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**ANGLIČTINA JAKO MEZINÁRODNÍ JAZYK:
PROMĚNA PEDAGOGICKÉ PRAXE**

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**PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF ENGLISH
AS AN INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE**

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Pilsen 2018

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ABSTRACT

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The thesis has chosen the topic of English as an international lingua franca as its point of focus and interest, since the subject is very vibrant and arguably pivotal for future English Language Teaching development. The English language, its usage, trends and deployment have undergone major shifts in the last decades and modern pedagogy has to acknowledge the change and adapt to it to stay topical and relevant. The main purpose for this work to have been written is to provide a concise summary of the most important items concerning the subject. The theoretical chapters consider English as lingua franca from the historical perspective, assess its position in the modern contemporary world and describe pervasive effects of its global prominence on language teaching. The field research attempts to elicit the viewpoint of Czech educational environment regarding the new concept and answer the question whether it is ready to adopt new principles and framework stemming from the global and multicultural position of English. Based on the results obtained from a questionnaire completed by Czech teenage students of secondary schools, it has been concluded that the new concept for language teaching may still be partially alien to Czech students and may require further exposure and promotion before being fully implemented. While the students have shown a general recognition for a global usage of English, in the area of English pronunciation and interest in their own culture, they have displayed an orientation towards current trends. Further research and discussions on the topic will be necessary, before the door for the concept of English as a lingua franca will be fully open to Czech learners.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The decision to learn a foreign language is usually grounded in a straightforward interest or need to be able to understand and communicate with the people of the target language. If one chooses to learn French, a motivation for it may lie in a desire to visit the countryside of Brittany or to enjoy authentically the humorous art of Louis de Funès. In other words, the reason will be heavily francophone-centred.

However, in the recent years the main driving force for acquiring English has not been the need to talk to the people from English-speaking countries anymore. Rather, it is the urge to be able to communicate with people on a global scale, to find a common communicative basis between people not sharing a mutual language background (Ur, 2012). In this sense, the English has in practice become the first global language, the *lingua franca* of the 21st century.

But this new conception of the language is bound to have far-reaching effects on its usage, spread, consequently the general shape of the language and especially its teaching and presentation in modern pedagogy. It is of vital importance to keep track of these changes and adapt to them accordingly to maintain language learning efficient, useful and topical. And this is the reason behind choosing this subject to be the topic of this thesis. It has been recognised as vital and this work attempts to capture the most important points concerning the issue.

The research questions that the thesis hopes to answer are whether Czech students are familiar with the topic and what is their view on it. Do they recognise the global asset of English or is it still to them the language primarily used for Anglophone purposes only? What is their learning preference? What attitude do they assume towards English accents and where does the non-native teacher stand in the process of language learning according to them? All these questions are closely tied to the theoretical finding explained throughout the work.

The thesis begins with the theoretical background. The first chapter considers English as a *lingua franca* from the historical perspective, explaining the concept in general first, describing how English has slowly attained such position by being at the right moment in the right place and contemplating about the future of the language and its development. The second chapter turns its focus exclusively on the present-day language and compares how the concept of a *lingua franca* differs from the concept of a foreign

language. The third chapter considers the pedagogical implications, specifically in crucial areas of English pronunciation, cultural content and the position of the non-native teacher.

The second part of the thesis covers the field research. The research questions, methods and tools are discussed first, followed by the analysis of the results and their appropriate interpretation with regard to the theory. The second part ends by proposing possible pedagogical implications and suggestions for further research.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The Rise of English as a Lingua Franca

The concept of lingua franca and its origin. The term ‘lingua franca’ refers to any language that is used, during communication, by two parties whose mother tongues are different. For both it is usually (but not exclusively) the second language and serves as a linguistic bridge to overcome a communicative gap (Knapp & Meierkord, 2002). Although today the name represents any language with this function, it originally described a specific one. As Ostler (2011) puts it, “it was the common contact language of the eastern Mediterranean in the first half of the second millennium, the pidgin Italian in which Greeks and Turks could talk to Frenchmen and Italians” (p. 4). This original trade and contact language was a linguistic hybrid, based on an Italian dialect of some sort, but also containing strong elements, especially lexicological ones, from various other languages commonly spoken in the south-east coasts of the Mediterranean Sea, namely Spanish, Arabic, Turkish, Greek, Persian and many others (Knapp & Meierkord, 2002). Throughout the history, many languages performed the role of a lingua franca, some notable examples being Latin, Ancient Greek, French and Arabic. However, their sphere of influence was usually limited by a political, military or economic reach of their mother tongue users. English, on the other hand, is the first lingua franca claimed to have attained a global status, a linguistic phenomenon very unique and previously unheard of.

Due to the confusing origin of the name, there may arise some uncertainties about its use in the plural. Occasionally, due to its Italian origin, the spelling *lingue franche* is used, a Latinised version *linguae francae* also exists. Nicolas Ostler offers an interesting solution, writing the name as a technical term together through hyphen, *lingua-francas*. Elegant as his alternative may be, this thesis opts for the traditional form, found in most dictionaries – *lingua francas*.

Factors leading to English becoming the global lingua franca. It may seem tempting to conclude that there must be some inherent features and qualities in the English language that render it most suitable for the global acceptance. Some could claim that English has a simpler grammar compared to other languages or richer vocabulary teeming with synonyms; that it is pleasant for the ear and its phonetic inventory is relatively easy. However, such assumptions have proved to be erroneous. Latin has a far more complex morphological system than English and it does not abound with synonyms. And yet, this did not prevent it from becoming a unifying language of the Roman Empire. If the history

of languages teaches us something, then it is that there is no connection between spread and power of the language and its linguistic properties. What makes a language important and widely used is the power and influence of its native speakers (Crystal, 2003). The ascent of English as a global language is bound to the history of its native countries. The main factors leading English to its present-day status are geographical, technological and a cultural.

With the settlements of the newly discovered American continent founded and the Great Britain established as one of the biggest colonial powers in history during the nineteenth century, English saw an immense geographical spread and became the primary official, administrative and educational language of these regions. Even today, the colonial times gone, the states that used to be under the British sovereignty, continue to hold English as an important second language and communication tool. The most important innovations during the Industrial Revolution came from the Great Britain and since English was present at the epicentre of these new discoveries, it became one of the primary languages for science and technology. The United States are one of the leading economic powers in the present-day world. English is also an important language in the cultural areas. The music and motion picture industry abound with iconic and successful English-speaking bands and film studios, such as the Beatles and Hollywood (McKay, 2015). As David Crystal (2003) aptly puts it, English simply happened to be in the right place in the right time. None of the above-mentioned factors would on their own be strong enough to establish English as the global language, but together they have prepared a firm ground for the language to attain its current strong position.

The future of English as a lingua franca. The current position of English as the chief among lingua francas seems unshakable. Its global relevance appears to be secured for any foreseeable future. And yet, one historical look back is enough to stir some uncertainty about the future. Throughout millennia, languages did rotate in and out of a common use. None stayed eternally as a lingua franca, because political and economic power never ceases to shift. The future of English could become analogous to other historical lingua francas. Crystal (2003) envisions several possible outcomes. One of them is obvious and entails the previously discussed points. English might simply be replaced if a serious and capable contestant appear on the horizon, supported by a relevant and powerful nation. This is further reinforced by the fact that many post-colonial nations hold hostile feelings against English and make a substantial effort to promote their own national languages (Crystal, 2003). Quick developments in informational technologies could also

diminish the value of English as a lingua franca. Ostler (2011) draws attention to translation technologies. Companies such as Google or Microsoft have been investing a substantial effort in developing this area and imperfect as the translation algorithms may be at present, the industry is making significant leaps every year. If computers become capable of immediate and reliable translations, the need for an international language is bound to decrease. Those are the extrinsic factors threatening the dominion of English. But no less important is the conundrum coming from the lingua franca itself, slowly beginning to surface.

English is becoming more and more diversified. The linguistic world no longer recognises only traditional major varieties such as American (ArE), British (BrE) or Australian English (AuE). More and more regional variations are being accepted, such as Singapore English, Hong-Kong English and many others, each having their own peculiarities in grammar, syntax, vocabulary and pronunciation (Schneider, 2013). Given it is a natural process for a language to split into dialects and varieties (a good example will be Latin and Romance languages) and since this phenomenon can already be observed for English, it is not entirely impossible to imagine that one day English varieties might be mutually unintelligible and might form 'an English language family' (Crystal, 2003). It is evident that such divergence in variation would pose a serious problem for English to perform its role as a global lingua franca.

The Present-Day English as a Lingua Franca

Whereas the previous section has established a theoretical and historical background for English as a lingua franca, also providing a small hint for its possible future development, this section will shift the focus on the present-day language, explaining the terminology and examining various attitudes, viewpoints and status of English in this new conceptualisation.

The status of English around the globe. Given its unique socio-linguistic situation, the English language has earned many closely related titles, whose slight nuances and differences may require some explaining, especially interwoven terms such as international language and global language with respect to the concept of lingua franca.

As has been stated before, a *lingua franca* is a linguistic medium that enables communication between speakers of different L1 backgrounds (Samarin, 1987). *International language* performs a wide array of communication purposes between nations and states that have recognised the language as suitable and important for this function (McKay, 2015). A language achieves the status of a *global language* when its linguistic values and assets are accepted on a world-wide scale and the number of its speakers is adequate to this viewpoint. That is not to mean that the language must be spoken or given a legal status in every state and geographic corner on Earth. What it means is that its importance is generally recognised and distributed in the majority of states of all the continents. Thus, such a language often features prominently in education as well as administrative systems around the globe (Crystal, 2003).

It is apparent that the three terms are closely connected and overlapping. In fact, they sometimes seem to be used almost interchangeably when the present-day English situation is discussed in linguistic journals and articles. It might be useful to think of these three terms as one concept in its core that simply scales in scope and magnitude. The core concept is always the common communication ground between parties not sharing the same language. On the basic level, *lingua franca* makes communication possible without any reference to range of use. Once the usage of such a language exceeds borders of more nations, it becomes an *international* one. Finally, when it reaches many countries dispersed around the world, it can be said to attain a *global* status.

As has been established, the world-wide use and prominence of English is undeniable. However, it obviously follows that the importance of the language cannot be the same in each part of the world. The official status of the language is dependant upon many factors. First, English obviously plays the primary role in the countries whose

inhabitants speak it as a mother tongue. Second, what is also highly relevant is the country's history and connection to other (especially English speaking) nations. Last but not least, it is a cultural and governmental stance that also determines how big or small a role English has in a country. In many postcolonial areas, the countries that used to be under the British sovereignty still hold English as an important legislative and administrative language, often being one of the official languages. On the other hand, those parts of world that have no direct connection to English-speaking countries may not consider the language to be of a high importance, preferring rather their own official or regional tongues.

The American linguist of an Indian origin, Braj Bihari Kachru, provides a well-known and illustrative visualisation of the position and use of English around the world as three concentric circles. The *inner circle* represents the language core. It encompasses the countries where English is the first official and native language (ENL) of its speakers. These include The United Kingdom, The United States of America, Ireland, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The estimated total amount of English speakers is between 320 and 380 million. The second ring labelled as the *outer circle* refers to countries where English is recognised as an official and important second language (ESL). These are typically the postcolonial nations that used to be under the British crown and the influence of the governing country has not vanished. The language continues to be an important part of the infrastructure, administration and legislation. These countries represent the epicentre of the spread of English (Crystal, 2003). The outer circle totals 300 to 500 million speakers and includes countries such as India, Singapore or the Philippines. Finally, the third ring called the *expanding circle* comprises of countries that have no historical connection to English speaking nations and that often do not recognise it as an official language. However, in these countries English is considered to be important due to its increasing global and communication merits and is frequently a possible and optional choice for administrative purposes and features prominently in an education system as a primary foreign language being taught (EFL). Countries found in this circle are numerous, representing practically the majority of the world such as Russia, China, Japan and many others. The total amount of speakers is hard if not impossible to estimate, but somewhere between 500 and 1,000 million (Kachru, 1992).

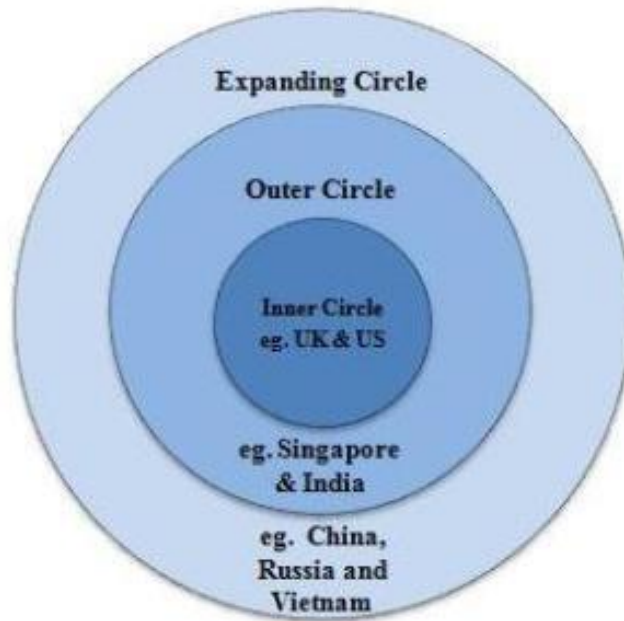


Figure 1, Kachru's circular diagram

Kachru's model, while popular, is not without its flaws and criticism. It is noteworthy that since inventing this model, the situation of English has been changing gradually. Lines between the circles that might have once been crystal-clear are now blurred and unjustifiable (McKay, 2015).

English as a foreign language and as a lingua franca. Every language is a subject of gradual modifications over time. Not only do the linguistic properties of the language itself change (i.e. its phonology, grammar etc.), but it is also the demographic factors, such as the number of speakers, spread and geographical acceptance of the language, that see a steady development. English, being a language like any other, is no different in this respect. And yet, there are two key things that set it apart and render its case unique, the scale of its spread and its function to perform. As Graddol (2006) has stated, the global demand for English is on the rise. Not only is the number of speakers, but more importantly the number of L2 learners tremendously increasing. These trends are bound to have a profound impact and are likely to take the language into a new direction. This new path will have vast consequences especially in one important area, the language teaching.

Given its unprecedented victory in the linguistic competition, it is not surprising that English should require a special pedagogic treatment that will be significantly different from that of any other language. The major diversion will lie in new, more realistic and pragmatic teaching goals and aims. The desired output of English language teaching (ELT) will be dependent on whether English is meant to be taught as a foreign language (EFL) or

as a lingua franca (ELF). These two attitudes result in a rather contrastive set of objectives (Galloway & Rose, 2017).

The traditional conception of English is that of a foreign language. That means adopting the same attitudes that teachers and learners do when they study any other foreign language such as Italian, Arabic or Japanese. In this sense, EFL sets as a goal to prepare its learners predominantly for native/non-native interaction. It is expected that English-studying students intend to come into contact with English native speakers and visit countries where English is the official language and a mother tongue of the population. The culture, literature and customs of English-speaking nations are supposed to be the chief of learners' interests. In EFL concept, the focal position is given to the native speaker, a golden standard, which students are to strive for achieving and mimicking, the idea that, as will be shown in later chapters, is impractical, even impossible to use as a desirable goal. The language of the native speakers is a role model for students to approximate to. Learners' L1 is seen as nothing more than a possible source of interference (Seidlhofer, 2015).

English as a lingua franca, however, approaches desired aims and outputs in a different way. It takes into consideration the present-day status and function of the language in order to set new, more useful and feasible goals for its learners. ELF presupposes the non-native/non-native interaction as pivotal. In the new concept, L2 English speakers are expected to engage primarily conversations with other L2 speakers, with whom they do not share the same mother tongue. Such interactions are more probable because of the global usage and importance of English. As a result of the fact that participants of such communication may come from very diversified linguistic and cultural backgrounds, the main objective is to shape the conversation and a manner of speech so that the mutual intelligibility between participants be possible. Unlike EFL, where imitation of native speakers' language is one of the main goals, ELF invites its speakers to cooperation and accommodation. The choice of language tools is highly dependent on the other side of the communication channel. In ELF, the focal role is assumed by a non-native speaker and intelligibility (Seidlhofer, 2015). The main points of difference can be summarised by the following table, taken from Galloway & Rose (2017).

| Table 1 | | |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| <i>The Main Differences of EFL and ELF</i> | | |
| | <u>EFL</u> | <u>ELF</u> |
| Target Interlocutor | Native English speaker | All English speakers |
| Target Culture | Fixed NE cultures | Fluid Cultures |
| Norms | Standard English | Diverse and flexible |
| Role Model | NE speakers | Expert Users |
| Source of Material | NE speakers | Salient English-speaking communities |
| L1 language and culture | Seen as a hindrance and source of interference | Seen as a resource. |

It is important to note that in ELF concept, the language is no longer seen as a propriety of its native speakers. The ownership becomes decentralised. Every English speaker is seen a valuable contributor to the language culture. Thus, the new golden standard and role model can no longer be native speakers, but rather proficient and highly skilled speakers, be they natives or non-natives.

The question of standardisation and mutual intelligibility. The process of diversification of a language into regional variants and dialects over time is a natural one. Each such individual variation is characterised by its own peculiarities concerning areas of grammar, pronunciation and especially vocabulary. Regional dialects are linguistic ecosystems that are most susceptible to change, because they are not regulated by any codifications and prescriptivism. What can be observed in dialects is a natural and unhindered language development at its purest. The scale of divergence among dialects may vary greatly. In many languages, dialects are perfectly mutually intelligible and pose no threat to communication. And yet, extreme examples can be found, where individual language dialects cannot understand one another. Two well-known examples found in modern and widespread world languages are Arabic and Chinese language. These two languages abound with regional dialects, whose mutual intelligibility differs to various degrees. Despite possible (and sometimes considerable) differences, speakers of different dialects can still usually hold a conversation with each other because of a cohesive instrument known as a standard formal language (StL). StL is a codified and official variety of a language that all speakers revert to when intelligibility is of utmost importance,

or they find themselves in a formal context. The need for a certain language standard becomes even more obvious for languages such as Arabic. Without such a conventional and agreed standard, communication across dialectal regions would be impossible (McKay, 2015).

English, being a language like any other, cannot avoid the same processes and factors. In fact, its global scale means that the effects of these factors will only be amplified. British English, American English, Singapore English and other varieties can be seen as macrodialects developing their own peculiarities. This naturally raises certain questions. Will it be possible for the dialects to be mutually understandable in the future and does English as a lingua franca need a global standard for everyone to adhere to (McKay, 2015)?

Widdowson (1994) acknowledges that English is bound to create many national and local varieties with their own norms, but reminds that as a second language it is often taught in educational institutions and as such it is always standardised. Thus, a certain level of uniformity should be ensured: “An international language has to be an independent language. It does not follow logically, however, that the language will disperse into mutually unintelligible varieties. For it will naturally stabilize into standard form to the extent required to meet the needs of the communities concerned (p. 385).”

Widdowson is not the only one concerned with this issue. The topic of standardisation naturally resonates strongly in linguistic circles. Two prominent figures discussing the topic on globalisation of English and its standardisation, Randolph Quirk and Braj Bihari Kachru adopt quite opposite views on the matter. Quirk suggests that a standard in the English language be maintained and extended to all three of Kachru’s circles. His argument is that the use of English in non-native environment has a rather narrow scope. The standard variant of the language should be sufficient for this purpose and given its value and acceptance in native environment, it is ideal as a unified code of communication (Quirk & Widdowson, 1985). Kachru, on the other hand, sees the need to reshape the approach towards standardisation, given the spread of the language in the Outer Circle. The standards of the English language in this circle should take into account linguistic backgrounds, manners and ways the language is used in each particular speaking communities. Kachru is not concerned with the question of intelligibility. He predicts that among different regional variants, an educated form of the language intelligible for others will always emerge, thus aligning his view with Widdowson’s (Kachru, 1985).

Perhaps the possible answer to the question of development of national variants of English with respect to a standard can be found in a linguistic situation of the Singapore English. The variation of the language can be divided into three strata. The first is the *Standard English*, which is primarily used in very formal and international context. The second is the *Standard Singapore English*. What is hidden behind this term is a variant of English that is based on a standard language, but may contain some features specific to the area of Singapore, such as certain lexical items and grammatical innovations not found in other standards of the English language. It is mainly used in educational institutions, administration or news broadcast. It is widely accepted as an appropriate language for everyday formal context. The third is the variant usually called *Singlish*, which refers to a contact, colloquial form of the language. Singlish has more prominent and striking differences compared to the Standard Singapore English, especially with respect to syntax, word order and lexicon, which derives many items from other languages native to the area. Its use is bound only to informal, spoken situations between friends, family, acquaintances and others (Gupta, 1999). As can be observed, while heavily localised variety does exist, when expectancy of formality increases, then so does a standardisation, and colloquial features heavily decline.

It is not unimaginable that a similar situation will be found in other global varieties of English. Just like English of the native speakers is slowly splitting into more distinct macrodialects, such as AmE, it is only sane to expect that non-native use of English will see an analogous branching. Each nation will probably develop a strongly localised version of English, influenced by L1 mother tongues that will only be bound to an informal and colloquial context, while a more standardised language will be reserved for formal or international usage. The need for standard is, thus, strongly felt. Without it, English might not perform its intended function as a lingua franca as efficiently, if at all. But that still does not solve the question of what standard should be followed. The agreement is nowhere to be found even among linguistic circles and so only time will unveil the answer.

Whereas the issue of a standard will probably stabilise itself over time, the question of intelligibility might represent a severer conundrum. Even though the 21st century may as well be called the century of instant messaging and emailing, the language is still first and foremost a vocal instrument. Most language interactions still occur orally. However, newly arising varieties of English across the globe are very often strongly marked phonetically and unlike in native/native interactions, lingua franca interactions lack a common cultural

background. Both these factors might be thought to present a threat to intelligibility (Jenkins, 2012).

But what exactly is meant by intelligibility in the context of ELF? Smith and Nelson (1985) make distinction between three terms that are sometimes felt as interchangeable. These are *intelligibility*, *comprehensibility* and *interpretability*. The first term refers to the ability to discern words and utterances in speech, to simply recognise what is being said on a phonetical level. That means being able to distinguish discrete sound units comprising a word and at the same time perceive them together to realise what exact words have been used. Comprehensibility then encompasses realising meanings of words and utterances. Simply to hear and recognise the forms of words is not enough for successful communication. Of course, speakers also have to be able to realise the meanings behind sound (or graphical) symbols. The highest level of understanding includes interpretability, the ability to correctly read the whole message and intension of a locution of the communication partner in a given situation.

The traditionally believed stance, adopted even by the aforementioned Smith and Nelson, is that most communication problems actually stem from failures on a level of *comprehensibility* and *interpretability*, the argument being that knowing a context and cultural background in communication may provide enough cues to overcome even the situation when parts of words or whole words are misheard. Native and fluent speakers are equipped with a phonetic intuition that enables them to predict what is to be said or to autofill phonetic gaps (Jenkins, 2014). However, none of that is applicable to the ELF interactions. Speakers of ELF come from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds. They cannot rely on a shared knowledge. It follows that misunderstanding in ELF must stem from something else. The root problem will lie elsewhere.

Juliane House (1999) speculates that cultural knowledge plays a little role in misunderstanding, as far as ELF is concerned. Instead, he says: “Misunderstandings in ELF talk do not stem from deep cultural differences between interactants’ native culture-conditioned norms and values, but can be traced, more mundanely, to interactants’ lack of pragmatic fluency” (p. 85). According to him, it is the linguistic knowledge that is most often responsible for intelligibility. Jennifer Jenkins, a prominent figure in ELF and EIL research, has also arrived at a conclusion that the problem of intelligibility can be found on the lower, linguistic level. Jenkins has gathered a noticeable amount of data regarding ELF interactions. According to her findings, *comprehensibility* and *interpretability* only cause problems, when significant deficiencies are found in *intelligibility*, that is to say, when a

listener simply cannot discern words that have been said. In ELF talks, listeners cannot rely on a mutual linguistic and cultural background and despite expectations, situational cues also do not often remedy a misheard chunk of a language. The root problem is the ability to understand the words, to know what exactly has been uttered, since audio signals are the only cues available to ELF interactants (Jenkins, 2014).

The importance of *intelligibility* entails that one crucial area that deserves a special attention is the pronunciation of the global English varieties. Jenkins (2012) has argued that it is unreasonable to require one pronunciation model from all non-native speakers. It is expected that each regional variant will retain some specific features. However, there seems to be a common phonetic core that appears to be crucial for intelligibility in ELF interactions. ELF talks are all about cooperation and adaptation. Grammatical deviations and cultural differences can be negotiated and overcome, but what seems to be vital to ELF communication is the ability to understand the language, thus putting a certain pronunciation standard forward as most important, a topic about to be discussed in the following chapter.

Pedagogical Implications of English as a Lingua Franca

In the light of the aforementioned topics being examined in the thesis and the previously conducted ELF research, it becomes obvious that the pedagogy of English in this new conception will require some rework and rethinking. Modern teaching philosophies and approaches should take into account the dynamicity surrounding the use and position of the language in the present-day, globalised world. It is advisable that English language teaching (ELT) address this new development by making adjustments to expected goals and aims in key areas. This section will attempt to target those crucial areas of ELF teaching that may need a special attention.

The lingua franca pronunciation core. In Kachru's model of three concentric circles, the outermost one, expanding circle, is described as *norm-dependant*, as opposed to the inner circle, which is said to be *norm-providing*. This means that the inner circle countries represent a model of how the standard language should sound and read, whereas the expanding circle is not expected to develop norms on its own and is supposed to follow the conventions established in L1 nations. And this stance has been strongly reflected in ELT for many decades, learners' expected goals being to copy English of native speakers as closely as possible in terms of grammar, lexicon and pronunciation. However, in the recent years, a gradual rejection of this view can be observed. The linguistic world is slowly accepting that English is bound to be a subject of diversification and the idea that the language of native speakers is the only model to approximate is simply untenable in the light of the globalisation (Jenkins, 2012).

But such acceptance may hold a serious problem for English as LF. As has been mentioned in the previous sections, English can serve this role as long as intelligibility is secured. If its diversification exceeds a certain threshold, the mutual understandability may be threatened and so can the function of the language. Arguably, grammatical and lexical differences do not necessarily represent as high risks in ELF talks as it may seem. Pluralisation of uncountable nouns, such as *evidences*, or using the present perfect with temporal adverbials such as '*Funds have been received last year*', both attested in some varieties, may sound strange and wrong to native speakers, but will hardly pose a serious threat for intelligibility, and could even sound fine and correct to the ELF speaker (McKay, 2015). New lexical items, developed in regional varieties, are expected to be avoided in more formal and international occasions, or if need be, the speaker can simply replace and paraphrase the new lexeme with a standard one when met with a lack of understanding. All this negotiation in ELF talks is meaningless, however, if a conversation breaks down on

the most fundamental layer of sound recognition. All differences can be somehow overcome, but it is of utmost importance that communication partners be able to understand each other. The ELF research shows that pronunciation plays a key role in intelligibility (Jenkins, 2014).

Using traditional and in education well-established models such as the Received Pronunciation (RP) or General American (GA) proves troublesome in ELF for two reasons. As Robin Walker (2011) points out, mastering near-native accent presents a goal that is probably not only unachievable, but also marginally rewarding. Acquiring active production of certain phonemes may take a very long time and some aspects of pronunciation are even believed to be unteachable, such as intonation patterns and word stress placement. Instead of investing a considerable part of classroom time into teaching items that are not even crucial for intelligibility, as will be shown later, it would be more advisable to focus on active language production and comprehensibility exercise. The second reason against using traditional models lies in the fact that ELF is centred around multiculturalism and pluralism. Many speakers from expanding circle countries have expressed the desire to retain some features of their L1 pronunciation as a sign of the national membership, as a way to keep their identity. It is necessary to adjust classroom goals concerning pronunciation so that they may be not only more economical and reachable, but also that they may be more in alignment with the philosophy of English as LF. Certain variations in pronunciation are, thus, expected. But to what extent could these variations be allowed without threatening comprehension?

Speakers of the British and American English can hold a conversation without significant problems despite both varieties having some considerable differences in pronunciation. And this applies to all officially recognised varieties. Their speakers can understand each other usually quite comfortably. This suggests that despite the variation, there must be certain universals concerning the English pronunciation that are core to intelligible production. Jennifer Jenkins has conducted a vast research of her collected corpus of what she calls *inter-language talks* (simply, interactions between non-native English speakers) in order to identify the common means of NNS's pronunciation variations and which ones represent the severest threat to ELF intelligibility. This research has become a basis of her proposed *Lingua Franca Core* (LFC), a list of crucial phonetic areas to be followed so as to maintain intelligibility and bearable variation in ELF pronunciation (2014).

Phonological inter-speaker variation. Non-native speakers' deviation in pronunciation happens on two levels, *segmental*, i.e. concerning phonemes, and *suprasegmental*, prosodic aspects, including stress or aspects of connected speech. It is usually alleged that it is suprasegmental deviations that cause greater problems to intelligibility, but this argument is usually taken from the NS/NNS perspective, quite less relevant for ELF. In fact, both areas may present a serious threat. Segmental variations can be divided into three groups: sound *substitution*, *consonant deletion*, and sound *addition* (Jenkins, 2014).

Sound *substitution* typically happens, when an English sound is not found in a learner's L1 phonetic inventory. In that case, a learner naturally tries to replace such English sound with a closest phonetic approximation existing in L1 language. Alternatively, an English phoneme may be found in learner's L1, but its realisation is different. For example, the English dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/, which are typically absent in many other languages, are often substituted by /t/ /d/ or /s/ /z/ pair. Spanish speakers of English tend to replace voiced labial plosive /b/ with corresponding voiced labial fricative /β/. Such variations must be viewed as potentially problematic to intelligibility and Jenkin's research shows that most substitutions are, some sounds prove not to be as important for intelligibility. Further factors include whether such substitutions lead to making non-words or not. If the result of a replacement creates a word unrecognised in the English vocabulary, speakers may more easily reinterpret it as an error and mentally adjust the correct form based on a context (Jenkins, 2014). Sound substitution on its own does not represent a great difficulty, far more threatening are the other two phenomena.

Consonant *deletion* and sound *addition* are non-native speakers' strategies to simplify and reorganise a syllabic structure of English words. In languages, there seems to be a generally preferred tendency towards open syllables and a sequence CV (consonant, vowel). Thus, consonant deletion typically happens in consonant clusters eliminating them and consequently opening a syllable. Sound addition usually concerns vowels being added after consonants or at the end of a word. Thus, using the two strategies may render English words *fiction* and *luggage* as /fɪʔʃən/ and /lʌɡɪdʒi/ respectively. Using both strategies may change the phrase *car theft* into /kɑ: tɛpətə/ (Jenkins, 2014). Consonant deletion is a naturally occurring phenomenon in English, however, it is highly rule-bound and never happens word-initially. If non-native speakers delete word-initial consonant clusters, this may have a damaging impact on intelligibility (Roach, 2013). Eliminating consonants at the end of a word seems to be far less troublesome, according to Jenkins's data.

Suprasegmental variations may indeed also cause a problem in intelligibility. The main areas prone to be sensitive to variation are stress placement, intonation and rhythm. A correct stress placement is often claimed to be crucial for intelligibility and Jenkins' data does confirm that claim. It is important to specify, however, what stress is meant here. Surprisingly and against the expectations, an error in *word stress* placement alone rarely causes a problem in ELF communication. Various researches have shown that a correct word stress placement is quite vital for native speakers, because stress patterns recognition is one of the main principles to identify words. But for ELF speaker, this is hardly applicable. For non-native speakers, word stress placement is not a natural and intuitive process. As a consequence, ELF speakers rely far less on a word stress when recognising words. When an incorrect word stress does cause an intelligibility problem, it is usually in accompaniment with other phonological errors but rarely on its own (Jenkins, 2014). What seems to be far more important is a correct *nuclear stress*. As one of the main means of information processing, a nuclear stress is used to highlight the most important segment of speech, often compensating the inability of the English language to use word order to show the most important piece of information in a sentence, unlike in inflectional languages, such as Czech (Dušková, 2012). Failing at utilising the nuclear stress properly may result in a wrong interpretation of an utterance and is likely to cause an intelligibility problem. Other prosodic features, such as intonation and rhythm prove to cause a minimal influence for ELF talks, according to Jenkins (2014).

The features of the lingua franca core. Based on the previous discussion about inter-speaker variations and their impact on intelligibility, the following features have been identified by Jennifer Jenkins as crucial for successful understanding in ELF talks and thus included in LFC (2014).

Most consonant sounds are to be approximated as closely to RP and GA as possible. However, two items are omitted from the core as they do not prove crucial for understanding. Dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/ are often given great attention in lessons and usually prove problematic for learners' active production, and yet the substitutes commonly employed by non-native speakers seem not to have a negative impact on intelligibility. Replacements, such as /s/ /z/ or /f/ /v/ pairs are thus permissible. The other item excluded from the core is a phonemic distinction between *clear* /l/ and *dark* /ɫ/ generally very difficult for learners to master, with most never acquiring it. Given that even in some native dialects the contact with the alveolar ridge is lost, accompanied with lip-rounding, vocalic alternative /ʊ/ is advised (Jenkins, 2014).

Concerning other consonants, learners should attempt to imitate Standard English and most approximations based in their L1 are allowed, but there are some approximations that may cause a threat to understanding and are to be avoided. Namely, Spanish use of /β/ instead of /b/, Japanese replacement of /h/ by voiceless bilabial fricative /ɸ/, Japanese dropping of postvocalic /n/ and nasalising of a preceding vowel, as in *cushion* /kʊʃõ/, Greek and Spanish replacement of /h/ by /x/ (Jenkins, 2014).

There are two consonants that are treated very differently in RP and GA, /r/ and /t/. LFC opts for the following realisations. The sound /r/ should be always pronounced, as it is in rhotic variants, such as GA /ɹ/ or the Scottish English /r/ regardless of its position in a word and phrase. The sound /t/ should be pronounced as voiceless alveolar plosive, as in RP /t/, never as voiced alveolar flap /ɾ/ in intervocalic position as in GA. These choices have been made so that phonetics of a word corresponds with its graphical representation as closely as possible (Jenkins, 2014).

Simplification of consonant clusters should be generally avoided as they always make a phonetic form of a word more distant from its graphical one. The initial clusters must never be simplified as they cause a great problem for understanding. However, other elisions that are according to RP/GA rules are permissible, with one notable exception that has been removed from LFC. Colloquial GA sometimes elides /t/ in a cluster /nt/ as in *winter* pronounced as *winner*. This is to be avoided, again for the sake of phonetic clarity of a word (Jenkins, 2014).

LFC also includes two phonetic features important for intelligibility. The sounds /p/, /t/ and /k/ should always retain their aspiration word-initially, otherwise they could be misheard as voiced, potentially sounding as a different word. The second feature concerns the *fortis/lenis* distinction and its effect on a preceding vowel. Without complicating the matter, for ELF pedagogy suffice it to say that learners should be accustomed to shortening a vowel before a final *fortis* consonant and maintaining a vowel length before final *lenis* consonant (Jenkins, 2014).

For *vowels* there are two main features to consider, the *quality* and *quantity*. According to Jenkins, a closer examination of those two properties shows that: “While vowel quantity is reasonably stable across varieties of English, vowel quality is not (2014, p.144).” Words such as *dog* and *goal* may have a slightly different quality realisations depending on a variety, with /dɒg/ /gəʊl/ in RP and /dɔg/ /goʊl/ in GA. These are only two contrastive examples, with many more existing not only between RP and GA but across other varieties. For this reason, LFC treats vowel quantity as important to retain according

to RP/GA rules. As far as quality is concerned, learners may opt for the one that suits them the best, but key here is consistency in usage. Vowel quality variations generally do not cause great problems for intelligibility as long as speakers use one quality variant for a vowel and diphthong without deviations and they retain an appropriate quantity. There is, however one vowel sound that proves to be potentially threatening to intelligibility if replaced by non-standard form. That is the least used vowel in RP, /ɜ:/. A common replacement with /ɑ:/, according to Jenkins' data, is often problematic, changing phonetic forms of word such as *curtain* into something close to *carton* and damaging understandability. LFC makes an exception regarding /ɜ:/ and demands that both quantity and quality be maintained (Jenkins, 2014).

Suprasegmental features have an interesting place in LFC. Often regarded as more important than segmental, most suprasegmental features appear to be either not relevant for or even damaging to ELF intelligibility. Much of the classroom time is spent on features of connected speech, weak forms and intonation, and yet aspects of connected speech (such as elision or assimilation) and weak forms seem to hinder understanding in NNS/NNS talks. Further most non-native speakers never attain a level of speed and fluidity to capitalise on the benefits of connected speech and weak forms and are thus omitted from LFC. Two features, however, are included as their importance for intelligibility seems immense, correct placement of *nuclear stress* and segmenting speech into *word groups*. These two features enable a better and clear information processing during speech and if ignored or used incorrectly often cause a problem in intelligibility according to Jenkins (2014).

To summarise, here is a brief overlook of the features of LFC, taken from Jenkins (2014).

Consonants:

- close approximations to core consonants generally permissible (certain approximations causing intelligibility problems not permissible, see above)
- rhotic /ɹ/ and intervocalic /t/ rather than intervocalic alveolar flap /ɾ/
- /θ/, /ð/ and /ʌ/ not included, their substitutions permissible
- consonant clusters simplified only according to English rules of elision, word-initial clusters never to be simplified

Phonetic aspects:

- plosives /p/, /t/ and /k/ always accompanied by aspiration word-initially

- fortis/lenis effect on preceding vowel length maintained

Vowels:

- length contrast maintained
- L2 regional variants of quality permissible if consistent, /ɜ:/ to be preserved

Suprasegmentals:

- correct nuclear stress production and placement necessary
- division of speech into word groups maintained

Pedagogic implications are potentially very beneficial for learners. LFC removes an immense workload from learners' shoulders by focusing only on the elements of English pronunciation that are realistically teachable and have proved to be vital for intelligibility, conserving a precious classroom time to be spent on more relevant areas of ELT. As Robin Walker (2011) argues, LFC represents a solid middle ground between a pedagogic tradition and globalising modernism. It retains some traditional features of standardised models such as RP or GA, but at the same time gives learners enough freedom and working space to express their national identification, not to mention that LFC is a much more easily attainable goal than the traditional expectation to acquire a near-native accent.

LFC will have a critical impact in one other very important area, the concept of error in teaching pronunciation. This term needs re-evaluation from the perspective of ELF and LFC. What should be considered an error during lessons and thus treated as something to be corrected is a deviation from those LFC aspects that might be potentially threatening to intelligibility. Variations in those items not included in the core should be treated only as simply L2 regional varieties of English, in the same way RP or GA are viewed.

The role of non-native teacher. The total amount of non-native speakers of the English language far exceeds the number of native speakers (Crystal, 2003). This in turn brings some important implications to ELT, one of which is the fact that as far as English teachers and tutors are concerned, the ratio between native and non-native ones is heavily in favour of the latter, with McKay (2015) providing the estimate that roughly 80% of English teaching professionals are non-native. In the light of the new globalised concept of English as LF, that makes the non-native teacher a respectable and important workforce to be reckoned with. And yet, the perception of non-native teachers in the eye of the general public is usually pejorative.

The concept of English as a foreign language is still strongly prevalent in ELT; as a consequence this old framework puts the main emphasis on a native speaker as an ideal

model. But this inherently entails that native-speaker teachers are viewed as more ideal for language tutoring, putting non-native teachers at a serious disadvantage. This fallacy is so strongly rooted that it permeates the general public opinions and attitudes. According to McKay (2015), native teachers are more likely to be successful on the job market. Prestige of language institutions often depends on whether or not they advertise native speakers. And in turn, non-native teachers' prestige is raised depending on how near native-like their English is, particularly in the area of accent. Those teachers, whose accent is regionally marked are usually perceived as less competent, illogical as such approach may be. The native-speaker supremacy fallacy is strongly imposed on non-native teachers that they usually waste time on 'improving' their pronunciation rather than spend it on mastering pedagogical skills (McKay, 2015).

The pedagogical advantage of a native-speaker teacher, debatable still as it is, can be justifiable if English is only considered as a foreign language, but not tenable in the concept of English as a lingua franca. ELF views *proficient* speakers as desirable models, be they native or non-native. Thus, all teachers, regardless of their linguistic origin, share the equal ground in this new concept. Additionally, it can be argued that in ELF, non-native speakers possess several beneficial advantages. The most obvious of these is that NNS teachers are bilingual, serving better as a linguistic bridge between English and their students. NNS teachers are well familiar with the mother tongue and culture of their students and as such, they should be able to choose an optimal teaching procedure adapted for students' needs. Since they have gone through the process of acquiring a foreign language themselves, they can more easily identify problematic areas with respect to both learning process itself (i.e. useful strategies and most common mistakes when studying language) and language areas (grammatical, phonetical...) especially problematic given the differences with students' L1 (McKay, 2015).

It is of vital importance that the public opinion change in regard to non-native teachers. They should no longer be seen as inferior to native speaking tutors, especially since they might actually prove more resourceful in certain areas for teaching English in the 21st century.

The role of culture in teaching English as a lingua franca. Culture has always played a prominent role in language studies, with textbooks and course books typically including cultural contents. There are two reasons why studying a language is usually thought to be inseparable from a cultural content. First, languages are instruments of communication of a particular social group and each such group shares its own cultural

values and history. Languages, shaping our thinking and in turn being shaped by it, often contain linguistic and lexical features embedded in culture. A notable example could be Japanese and the importance of politeness and social status for Japanese people that permeates the morphology and vocabulary of the language. Second, teaching culture could be highly motivating for students. By learning habits, customs and traditions of a target language, students usually feel more secure in using the language in that particular country (McKay, 2015).

Kramsch (1993) recognises two important goals in teaching culture. The first being establishing something that she calls *the sphere of interculturality*. What encompasses the term is the idea that learning another culture should not be simply a process of information transferring, but it should stimulate learners to reflect on their own culture with regard to the other. The second goal is to approach culture teaching as teaching difference. Not only, two cultures will be different from one another in many respects, but also within the same culture, there is no ‘monolithicism’, different social groups by age, gender, religious and ethnic background share slightly different values. As such, the most important theme to keep in mind when it comes to teaching culture is *diversity* as a pivotal point.

But English as a lingua franca is not a language of a specific nation anymore. It becomes denationalised and as such is not connected with any culture in particular. This has raised a question, whether there is a need for culture content in ELF. The argument is even more fortified by the fact that some studies have shown that studying culture is not always even motivating for students. The motivation is heavily reliant on what content is presented to learners. Until now, the content in language textbooks has naturally been predominantly Anglophone-oriented, with a special focus on a western-style middle-class life. Understandable, when studying English as a foreign language, such content is not always relevant or relatable for all students across the globe, thus motivation is seriously disputed (McKay, 2015).

In the same tone as in the previous sections, culture requires re-examining and re-assessing in the ELF concept. Similarly to how approaches to pronunciation and non-native teachers need to take into account globalising of English, so does culture content presented to students. It is far more motivating for students when a cultural topic can be related to their own lives and experience. It might be a good idea to handle cultural topics with a *reflective* approach in mind. Students, then, are meant to think about a topic from the perspective of their own national origin and ponder about similarities and differences. Discussing cultural topics should make them more aware about their own, so that they can

present and share their culture. ELF presupposes communication between people from various nations and ethnic backgrounds, thus each presenting their own unique opinions and world views to share and discuss. That does not mean a total exclusion of Anglophone-centric topic. Obviously, they are a part of a globalised world as well, but it might be more fruitful to encourage students to compare them with their own life, how they look at the topic.

Cultural content in language textbooks must be a subject of fine-tuning the balance between topics concerning students' own, foreign and an international culture. Ideally, such content should promote sharing ideas and discussing them, not only absorbing them.

The modern world and everything in it changes at a rapid pace, language learning being not an exception. The position of English has seen especially dramatic shifts in the area of global linguistic importance in the last decades. Its attainment of the title as a global lingua franca cannot be overlooked. Whereas ELT has always been (as any other field of study) a subject of change and improvement, it usually was from the perspective of language learning in general and English as a foreign language. However, there are certain key areas affected by the language's global status and modern pedagogy must keep the tempo with these new developments to stay topical and relevant. Some principles and attitudes long considered to be staples in teaching English, such as a native speaker as a role model and Anglo-centred cultural content, must be adjusted in the light of the new global future of the language.

III. METHODOLOGY

The previous chapter represents an endeavour to provide and summarise some of the most topical and relevant items of information regarding new developments in English language teaching and English in general. This chapter sets as its goal an attempt to synergise with the theoretical background by putting the hypotheses and findings to the practical test and uniting them with the results. At the beginning of the chapter, the research questions and the focus of the methodology will be presented. Then, the chapter will proceed to provide the information about the research methods having been selected and used and the reasoning behind opting for them.

The topic of English as a lingua franca is a very broad one and it still resonates quite freshly in the linguistic and pedagogic circles. It becomes obvious that the modern pedagogy and English language teaching will need to call for reformation. Approaches and attitudes are to change. But given the fact that the opinions on this subject are not unanimous and are still being actively debated, it might not be exactly clear what the best way to steer the teaching is. A field research concerning this topic could be approached from various angles, ranging from conducting a practical lesson employing the principles having been covered in the previous chapter to various types of questionnaires eliciting attitudes towards the current situation.

Taking into consideration the overall descriptive nature of the thesis, which mostly summarises various theoretical stances of authorities in the field and does not provide definite and specific proposals for teaching amendments, practical application of the points covered in the theoretical background, such as preparing a lesson that takes ELF into account, has been rejected. Instead, the thesis will take again a descriptive direction with the field research by opting for a questionnaire, whose aim was to elicit attitudes of Czech students towards the concept of ELF.

Research Questions

The overarching theme of the theoretical part is to approach English from a different perspective, not as a foreign language, but as a lingua franca. However, this conceptual shift requires a considerable change of attitude in many critical areas, challenging the old perspectives and opinions that will be rooted quite deeply in the minds of both learners and teachers of the English language. The main purpose of the field research was to examine where Czech learners of English stand when it comes to the topic

of ELF. The questionnaire attempts to probe into learners' mind framework and elicit what their attitude towards the topic is.

Considering the questions more specifically, the first one is to discover the value of English for Czech learners. What is the main driving force to learn the language for them? What do they use or intend to use it for? Finding the answer to those questions is an anchorage for further examination. The following research is to be highly influenced by the nature of the answers to those two questions. Based on the findings in the theoretical part, it is reasonable to presume that the application of English for Czech learners may be in alignment with the global viewpoint having been stated earlier in the thesis. The research is, of course, ready to acknowledge different results contrary to the estimated ones and comment on them correspondingly, should they transpire.

Having established the initial starting point of the examination, the field research then investigates learners' standpoint of more specific areas of ELT with regard to ELF. What are their learning and studying preferences? Are they still more oriented towards old concepts that hold native-speaker English pivotal as a learning goal or do they display open-mindedness towards denationalisation of English and its implications? The structure of the questionnaire, as will be discussed later, examined specifically areas of pronunciation, cultural content and teachers of the English language.

Finally, the aim of the thesis with all its information and research is a attempt to provide at least a hint of the answer to the question whether or not the Czech environment is ready to adopt ELF philosophy and principles. In case the learners show already quite a positive affinity towards the concept, the modern pedagogy might have a green light for applying it. In the opposite case, it may be advisable that the learners be exposed to the concept first.

Tools and Methods

As has been mentioned in the previous section, the thesis has opted for a questionnaire as the main tool for the field research. The choice is purely pragmatic. For descriptively-oriented research, the questionnaire is an ideal tool that provides flexibility and time efficiency. It consisted of twenty-two statements and three questions which were open questions for students to write their answers in any way they found adequate. The remaining statements were scale-based. The number of items was a balance between gathering enough information for results to be relevant and a relatively low period of time needed to complete the questionnaire without obtruding lessons much.

The items were divided into four segments, each covering one topic area. These areas are the usage of English, English pronunciation, cultural material in textbooks and the attitude towards teachers of English. The segmentation was for convenience reason and was not labelled as it was not necessary for students. The statements were ordered in a specific way. In each segment, the items that represented the traditional point of view about ELT were placed first. Then, they were followed by items that coincided with the principles of ELF. Choosing a different order of these questions may have had a different effect upon participants' judgement when they filled the questionnaire. Had the ELF-oriented statements come first, they might have tuned participants' minds to the concept from the beginning influencing the results. This was not a desirous effect as the questionnaire aimed to map the current situation as objectively as possible. Placing items oriented towards the traditional model before ELF ones was indeed conducive as well to some extent. But in this case, the intended effect was to put the participants into a familiar context first and then let the later statements challenge the participants' quite possibly fossilised viewpoints. In this order, each standpoint was given enough space to contemplate. There might be arguments for and against both the approaches. The third possibility could have been to arrange the items in a mixed order, both concepts alternating, for example. However, the aforementioned setup was chosen as more fitting with the general theme of the thesis and for promoting quite possibly critical thinking.

The statements were all scale-based. For each statement a number ranging from 1 to 6 was to be put into circle, with 1 representing "absolutely disagree" and 6 "absolutely agree". A six-value scale had been chosen for the questionnaire for various reasons. Any value range could have been used for the purpose of this field research, with minimum being two, basically binary decisions "yes/no". This would not have been suitable, however, as the nature of the statements was slightly more complex to be answered in such a simple way. Odd ranges were eliminated too for a simple psychological reason. If there is a middle value, in practice representing the opinion "I do not know" or "neutral", people are likely to choose that option more often, especially with more controversial statements, because that way they evade the need to ponder them carefully. Even scales eliminate this and force the participants to choose a side. Again, psychologically speaking, deciding for either side presupposes some contemplation. A six-value scale seems perfectly adequate as it gave the participants enough space both to decide whether they agreed or disagreed with the statements and to express their level of (dis)agreement. The questionnaire also contained three open questions. Their role was to supplement the statements, to give

students an opportunity to express an opinion not covered in the statements. Although each item was carefully selected to reflect the main points of the theory, ensuring that the participants address them properly, it might be very beneficial to give the students a space potentially to tackle other areas that they can think of. The open questions gave them this chance.

The questionnaire was designed in such a way so that it might not require any previous exposure to the topic of ELF. Its content was simple to understand and answer. This was intentional. One possible conduct of the field research could have been that the students would undergo a lecture or seminar about ELF and its benefits and then they would be given a questionnaire containing even more complex statements and being much larger. However, it is very probable that after such seminar, their answers would be highly influenced and would not correspond objectively to their opinions prior to the seminar. The whole questionnaire can be found in the ‘appendices’ section. Since it was written in Czech, an English translation is also included.

Conduct and Participants

Fifty-two students have been selected to participate in the field research, all of them being pupils of Czech secondary schools. Their age ranges from sixteen to eighteen. For the sake of variety, not all participants attend the same school. Twenty-six of them are students of a Prague secondary school of EU administration and the remaining half are students of a secondary school with a focus on veterinary & business education and located in a smaller countryside town.

The decision behind selecting these participants is supported with certain reasoning. Without trying to insinuate anything and start a ‘small town versus big city mentality’ debate, the thesis reasonably presupposes that learning a social environment will be to some degree different in the two schools. The main factor ensuring a variety is not the location of the schools itself, but rather a different focus of education on these institutions. A business and veterinary-oriented school might display a different attitude towards English language learning compared to a school with a focus on EU administration education. If all the participants attended the same institution, there is a considerable probability that their minds would be shaped in a similar way due to the same environment and tutors influencing them. In this way, a slight variety should be achieved increasing the questionnaire’s validity.

The questionnaire was distributed during standard teaching lessons, at their beginning ensuring that the students had enough time completing it. The participants had

been informed a lesson before that they would be given a questionnaire researching English learning so that it may not catch them entirely unprepared, but they had no further information or discussion about the topic. Again, the questionnaire is designed with no prior exposure to the topic in mind and intentionally so to maximise objectivity of its results.

The main idea that has been kept in mind with the questionnaire is accessibility and objectivity. The methods and conduct have been guided by this principle. The questionnaire should map a mind framework of Czech students concerning ELF in a reasonably varied environment. With all methods and conduct having been explained, the following chapter will analyse the collected data and interpret them accordingly.

IV. RESULTS AND COMMENTARIES

This chapter presents the results of the conducted research introduced and explained in the previous chapter. The expected outcome of the field research is an examination of the extent to which the Czech school environment is ready to adopt the ELF attitude and framework. The results are to indicate what areas of ELF philosophy the Czech students are open for and what areas are still impeded by the current and prevalent ELT attitudes. The chapter will be introduced by general remarks and observations of the whole questionnaire. Then, it will proceed to examine specific statements or groups of related statements individually as many of them may require a more detailed discussion. At the end, the chapter will conclude by interpreting the results in the light of the research questions having been proposed at the beginning of the methodology chapter and by considering strengths and weaknesses of the research.

There are many ways in which the result section could have been organised and presented. One possible and originally intended manner is to compare the results with relation to age and gender. However, this organising principle has been abandoned in the end due to an unequal distribution among the participants. The majority of them are females, leaving male representatives in too small a number to draw safe conclusions about ELF preferences with regard to gender. The age factor suffers with similar shortcomings. The individual ages show a much more optimal distribution among the participants, with each having a satisfactory and representative number. However, it has been concluded that the range is perhaps too close to matter. Upon examining the results, it has become obvious that there is a different main factor that is responsible for varying outcomes in many questions and ultimately this factor has been chosen as the main organising principle for this chapter. That is the comparison of the schools and opinions of their pupils. In the section discussing the chosen tools and methods, it has been postulated that a different social and learning environment may be a major factor and this presupposition has been supported by the results. Thus, each individual statement is examined by comparing the results gathered from both schools.

Before delving into the statements individually, the results of the whole questionnaire can be found below in Table 2. Number 1 represents ‘absolutely disagree’ whereas 6 ‘absolutely agree’.

Table 2

Questionnaire results

| # | Statement | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> | <u>6</u> |
|----|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1 | I use English to communicate with native speakers most the time. | 21% | 23% | 27% | 15% | 12% | 2% |
| 2 | I learn English primarily to visit native-speaker countries, talk to them and learn about their culture. | 8% | 4% | 8% | 17% | 35% | 29% |
| 3 | I learn English primarily for study and work purposes. | 0% | 2% | 6% | 10% | 58% | 25% |
| 4 | I use English to communicate with non-native speakers most the time. | 0% | 4% | 15% | 15% | 25% | 40% |
| 5 | I learn English primarily to talk to people all over the world, travel and learn about foreign cultures. | 4% | 0% | 4% | 6% | 23% | 63% |
| 6 | I learn English to gain access to information sources and media that interest me. | 4% | 4% | 12% | 15% | 31% | 35% |
| 8 | It is important to me to acquire a native-speaker pronunciation. | 6% | 12% | 31% | 21% | 19% | 12% |
| 9 | I find acquiring native-speaker pronunciation feasible and learnable. | 2% | 13% | 27% | 27% | 23% | 8% |
| 10 | I try to eliminate traces of Czech accent from my pronunciation. | 8% | 12% | 15% | 25% | 17% | 23% |
| 11 | British English pronunciation should be primarily taught at schools. | 12% | 12% | 23% | 27% | 13% | 13% |
| 12 | American English pronunciation should be primarily taught at schools. | 12% | 17% | 21% | 23% | 13% | 13% |
| 13 | In an English class, students should encounter various accents to be better prepared for communication with people all over the world. | 0% | 0% | 10% | 23% | 19% | 48% |
| 14 | I do not mind my English having traces of Czech accent. I show my nationality that way. | 15% | 13% | 31% | 10% | 19% | 12% |
| 15 | Acquiring a native accent is not important to me. The main thing is to understand and be understood. | 6% | 8% | 19% | 13% | 21% | 33% |
| 17 | In an English class, I would like to learn as much about native-speaker culture as possible. After all, we study their language and the cultural knowledge gives me more confidence when talking to them. | 2% | 15% | 35% | 23% | 15% | 10% |
| 18 | In an English class, I would like to discuss topics from the Czech culture. Me being Czech, they are more relevant, I practise talking about them in English to be able to present our culture to the world. | 23% | 10% | 31% | 13% | 17% | 6% |

| | | | | | | | |
|----|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 19 | In an English class, I would like to discuss topics concerning the whole world and foreign cultures, since I will use English to communicate with people from around the world and discuss global topics. | 0% | 4% | 15% | 33% | 23% | 25% |
| 20 | The native speaker is more competent as an English teacher than non-native one. | 2% | 6% | 23% | 13% | 29% | 27% |
| 21 | I expect the Czech teacher of English to display an exemplary native-like English. | 4% | 4% | 6% | 23% | 48% | 15% |
| 22 | I would prefer studying at a school that also employs native speakers to a school where there are none. | 0% | 10% | 25% | 15% | 23% | 27% |
| 23 | Czech teachers of English are more suitable, since they have gone through the process of language learning themselves and thus can predict problematic areas of English for Czech students more easily and explain them using comparisons with Czech. | 8% | 4% | 15% | 21% | 37% | 15% |
| 24 | It is more important to me to be simply able to make myself easily understood rather than to have an exemplary native-like English. | 10% | 2% | 6% | 19% | 25% | 38% |

In general, it could be said that the results are quite ambivalent. The questionnaire does not show a conclusive orientation to either ELF or current ELT situation. Some ELF statements have gained a firm support while others have been met with a strong disagreement. The results of the statements 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 13, 15, 19, 23 and 24 are in an alignment with ELF philosophy, whereas the results of the statements 2, 9, 10, 14, 18, 20, 21 and 22 go against it. The remaining statements show no particular orientation. The results are about 50% for agreement and disagreement. This shows quite an unconvincing attitude of Czech students towards ELF principles. The results find the participants somewhere in the middle. It cannot be concluded that they are completely against ELF, if anything, perhaps the opposite may be true as there are slightly more results supporting ELF rather than opposing it, but there are definitely some areas of ELF that are still alien to Czech students and hard to accept. Now individual statements and their results will be examined.

Statement 1 (Table 3) shows quite expected results. Not only does it go with ELF principles, but the slightly different numbers are undoubtedly influenced by the nature of the schools and their geographic position. Both schools confirm the ELF assumption that English is no longer primarily used to communicate with native speakers. However, the disagreement with the statement is slightly smaller with the Prague school. This is to be

expected. It is probably much easier to encounter native speakers in the capital than in a countryside town.

| Table 3 | | | | | | |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <i>1. I use English to communicate with native speakers most the time.</i> | | | | | | |
| <u>School</u> | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> | <u>6</u> |
| Prague Secondary School | 19% | 23% | 23% | 12% | 19% | 4% |
| Countryside Veterinary and Business School | 23% | 23% | 31% | 19% | 4% | 0% |

Unsurprisingly then, statement 4 (Table 4), which goes directly against the previous one, shows a strong agreement on both sides. Students from the countryside school have chosen number 6 slightly more often, again probably due to a scarcity of native-speaker encounters.

| Table 4 | | | | | | |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <i>4. I use English to communicate with non-native speakers most the time.</i> | | | | | | |
| <u>School</u> | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> | <u>6</u> |
| Prague Secondary School | 0% | 8% | 15% | 15% | 27% | 35% |
| Countryside Veterinary and Business School | 0% | 0% | 15% | 15% | 23% | 46% |

Statements 3 and 6 concerning application of English for working purposes and access to media and information sources show a remarkable match on both sides. 92% of participants from both schools agree with learning English for study and work reasons. And again, an exact match can be found in using English to access information. Both schools agreed in 81%. As the most important global lingua franca, it is logical to assume that it will play a prominent role on a job market. The Internet has become the most accessible and widespread source of information and its primary language is, again, English. It is no surprise that all the participants have acknowledged the importance of the language in these sectors.

Comparing statements 2 and 5 (Table 5) brings interesting observation. To their core, both statements represent opposite attitudes towards ELT. The former represents the more traditional goal of English teaching, whereas the latter expresses the position of ELF

ideology. It could be expected that one of the statements will be met with agreement and, naturally, the other with the opposite, like it was the case with statements 1 and 4. The result do not support this assumption. Both schools have strongly agreed with both statements. However, upon closer assessment of the statements, it can be seen that neither statement necessarily eliminates the other. It is perfectly possible for a learner to express an interest in both native-speaker countries and a global culture. The result merely show that the participants truly embrace the possibility to travel around the whole world. English-speaking countries are still favourite tourist destinations. Learners' interest in them is expected.

| Table 5 | | | | | | |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <i>I learn English primarily to visit native-speaker countries, talk to them and learn about their culture.</i> | | | | | | |
| <u>School</u> | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> | <u>6</u> |
| Prague Secondary School | 8% | 0% | 8% | 15% | 35% | 35% |
| Countryside Veterinary and Business School | 8% | 8% | 8% | 19% | 35% | 23% |
| <i>I learn English primarily to talk to people all over the world, travel and learn about foreign cultures.</i> | | | | | | |
| <u>School</u> | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> | <u>6</u> |
| Prague Secondary School | 4% | 0% | 0% | 8% | 19% | 69% |
| Countryside Veterinary and Business School | 4% | 0% | 8% | 4% | 27% | 58% |

Next in order are the statements concerning English pronunciation. Statements 8 and 9 (Table 6) bring interesting results. The Prague school expresses a greater importance to sound like a native speaker than the countryside school by almost 20%. Given the results of the previous statements, the outcome of the countryside school is to be expected. The students do acknowledge that they mostly use English to talk to non-native speakers, thus the need to acquire a native accent is naturally smaller. To interpret the Prague school results is more difficult. One would expect that multicultural nature of the capital would support the assumption that accents are not that important. The focus of the school is the likely candidate as the main reason. Being prepared for EU administration, the students probably expect to come into contact with native speakers often or find themselves in formal context, thus they might feel the need for their English to be exemplary.

| Table 6 | | | | | | |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <i>8. It is important to me to acquire a native-speaker pronunciation.</i> | | | | | | |
| <u>School</u> | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> | <u>6</u> |
| Prague Secondary School | 4% | 8% | 27% | 19% | 23% | 19% |
| Countryside Veterinary and Business School | 8% | 15% | 35% | 23% | 15% | 4% |
| <i>9. I find acquiring native-speaker pronunciation feasible and learnable.</i> | | | | | | |
| <u>School</u> | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> | <u>6</u> |
| Prague Secondary School | 4% | 8% | 15% | 35% | 31% | 8% |
| Countryside Veterinary and Business School | 0% | 19% | 38% | 19% | 15% | 8% |

Even more surprising is the attitude towards teachability of the native pronunciation. The Prague school shows quite a great confidence that it is possible to acquire a native accent, whereas the conviction is much lower with the students from the countryside school. As has been suggested, Prague students are probably more often in contact with English speakers, they are more exposed to English accents and for that reason, they might find it easier to learn it.

Statements 10 and 14 (Table 7) are connected with the previous ones, this time focusing on the Czech accent of English and students' attitude towards it. There is a considerable agreement on both sides. Both schools try to eliminate traces of Czech accent and generally do not wish to show the nationality through pronunciation. For the Prague students, this is an expected result considering the previous statements. However, there seems to be a slight contradiction with the countryside students. They do not find acquiring native accents important and yet they seem to be more sensitive about the Czech accent of English than the Prague students. However, this is not necessarily a contradiction. They may not be interested to acquire a native accent, they just do not wish to retain the Czech pronunciation. One of the reasons for Lingua Franca Core to be proposed is to give speakers an option to promote their local variety of English and to keep their national identity. In the new concept, this is a beneficial goal. The Czech population seems not to be there quite yet.

| Table 7 | | | | | | |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <i>10. I try to eliminate traces of Czech accent from my pronunciation.</i> | | | | | | |
| <u>School</u> | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> | <u>6</u> |
| Prague Secondary School | 8% | 12% | 19% | 23% | 8% | 31% |
| Countryside Veterinary and Business School | 8% | 12% | 12% | 27% | 27% | 15% |
| <i>14. I do not mind my English having traces of Czech accent. I show my nationality that way.</i> | | | | | | |
| <u>School</u> | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> | <u>6</u> |
| Prague Secondary School | 19% | 23% | 23% | 8% | 15% | 12% |
| Countryside Veterinary and Business School | 12% | 4% | 38% | 12% | 23% | 12% |

Statement 13 has received almost unanimous match, with 90% participants agreeing with it. The remaining 10% have only chosen number 3, expressing ‘slightly disagree’ degree. While the participants may display certain concerns about their own accents, most of them realise how important it is to be exposed to a variety of English accents, training themselves for ELF interactions.

British English accent vs. American English accent debate is a point of interest of statements 11 and 12. These two accents take a primary position in the contemporary ELT as most textbooks use them as a teaching model. Even LFC follows phonetic rules of these two accents for its crucial features showing that even from the more globalised perspective, RP and GA are still of a considerable influence. The overall results are remarkably equal. Only a slight majority (54%) agrees that BrE pronunciation, but the difference is quite negligible. The opinion about AmE is even more equalised, scoring exactly 50%. Upon examining each school separately, there is a slight bias towards AmE in the Prague schools, whereas the countryside school shows a higher affinity towards BrE. The choice of accent is often influenced by various factors. A significant one is an English of a teacher. As a role model for students, the teacher is often a target of imitating. Another important factor is what accent speakers hear the most. These factors might have played their role in the questionnaire. But for ELF, it is important that there is not a single variety of English that receives a unanimous support, thus promoting a variety and a speaker’s personal choice.

Statements 17, 18 and 19 (Table 8) discuss a cultural material covered in English lessons. ELF emphasises the importance to give students an opportunity to discuss global topics and to learn about other cultures from all over the world. At the same time, ELF also attempts to encourage learners to consider their own culture and increase awareness of interculturality. The results coincide with this view partially. Neither school shows a convincing agreement to learn Anglocentric content, with the countryside school agreeing with the statement more. On the other hand, both have expressed a convincing desire to discuss global topics and learn about world cultures. However, topics concerning Czech culture appear to be harshly underestimated in the mind of the participants. The Prague school expressed a strong disagreement with the statement (76%). The countryside school shows a more positive attitude towards it, but the ratio is still unconvincing, being exactly 50%.

| Table 8 | | | | | | |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <i>17. In an English class, I would like to learn as much about native-speaker culture as possible. Afterall, we study their language and the cultural knowledge gives me more confidence when talking to them.</i> | | | | | | |
| <u>School</u> | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> | <u>6</u> |
| Prague Secondary School | 0% | 23% | 35% | 19% | 12% | 12% |
| Countryside Veterinary and Business School | 4% | 8% | 35% | 27% | 19% | 8% |
| <i>18. In an English class, I would like to discuss topics from the Czech culture. Me being Czech, their are more relevant, I practise talking about them in English to be able to present our culture to the world.</i> | | | | | | |
| <u>School</u> | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> | <u>6</u> |
| Prague Secondary School | 38% | 15% | 23% | 12% | 8% | 4% |
| Countryside Veterinary and Business School | 8% | 4% | 38% | 15% | 27% | 8% |
| <i>19. In an English class, I would like to discuss topics concerning the whole world and foreign cultures, since I will use English to communicate with people from around the world and discuss global topics.</i> | | | | | | |
| <u>School</u> | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> | <u>6</u> |
| Prague Secondary School | 0% | 4% | 23% | 42% | 15% | 15% |
| Countryside Veterinary and Business School | 0% | 4% | 8% | 23% | 31% | 35% |

The more negative viewpoint on interculturality assumed by the Prague school is likely to be again the result of the multicultural character of the capital. Encountering foreign cultures increases the interest in them, but at the same time may lower the interest in one's own culture.

The last set of statements elicits students' view of Czech teachers of English and their assets. Statement 21 has received a very strong support from both schools (over 80% in each). This shows that Czech students might still consider English of native speakers as the ideal teaching model and they expect their teachers to master and display it. Not entirely coinciding with ELF standpoint, this area alongside national variation in pronunciation seem to be the primary areas to be addressed in the view of the general public.

The most interesting outcomes can be found in the comparison of the results of statements 20 and 23 (Table 9).

| Table 9 | | | | | | |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <i>20. The native speaker is more competent as an English teacher than non-native one.</i> | | | | | | |
| <u>School</u> | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> | <u>6</u> |
| Prague Secondary School | 4% | 8% | 12% | 19% | 27% | 31% |
| Countryside Veterinary and Business School | 0% | 4% | 35% | 8% | 31% | 23% |
| <i>23. Czech teachers of English are more suitable, since they have gone through the process of language learning themselves and thus can predict problematic areas of English for Czech students more easily and explain them using comparisons with Czech.</i> | | | | | | |
| <u>School</u> | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> | <u>6</u> |
| Prague Secondary School | 8% | 4% | 12% | 15% | 42% | 19% |
| Countryside Veterinary and Business School | 8% | 4% | 19% | 27% | 31% | 12% |

There, what can be observed is an instance of either a true contradiction in opinions or the intended effect of the order of the statements forcing the participants to re-evaluate their stances. Both schools have first expressed a strong conviction that the native speaker is more competent as the English teacher, an opinion strongly maintained by the old ELT trends. However, with the latter statement, they do seem to have reconsidered that standpoint by admitting, again, strongly that the Czech teacher may be more suitable due to

experience of language acquisition and ability to identify more problematic areas through linguistic empathy, as it were. This is also reinforced with the last, open question. Many students have stated that they would prefer Czech teachers, because they tend to explain grammar better and they can switch to Czech if need be.

The last statement 24 concludes the questionnaire in a true ELF spirit. Both schools have shown a strong agreement with it. Perhaps, this really might reflect the stance of Czech students that the ultimate goal of ELT is to make communicating ideas and sharing opinions possible and not to imitate native speakers.

The three open questions are meant to be a back-up tools to give the participants an additional way to express their opinion. Although the statements should provide a satisfying coverage for ELF topics, they cannot possibly contain everything. This is where the questions come into play. Through them, the students may mention new reasons and viewpoints. Unfortunately, most answers only repeated the reasons of the statements. Question 7 asks for students' personal reason to learn English and the most common answers are travel and work purposes. Some students have mentioned that they learn the language to be able to watch films and read books in original, but that could be counted simply as media access. A few students have stated that they learn English, because of friends and family living abroad. Lastly, only four pupils claim to learn the language, because they simply like it, they are interested in it itself. Question 16 concerning accents also does not bring surprising answers. Most answers are that the students do not try to learn any accent in particular or they try to learn them both, confirming the indecisiveness between the two main accents found in the statements. However, the countryside school finds the British accent more understandable and common in teaching materials. It is true that in European environment, English is more oriented towards the British variant. This is likely the reason for their answers. The last question 25 asks about the preference between native/non-native teachers. The most common argument for native teachers are that they have a better insight into their own language and since most the time they cannot speak Czech, it forces the students to use the language and improve. On the other hand, many students have stated that they would rather be taught by non-native teachers, because they tend to explain grammar more concisely and they can always revert to Czech when necessary. Lastly, not few participants have speculated that it is best to be taught by both, with non-natives being more ideal for beginners. Once a more advanced level has been reached, native teachers should take over.

The field research has confirmed the ELF assumption that English is mostly learned for global purposes. Study and work reasons, communicating with non-native speakers, as well as travelling and meeting foreign countries and cultures have received a strong agreement from students' side. However, the interest in native-speaker countries and culture is also met with a positive attitude. Czech students seem to embrace the value of English fully, leaving no corner of the planet without curiosity.

Whereas the area of application of the language seems satisfyingly in accordance with ELF, the more specific topics have been met with less conclusive results. The importance to acquire a native-like accent seems ambivalent with the Czech students. The Prague school expresses the desire to learn it, while the countryside school does not. On top of that, both strongly agree that they try to eliminate traces of Czech accent from their English. In terms of pronunciation then, Czech environment does not seem quite ready to adopt the new concept. On the other hand, the participants have shown a reasonably healthy position concerning cultural content in English classes. The majority shows a great interest in global topics. This is evidently a good basis for ELF. On the other hand, it might be necessary to increase their awareness of the value of interculturality. Lastly, their view of Czech teachers of English seem partially in accordance with ELF. They recognise the main asset of non-native teachers to provide a good insight into learning a foreign language and to identify problematic areas, with a possibility to use the mother tongue as a scaffolding if need be. Further, they seem to adopt a very reasonable stance that it is most profitable to be taught by both native and non-native teachers as each can contribute uniquely to an English class.

Is, then, the Czech learning environment ready to adopt ELF principles and ideology? The answer proposed by this thesis is tentatively 'not quite yet'. While there are areas where Czech students seem to be in alignment with ELF, there are also others where the old principles and opinions seem to be rooted quite firmly and need addressing and discussing before ELF can begin to be fully implemented.

There is always a room for improvement. The field research is not without shortcomings. Two main points of criticism might be the number of participants being too small and the open questions being too generic and close to statements, thus yielding unattractive answers. Questionnaires always benefit from higher numbers of participants as it increases their accuracy. This field research could have been conducted on a much larger scale, but what scale exactly? It is important to keep in mind that larger research might be

more suitable for dissertation works. For the purpose of this thesis, the number used here seems to be sufficient enough. It has managed to show tendencies and preferences and that is the main objective of it. The open questions are too closely related to the statements that precede them. One could suspect that the participants were inspired by them when answering the question. This has led to the answers showing little original content. More ideal would have been to choose more specific, if not more controversial, questions that would require the participants to consider different areas of ELF.

V. IMPLICATIONS

The results obtained from the field research covered in the previous chapter might be pointing towards a new possible direction of ELT in the Czech pedagogic environment. This chapter summarises the potential implication and discusses ways to develop the research further.

As has been postulated above, the participants in the field research have demonstrated a relative ambivalence towards ELF concepts. Before its principles can be fully deployed, it seems necessary to increase students' awareness about them. This could be achieved through various ways. Ideally, teaching materials should support the topic by including chapters mentioning and discussing it. If a school does not use any such course book, this might present an ideal opportunity for teachers to create a conversation lesson centred round ELF discussions. The topic offers a broad space for viewpoints and stances so that it should ensure vibrant debates in class.

Similarly, the potential of conversation lessons to serve ELF purpose does not end here. They create an ideal occasion to discuss global topics and foreign cultures. Teachers are invited to prepare lessons based on recent topical events or topics that students show a particular interest about. However, based on the research results, one suggestion for teachers is to introduce topics concerning the Czech culture more in their class. Discussing one's own culture in language teaching is often overlooked, but as has been hinted in the theoretical background, for ELF fostering interculturality is important. Including lessons discussing Czech culture is something that is within teachers' possibilities and should be strongly considered.

One major change of attitude should concern the look on error in teaching pronunciation. Teachers are recommended to be exposed to the concept of LFC and acknowledge that RP and GA are no longer golden standards that students' performance should be measured against. Teachers are to show a lenience towards learners' phonological variations that are not included in LFC and at the same time a strong guidance and insistence on those features that form the skeleton of LFC as they have been identified as crucial for intelligibility.

The above-mentioned recommendations are based on the field research and its results presented in the thesis. However, the outcome may not be conclusive enough given the relative small scope of the research. It would require many more such endeavours to be

undertaken, and on a much larger scope, to confirm a definite state of the Czech pedagogic environment concerning ELF concepts. The thesis invites other researchers to conduct similar surveys and compare their results. It is important to invest time to elicit the attitude of Czech learners and establish well-informed and supportive learning ground for ELF to be successfully adopted.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

In the rapid and ever-changing contemporary world, it is of utmost importance to keep up with modern trends, innovations and tendencies to remain relevant. Language learning is no exception and ELT in particular has seen especially dramatic changes in the last couple of decades. The main reason for this thesis to have been written is to highlight and describe the current situation and to summarise the main points of the newly developing course of English learning and teaching. In this new concept, English is treated as the first lingua franca that has achieved a global status. This brings some important changes. English is becoming significantly more denationalised and multicultural. New local varieties with their own peculiar linguistic features are emerging and the role of native speakers, previously seen as pivotal, are losing their dominance and power over the language. With respect to language learning, this means that modern pedagogy has to acknowledge the multicultural character of the language and its pervasive effects on its development.

It seems that the Czech educational environment is partially prepared for ELF adoption. The participants of the field research have shown a positive attitude in some key areas of ELF, but there are still principles of ELF that have not been accepted quite yet. The new concept of English as a language for international and global communication brings some views that are in a stark contrast with the current trends holding native speakers as crucial for setting directions for ELT. It is only natural that Czech students find some of the new principles counterintuitive. The important discovery is that they are not completely against ELF. Further exposure to the topic is likely to improve their view on ELF and enable its future rapid deployment.

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APPENDICES

Současná angličtina a její výuka - dotazník

Vážené studentky, vážení studenti,

prosím vás o vyplnění tohoto dotazníku, zkoumajícího váš postoj k angličtině, jejímu využití a výuce. Většina otázek je kroužkovácí. Pozorně si, prosím, přečtěte následující výroky a nalevo od nich vždy zakroužkujte číslo na stupnici odpovídající tomu, do jaké míry s daným výrokem souhlasíte či nikoliv s tím, že 1 znamená „naprosto *nesouhlasím*“ a 6 „naprosto *souhlasím*“. Některé otázky však budou vyžadovat písemnou reakci. Místo pro ni naleznete vždy pod nimi. Výsledky dotazníku budou použity do diplomové práce pro fakultu pedagogickou Západočeské univerzity v Plzni.

Mějte, prosím, na paměti, že u dotazníků neexistují správné či špatné odpovědi. Jedná se o průzkum vašeho názoru, proto odpovězte vždy podle sebe a maximálně subjektivně.

Děkuji vám za vyplnění a přeji mnoho úspěchů v budoucích studiích.

Bc. Daniel Pichert

Pohlaví:

Muž Žena

Věk:

- | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Nejčastěji angličtinu využívám ke komunikaci s rodilými mluvčími. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 2. Učím se anglicky hlavně proto, že hodlám navštívit země rodilých mluvčích, komunikovat s nimi a poznávat jejich kulturu. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 3. Učím se anglicky hlavně kvůli pracovnímu či studijnímu využití. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4. Nejčastěji mluvím anglicky s nerodilými mluvčími. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 5. Učím se anglicky hlavně proto, abych mohl(a) komunikovat s lidmi z celého světa, cestovat a poznávat cizí kultury. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 6. Učím se anglicky, abych měl(a) přístup k informacím a médiím, které mě zajímají. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7. Jaký je pro vás osobně nejdůležitější důvod proč studovat angličtinu? | | | | | | |

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| 8. Je pro mě důležité osvojit si takovou výslovnost, abych zněl(a) jako rodilý mluvčí. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 9. Osvojit si výslovnost rodilých mluvčích či jí velmi blízkou mi přijde dosažitelné a naučitelné. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 10. Snažím se ze své výslovnosti odstranit známky „českého“ přízvuku. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 11. Měla by se vyučovat především výslovnost britské angličtiny. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 12. Měla by se vyučovat především výslovnost americké angličtiny. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 13. V hodinách angličtiny by se žáci měli setkat s co nejvíce přízvuky, aby byli lépe a flexibilněji připraveni na komunikaci s lidmi z celého světa. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 14. Nevadí mi, že má angličtina obsahuje stopy české výslovnosti. Dávám tím najevo příslušnost k své národnosti. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 15. Osvojit si rodilý přízvuk pro mě není důležité. Hlavní je, abych ostatním mluvčím rozuměla a aby bylo rozuměno mně. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

16. Jaký přízvuk angličtiny se vy osobně snažíte osvojit? Proč?

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17. V hodinách angličtiny bych se rád(a) dozvěděl(a) co nejvíce z kultury rodilých mluvčích. Konec konců, jejich jazyk se učíme a znalost jejich kultury mi dodává více sebedůvěry při komunikaci s nimi. 1 2 3 4 5 6

18. V hodinách angličtiny bych raději probíral(a) témata z české kultury. Jsou pro mě jako příslušníka České republiky relevantnější, procvičím si o nich mluvit anglicky, abych pak snáze mohl(a) prezentovat svou kulturu lidem z celého světa. 1 2 3 4 5 6

19. V hodinách angličtiny bych rád(a) prodiskutoval(a) a probíral(a) témata týkající se celého světa a cizích kultur, neboť anglicky nejčastěji budu mluvit s lidmi ze všech možných koutů světa a probírat globální témata 1 2 3 4 5 6

20. Rodilý mluvčí je jako učitel angličtiny kompetentnější nežli nerodilý. 1 2 3 4 5 6

21. Očekávám od českého učitele, že jeho angličtina bude ukázkovou angličtinou rodilých mluvčích. 1 2 3 4 5 6

22. Dal(a) bych přednost studiu na škole, kde jsou zaměstnáni i rodilí mluvčí angličtiny nežli na škole, kde rodilí mluvčí nejsou. 1 2 3 4 5 6

23. Český učitel angličtiny je pro výuku vhodnější, neboť si sám prošel procesem naučení se cizímu jazyku a lépe tak může odhadnout, které oblasti angličtiny jsou pro česky mluvící studenty obtížné, a na pozadí češtiny lépe anglické jevy vysvětlit. 1 2 3 4 5 6

24. Důležitější pro mě je naučit se vyjadřovat se anglicky tak, aby mi druzí zkrátka snadno porozuměli, nežli aby má angličtina byla ukázkovou angličtinou rodilých mluvčích. 1 2 3 4 5 6

25. Osobně byste raději, aby vás učil rodilý či nerodilý mluvčí angličtiny? Proč?

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Present-day English and its teaching - questionnaire

Dear students,

I ask you to complete this questionnaire concerning your attitude towards English, its usage and teaching. Most questions are scale-based. Please, read carefully the following statements and on the left, choose the number on the scale corresponding with the level of your agreement or disagreement with the statement, with 1 meaning "completely disagree" and 6 "completely agree". Some questions might require your full written response. There is a space for it under each question. The results will be used for a graduate thesis of the Pilsen faculty of Education.

Please, keep in mind that there are no right or wrong answers in questionnaires. This is a survey of your opinions, so always give honest and maximally subjective answers.

Thank you for the participation and I wish you good luck in your future study endeavours.

Bc. Daniel Pichert

Sex:

Male Female

Age:

- | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I use English to communicate with native speakers most the time. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 2. I learn English primarily to visit native-speaker countries, talk to them and learn about their culture. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 3. I learn English primarily for study and work purposes. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4. I use English to communicate with non-native speakers most the time. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 5. I learn English primarily to talk to people all over the world, travel and learn about foreign cultures. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 6. I learn English to gain access to information sources and media that interest me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7. What is your personal most important reason to study English? | | | | | | |

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| 8. It is important to me to acquire a native-speaker pronunciation. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 9. I find acquiring native-speaker pronunciation feasible and learnable. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 10. I try to eliminate traces of Czech accent from my pronunciation. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 11. British English pronunciation should be primarily taught at schools. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 12. American English pronunciation should be primarily taught at schools. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 13. In an English class, students should encounter various accents to be better prepared for communication with people all over the world. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 14. I do not mind my English having traces of Czech accent. I show my nationality that way. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 15. Acquiring a native accent is not important to me. The main thing is to understand and be understood. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

16. What accent of English are you personally trying to learn? Why?

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17. In an English class, I would like to learn as much about native-speaker culture as possible. After all, we study their language and the cultural knowledge gives me more confidence when talking to them. 1 2 3 4 5 6

18. In an English class, I would like to discuss topics from the Czech culture. Me being Czech, they are more relevant, I practise talking about them in English to be able to present our culture to the world. 1 2 3 4 5 6

19. In an English class, I would like to discuss topics concerning the whole world and foreign cultures, since I will use English to communicate with people from around the world and discuss global topics. 1 2 3 4 5 6

20. The native speaker is more competent as an English teacher than non-native one. 1 2 3 4 5 6

21. I expect the Czech teacher of English to display an exemplary native-like English. 1 2 3 4 5 6

22. I would prefer studying at a school that also employs native speakers to a school where there are none. 1 2 3 4 5 6

23. Czech teachers of English are more suitable, since they have gone through the process of language learning themselves and thus can predict problematic areas of English for Czech students more easily and explain them using comparisons with Czech. 1 2 3 4 5 6

24. It is more important to me to be simply able to make myself easily understood rather than to have an exemplary native-like English. 1 2 3 4 5 6

25. Would you personally prefer being taught by the native teacher or the non-native one? Why?

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SHRNUTÍ

Tato diplomová práce si zvolila téma „angličtina jako mezinárodní dorozumívací jazyk“ jako svůj hlavní předmět zájmu, neboť toto téma je velmi ožehavé a možná zcela stěžejní pro budoucnost a vývoj výuky angličtiny. Angličtina, její užití, tendence a rozvoj podstoupily velké změny v posledních několika desetiletích a současná pedagogika musí tyto změny přijmout a přizpůsobit se jim, chce-li zůstat aktuální a relevantní. Hlavním účelem této práce je poskytnout výstižné shrnutí nejdůležitějších bodů týkajících se tohoto tématu. Teoretická část nahlíží na angličtinu jako mezinárodní dorozumívací jazyk z historického pohledu, zvažuje její pozici v současném světě a popisuje důsledky její globální důležitosti vzhledem k její výuce. Praktická část si klade za svůj cíl zjistit pozici českého vzdělávacího prostředí k tomuto novému konceptu a odpovědět na otázku, zdali je připraveno přijmout nové principy a plány pramenící z globální a multikulturní pozice angličtiny. Na základě výsledků obdržených z dotazníku, jež vyplnili čeští studenti středních škol, se došlo k závěru, že nový koncept výuky jazyka může být stále poněkud cizí českým žákům a bude potřeba ho blíže představit a podpořit, než se bude moci zavést do pravidelné výuky. Přestože studenti, obecně vzato, prokázali, že jsou si vědomi celosvětového využití angličtiny, v oblastech výslovnosti a zájmu o vlastní kulturu předvedli silnou orientaci k současným názorovým trendům. Bude zapotřebí dalších průzkumů a debat o tomto tématu, než se dveře konceptu angličtiny jako mezinárodního dorozumívacího jazyka zcela otevrou.