication within the EU/EC/UN. The expressions that were cited most frequently included *shop, deadline, job, business plan, budget, meeting, marketing and invoice*. Besides, respondents stated for example *back panel, desk, data recovery, forecast, deal, non-disclosure agreement and session*. It can be said that many of these words have been borrowed into Czech long time ago and they are used so often that some of them became the part of Czech vocabulary thanks to their own Czech transcription (*marketing* → *marketink*, *meeting* → *mítink*, *business plan* → *byznys plán*).

7.3. Information about the company

The questionnaire also examined the basic information about the company of each respondent. According to the answers, 70 % (21) of the total number of companies rank among the small (up to 49 employees), 5 of them are medium (50–249 employees) and 4 are large with their staff number over 250. For better vision, the chart no. 3 is drawn below.

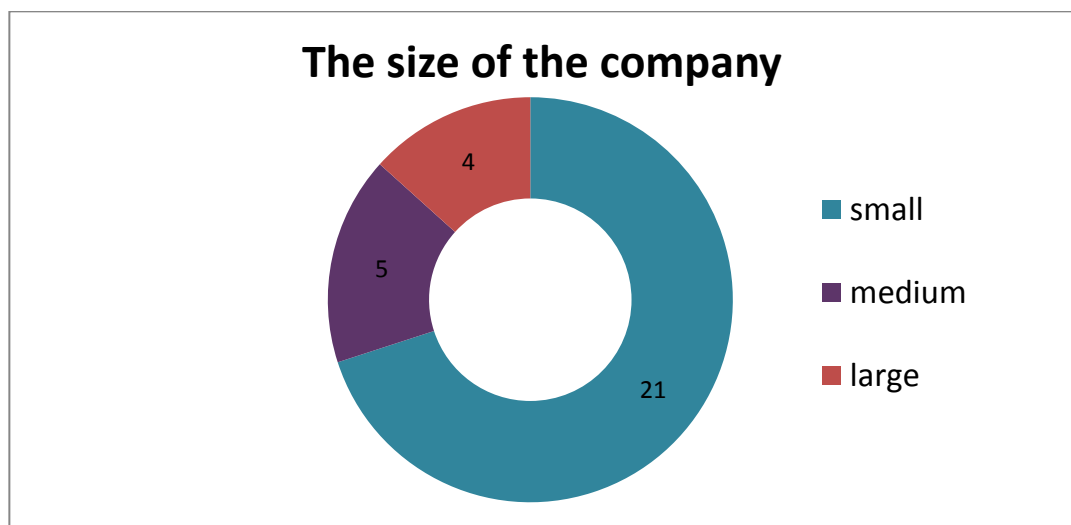


Chart no. 3. The size of the company

Next question related to the company inquired the sector of activity. It turned out that the branches of companies were very diverse. Information technology was the most represented field (6 companies), then education (3), civil engineering (2), industry (2), mechanical engineering (2) and chemistry (2). Other sectors were as follows: production, trade, telecommunication, hotel industry, work & life balance, electrical engineering, agriculture, environment, media and promotion, textile and beekeeping.

According to the next question which looked into the region where the headquarters of the companies are situated, it is clear that the respondents were from all over the Czech Republic. Precise number of companies by region can be seen in the following list:

Prague – 8
Jihočeský – 1
Jihomoravský – 5
Karlovarský – 0
Královéhradecký – 1
Liberecký – 1
Moravskoslezský – 1
Olomoucký – 2
Pardubický – 5
Plzeňský – 2
Středočeský – 2
Ústecký – 1
Vysočina – 1
Zlínský – 0

7.4. Relation to English

In the end, the respondents were asked for the relation of their company to English. Firstly, they should evaluate if their company promotes itself in English language; if so, whether it is ensured via websites, promotional materials or in other way. English version of websites was used by 17 firms. In open-ended responses, company representatives mentioned trade shows and expositions. You can see all the answers in the chart no. 4.

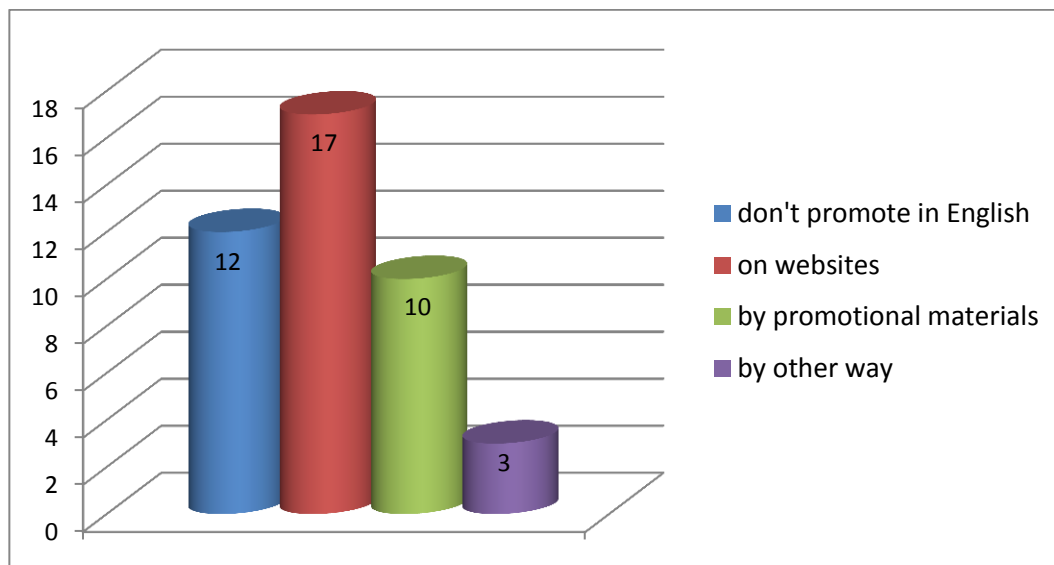


Chart no. 4. Company promotion in English

The last question discovered whether the employers try to support their employees in improving the English skills. Respondents should evaluate this fact and in case of affirmative answer, state the method of such support. The results have shown that a very low number of employers are doing so; only 9 (30 %) from the total 30 – primarily through the internal language courses. This fact is somewhat incomprehensible whereas the growing number of employers strictly requires the language skills. They should rather contribute to their improvement for the satisfaction of both parties. Some respondents wrote that they were the employers on their own and they educated themselves in English via reading books or watching films.

8. CONCLUSION

Main idea of the bachelor's thesis was to evaluate the fact if English occupies an important position within the Czech companies. The analysis began with the description of the roots of English and it presented its development and expansion.

Subsequent chapters were focused on the language knowledge among Czech people. The theory was underpinned by the various articles which stated a number of data or mentioned particular ideas. Following these information, the survey that brought another results was drawn up.

With respect to the findings which have arisen from the research – either via the questionnaire or by studying of the relevant literature – these facts can be mentioned. The role of English in the Czech Republic has recently grown significantly. Some of the aspects that have contributed to this fact comprise of expansion of information technologies and the Internet and also the influence of many different areas like pop culture, sport, etc. Nowadays, we can observe the common trend – considerable interest of the Czech employers in recruiting of the linguistically equipped personnel. On the base of the results following from the questionnaire which interviewed the working people from all sectors throughout the whole Czech Republic, there is almost no one who couldn't be able to speak any foreign language. And even people who cannot speak English are commonly accustomed to use English expressions.

However, not everyone is fond of the fact, that whichever foreign language has such a huge impact on his or her mother tongue that it starts to transform and adjust. There exist different opinions on this issue. On the one hand, the convergence of the world through the unified communication medium – English – can facilitate not only the business but also interpersonal relations, on the other hand, it can cause the vanishing of national cultures which are the part of each language.

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10. ABSTRACT

The Bachelor's thesis deals with the progressive penetration of the English language into the Central Europe, particularly in the Czech Republic. It analyses its evolution from the very beginning through the eras until the 21st century. It also describes other languages that contributed to its contemporary form. The theoretical part is supplemented by the problems that Czech students can have during studying English.

Besides, the important part of the thesis represents the research which investigates the necessity of English language use within the Czech companies. However, it is focused not only on the use of English; it aims to find out whether other languages are needed nowadays.

11. RESUMÉ

Bakalářská práce se zabývá postupným pronikáním angličtiny do centrální Evropy, a to především do České republiky. Popisuje její vývoj od úplných začátků napříč érami až do 21. století. Rovněž se zmiňuje o ostatních jazycích, které přispěly k její současné podobě. Teoretická část je doplněna problémy, na které mohou čeští studenti narazit při studiu tohoto jazyka.

Důležitou součástí práce je dotazník, jenž prošetřuje potřeby znalosti anglického jazyka v českých podnicích. Tento výzkum však není zaměřen pouze na anglický jazyk, ale snaží se zjistit, zda je v dnešní době potřebná znalost i dalších jazyků.

12. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Questionnaire

1. What is your gender? / Jaké je vaše pohlaví?

- Male / Muž
- Female / Žena

2. How old are you? / Jaký je váš věk?

3. What is your position? / Jaká je vaše pozice?

4. What foreign language do you speak? / Který cizí jazyk ovládáte?

- English / angličtina
- German / němčina
- French / francouzština
- Spanish / španělština
- Russian / ruština
- none / žádný
- other / jiný

5. Do you have some certificate of English knowledge? If so, what level? / Vlastníte nějaký certifikát o znalosti anglického jazyka? Pokud ano, uveďte úroveň.

- no / ne
- yes / ano

6. What language do you use for communication with your business partners? / Jakým jazykem komunikujete s vašimi obchodními partnery?

- Czech / čeština
- English / angličtina
- German / němčina
- other / jiný

7. How important is English for performance in your profession? / Jak důležitá je angličtina pro výkon vašeho povolání?

- unnecessary / nepotřebná
- advantageous / je výhodou
- important / důležitá
- necessary / nezbytná

8. How often do you encounter English in your profession? / Jak často se při výkonu své profese setkáváte s angličtinou?

- daily / denně
- several times a week / několikrát týdně
- several times a month / několikrát měsíčně
- exceptionally / výjimečně
- never / nikdy

9. On which occasions do you encounter English? / Při jakých příležitostech se setkáváte s angličtinou?

- performance in the profession / při běžném výkonu povolání
- negotiations / při jednání

- communications with the business partners / při komunikaci s obchodními partner
- other / jiné

10. Do you use some English terms in your profession? If so, give some examples. / Používáte při své práci anglické termíny? Pokud ano, uveďte konkrétní příklad.

- no / ne
- yes / ano

11. What is the size of your company? / Jaká je velikost vaší firmy?

- small (1-49 employees) / malá (1-49 zaměstnanců)
- medium (50-249 employees) / střední (50-249 zaměstnanců)
- large (250+ employees) / velká (250 a více zaměstnanců)

12. In which sector does your company work? / V jakém oboru působí vaše firma?

13. In which region is your company seated? / V jakém kraji sídlí vaše firma?

- Prague / Praha
- Jihočeský
- Jihomoravský
- Karlovarský

- Královéhradecký
- Liberecký
- Moravskoslezský
- Olomoucký
- Pardubický
- Plzeňský
- Středočeský
- Ústecký
- Vysočina
- Zlínský

14. Does your company promote itself in English language? / Propaguje se vaše firma v anglickém jazyce? Pokud ano, jakým způsobem?

- no / ne
- yes, on our websites / ano, na svých webových stránkách
- yes, by promotional materials / ano, pomocí propagačních materiál
- yes, by other way: / ano, jiným způsobem:

15. Does your employer support you in improving English? If so, how? / Podporuje vás zaměstnavatel ve zdokonalování angličtiny? Pokud ano, jakým způsobem?

- no / ne
- yes / ano