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**ANGLICKY MLUVÍCÍ RODILÍ MLUVČÍ VE
MĚSTĚ PLZEŇ**

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ENGLISH NATIVE TEACHERS IN PLZEŇ

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Plzeň 2021

I declare that I have worked on this thesis independently, using only the primary and secondary sources listed in the bibliography.

.....

Zuzana Petrová

Prohlašuji, že jsem práci vypracovala samostatně s použitím uvedené literatury a zdrojů informací.

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ABSTRACT

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The thesis *English Native Teachers in Plzeň* deals not only with the under-researched topic of native speakers of English who teach in Czech education institutions, but also with the history of the English language in the Czech Republic and its position in the Czech education system. The thesis briefly examines common mistakes that Czech students make.

The objective of the thesis was to conduct information regarding native speakers' professional background as well as to research their personal teaching experience in the city of Plzeň. The aim was also to establish to what extent they use the Czech language during lessons, and to determine errors they encounter in schools.

A questionnaire was distributed to the research subjects (native teachers in Plzeň) and subsequently analysed. From the results it is apparent that the largest portion of respondents has completed the bachelor degree programme, and almost a third of them did not teach in their home country. The results also show that the largest portion of respondents does not have a full-time employment at any education institution; however, the majority of people with a full-time employment teach at a high school. The majority of respondents use Czech when teaching English vocabulary and the most common errors are by the majority of native teachers considered to appear in grammar.

Key words: English, native speakers, native teachers, Czech Republic, Plzeň, education, history, common mistakes

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INTRODUCTION

Native speaker teachers in the foreign language classroom is a topic keenly debated amongst experts, and while some regard their presence in class as unnecessary, the fact remains that there are numerous advantages of native speakers' appearance in foreign language teaching. As Richard Clouet (2006, p. 73) noted "They [native teachers] can give the students insights into the culture which a non-native would find difficult to provide, and they know things about their language, which a non-native teacher might find impossible to learn".

In order to completely understand the current position of English (and English native teachers) in the Czech education system, it is crucial to determine how its status shifted over the last one hundred and twenty years. The opening part of the thesis will therefore focus on this issue and study the obstacles English had to overcome throughout the decades to reach its contemporary position. This part will also be divided into four subcategories, each dealing with a specific time period and significant events in Czech history that relate to the English language. The thesis will begin with *The Status of English at the Turn of the 20th Century*, which will be followed by *The Status of English during World War II*, and *The Status of English during the Communist Era*. The last subcategory *Status of English After 1989* is especially of great importance, for it studies the changes the Czech Republic went through during the 1990's.

Subsequently, it will be essential to establish to what extent the English language is incorporated into the Czech education system and to research to what degree each level of education provides foreign language teaching with a native speaker. References from the Czech School Inspectorate will often be included in this chapter. The first subcategory to appear in this chapter will be *Czech Education Reforms after 1989*, which will focus on various reforms that had taken place before the 2006 systemic reforms were put into practice. Each subcategory will be dealing with a specific level of education in accordance with the International Standard Classification of Education (from now on the term ISCED will be used). *English in Kindergartens* will briefly cover the topic of advantages and disadvantages of offering a foreign language at an early age and mention data from a research regarding foreign language teaching in kindergartens from 1992. The following subcategory *English in Elementary Schools* will determine the number of native teachers in Czech elementary schools, what textbooks are approved for this level of education, and what requirements students have to meet in order to successfully finish foreign language teaching in primary education. Similarly, *English in High Schools* will provide not only this information, but also

what number of secondary education institutions in Plzeň employs native teachers. *English in Universities* will focus on higher education degree programmes in the Czech Republic that relate to English studies, and the need to internationalize higher education in order to make meeting foreign teachers and conversing with them easier for Czech students. The last subcategory *English in Language Schools* will determine what number of language schools there are in Plzeň, and the differences between language schools with accreditation for state language examinations and independent language schools.

The next chapter *Native English Teacher in the Czech Republic* will then cover the main topic of this thesis and provide an insight into the advantages and disadvantages of native teachers in schools.

The last chapter of the theoretical part will focus on *Common Mistakes Made by Czech Students*. Sparling's (1990) publication *English or Czenglish? Jak se vyhnout čečismům v angličtině* will be cited throughout this chapter as well as in the practical part of the thesis.

The practical part will subsequently establish *Objectives and Hypotheses* of the thesis. The four objectives are to: 1) Determine native speakers' professional background., 2) Research native speakers' personal teaching experience., 3) Establish to what extent native speakers use the Czech language during lessons., 4) Determine errors native speakers encounter in schools. As regard the hypotheses, they are all purely intuitive; although, they are based on preceding research for the theoretical part of this thesis.

The *Methodology and Respondents* will be introduced in the following chapter. Some of the most crucial information in this part of the thesis include: 1) description of the questionnaire consisting of sixteen closed-ended single-choice questions one open-ended question, 2) combining both the quantitative and the qualitative method, 3) publishing the questionnaire online due to the unfortunate events of the 2020/2021 school year, 4) transferring the received data into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, and subsequently converting them into percentages in order to make tables, and 5) that all respondents were informed that their responses will remain anonymous and the collected data are solely for academic purposes.

Analysis of the Questionnaires will then appear in the practical part, providing all sixteen tables with the collected data and a description of responses to question 17.

The last chapter of the practical part of the thesis, *Analysis of the Objectives and Hypotheses*, will focus on whether the hypotheses were confirmed and the set objectives were met.

1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The History of English in the Czech Republic

The primary focus of this chapter will be on the history of the English language in the Czech Republic throughout the second half of the 20th century, with respect to the history of education. In the present period of globalization (which may be described as a cultural phenomenon, reflected in population migrations, contemporary art, and most importantly in linguistic changes) English has become the most commonly spoken language in the world¹ (Eberhard, et al., 2021). In order for a language to become global, it has to develop a specific role in every country – either it needs to achieve an official status and become the official language of a certain country, or it can be made a priority in a country's foreign-language teaching, even though it has no official status (Crystal, 2003, pp. 4-5). English has gained such a reputation and should therefore be considered a global language. The use of English has never been wider, and the number of native English speakers in the Czech Republic never greater than it is today. Nevertheless, prior to the post Velvet Revolution period the language was not used quite so frequently. In both, the 19th and most of the 20th century, German, French, and Russian used to be of more relevance in central European countries, partly on account of their historical hegemony, and partly given the Germanic and Slavic roots these languages share with central European nationalities. However, to state that English had no history in the Czech Republic prior to World War II would be vastly inaccurate.

The Status of English at the Turn of the 20th Century

It is important to realize, that English language as a school subject entered the curriculum in Bohemia in the second half of the 19th century. It was specifically introduced as a third foreign language to be taught at schools, as German and French were considered to be superior. Alešová (2016, p.8) describes how “[a] growing number of German schools in Bohemia were granted an exception to teach foreign languages (English or French) instead of compulsory Czech and, in reaction to this, Czech schools started to offer foreign language courses in their curricula as well.”

The first English-Bohemian and Bohemian-English dictionary was published in 1876 by Karel Jonáš², a Czech author living in the United States of America (for his critique of the monarchy and his political ideas concerning secondary school education had forced him to

¹ By total number of both native and non-native speakers.

² Karel Jonáš's publication was titled *Slovník česko-anglický i anglicko-český s doplňky všeobecnými i odbornými k dílu česko-anglickému, s úplnou výslovností a krátkou mluvnici anglickou/Dictionary of the Bohemian and English Languages. Two Parts, with Supplement to the First Part.*

flee the Austro-Hungarian Empire in October 1860 (Chrislock, 1993, p. 131)). Václav Emanuel Mourek's *Slovník jazyka anglického i českého. Díl anglicko-český/A dictionary of the English and Bohemian languages. First part, English-Bohemian*³ is considered to be the first English-Bohemian dictionary published in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Several other dictionaries were being printed towards the end of the 19th century, but it needs to be clarified, that the majority of these publications were again authored by either Jonáš or Mourek. Josef Pastor also independently published three additional dictionaries at the turn of the 20th century. (Meiner, 2012, p. 47)

The subsequent twenty-year period saw a lack of major publications related to Czech and English. This was caused by the dramatic events at the beginning of the 20th century. World War I resulted in various political, economic, and social upheavals. The importance of the English language on global scale began to increase.

The development towards global English is largely due to the influence, at important moments in history, of two empires, the British and the American one. Britain as a trade partner played an important role in the establishment of English as a university discipline before World War I. (Engler, 2000, p. 8)

In central Europe, the downfall of the Austro-Hungarian Empire led to the creation of such new countries as Austria, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. After the First Czechoslovak Republic had been established, the number of migrants increased together with the demand of dictionaries. However, the migrants were not primarily from English speaking countries. In comparison to the violent and authoritarian countries of central Europe, the interwar First Republic was considered to be democratic, liberal, and tolerant towards refugees coming from Germany and the Soviet Union.

While the English language remained optional (as a part of the official Czechoslovak education system), many English enthusiasts continued to demonstrate their passion by publishing dictionaries. Publications such as Jung's *Příruční slovník anglicko-český/A middle-sized dictionary English and Bohemian languages* were being published almost annually throughout the first half of the 20th century⁴, the two exceptions being the period of the Great Depression and then World War II, which again caused the number of dictionaries to decrease.

³ Václav Mourek's dictionary was published in 1879.

⁴ Some other authors from this period include for example Jan Váňa, František Krupička, Jaroslav Hokeš, Alois Čermák, Harold T. Cheshire, Antonín Osíčka.

The Status of English during World War II

Prior to World War II the former Czechoslovak Republic was regarded as one of the most developed countries, especially in higher education. Not only was the English language still a part of the curriculum, but it was also implemented into the aforementioned higher education. Some of the most prominent university English teachers from this period include for example Antonín Osička, Vilém Mathesius or Josef Vachek.

The German occupation of the Czechoslovak Republic commenced in 1938, when German troops invaded the Sudetenland⁵ and subsequently annexed the area. Despite the fact, that the Munich Agreement was supposed to provide and ensure safety in the rest of former Czechoslovakia, the occupation persisted and led to the invasion of the whole state (except for Slovakia, which established its own Republic). These events resulted in the creation of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.

In 1939, Czech students held a protest against the occupation, and in reaction to these events, all Czech universities were closed until the end of the war. For six years, Czech university students were not allowed to pursue any form of higher education. Under these circumstances, German was once again introduced as the main foreign language in 1940, replacing French and English. On the contrary, according to Engler (2000, p.8), the overall global influence of the English language in the 20th century increased as the two World Wars came to an end. The United States were of most importance during this process, as, for instance, president Wilson insisted on the Treaty of Versailles being in English. In the post-war period and the Cold War the language became even more influential and persuasive, which resulted in the establishment of new English departments.

The only dictionary printed between 1939 and 1945 was the publication *Velký česko-anglický slovník Unikum/Comprehensive Czech-English Dictionary Unikum* by Ivan Poldauf and Antonín Osička, which was published in 1941. (Meiner, 2012, p. 47)

The end of the war may provide an interesting insight into the world of foreign language teaching. As American troopers liberated the area of West Bohemia, interest in the language and the western culture arose once again. However, shortly after the war had ended, another occupation was ahead.

⁵ These were certain areas of the former Czechoslovak Republic, where Germans were the ethnic majority.

The Status of English during the Communist Era

The era of Communist rule in the Czechoslovak Republic commenced in February 1948, as a result of the 1946 parliamentary election⁶ and the subsequent coup d'état. The position of English in the curricula had not been officially changed, and was comparatively similar to the role English had throughout the existence of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. The state foreign language policy implied that English, French, Spanish, and German had an equal position as a second language, and while this might have been true, the fact remains that German was generally preferred by the majority of students. As one would expect, Russian held the position of the compulsory first foreign language. Although English could be taught in high schools as an optional language, there were certain ideological restrictions regarding the actual use of it. These restrictions were implemented in the government policy for English during the German occupation and included prohibition of swing, jazz, singing in English, or watching either American or British movies. All of the restrictions above stayed unchanged until the 1960s (Hnízdo, 2016, pp. 26-27).

The number of dictionaries being published decreased significantly under the circumstances of this twenty-year period of censorship. Nevertheless, some re-editions of dictionaries and three major publications came out during the 1950's. The publications were authored by Jindřich Procházka⁷, Antonín Osička⁸, and Ivan Poldauf⁹ (Meiner, 2012, p. 47).

The wake of the 1960s, as Hnízdo (2016, p. 28) states, was characterized by decriminalisation of the use of the English language and by general liberalization of the Czech society. Loosening of the government policy for English had led to an increased interest in the language, which could mostly be observed in the music industry, as various artists were able to perform not only in their mother tongue, but also in English. Neustupný and Nekvapil (2003, p. 232) claim that “although the official attitude was hostile, as early as 1960s one could see many loans from English, in particular in registers of pop-music, sport and (later) computing.”

Events of spring 1965 are of considerable relevance to the history of English in the former Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. On May 1, an annual student festival was taking place in

⁶ The parliamentary election was held on the 26th of May in 1946 and was won by The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. This election was virtually the last free election in the Czechoslovak Republic until the fall of the regime.

⁷ Procházka's publication was titled *Slovník anglicko-český s připojenou výslovností všech anglických slov/English-Czech and Czech-English dictionary giving pronunciation of all English words* and was being published from 1950 to 1959.

⁸ Osička and Poldauf authored the publication *Anglicko-český slovník s výslovností, přízvukem, mluvnicí, vazbami a frazeologií/English-Czech dictionary giving pronunciation, stress, grammar, and phraseology*, which was being published from 1956 to 1958.

⁹ Poldauf's publication was titled *Česko-anglický slovník středního rozsahu/Czech-English Dictionary Medium* and was first published in 1959.

Prague, and while any sort of association with American authors would have been unthinkable during the previous decade, Irwin Allen Ginsberg attended the celebrations and was declared “the King of May”¹⁰. In spite of the liberalization of Czech society, Ginsberg was subsequently expelled from the country by the government and labelled an “immoral menace”. However, the Beat Generation left an enormous impact on Czech students and the growing underground scene, as freedom was one of the key features of the Beat literature. Jack Kerouac’s ‘On the Road’ influenced a large number of young people in the country, for it described a travelling lifestyle which had become a symbol of free moving and independence. Czechoslovak translations of American works, including Jan Zábřana’s ‘Howl’ or Josef Škvorecký’s ‘The Cool World’ also played an important role during this period (Olehla, 2015).

This era also marks the beginning of mass production of dictionaries. From 1960 onwards the number of these publications has steadily been rising. No matter the impact of normalization¹¹, dictionaries have begun being published on a regular basis by the state itself and much more frequently than during the previous decades (Meiner, 2012, p. 8).

In 1968, after several mass protests had taken place in Prague and in other major cities of the Czechoslovak Republic, the country was, yet again, invaded by the Soviets. In this invasion of a military nature the Eastern Bloc armies from the Warsaw Pact subjugated Czechoslovakia, which led to the beginning of the period of normalization. New laws that were passed by the state foreign language policy prohibited singing in English, and bands which had English names were obligated to change them into Czech¹². On the positive side, the language had previously been introduced to Czechs, who then realized the importance of English, so the interest in it would not vanish (especially among the young generation). However, it needs to be emphasized, that the voices of young people were being silenced and repressed for another 21 years – until the fall of the totalitarian rule in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic.

The Status of English after 1989

In autumn 1989 a sudden transition of power occurred after protestors from all over the country held demonstrations against the regime. The long awaited restoration of democracy,

¹⁰ King of May (*král majálesu* in Czech) is a title awarded by Czech students who elect the “King” at the annual Majáles festival.

¹¹ Normalization was an era beginning after the 1968 Soviet invasion, and could be characterized by efforts to re-establish Czechoslovakia’s position in the Eastern Bloc and to restore the communist rule in the country.

¹² Renamed bands include Blue Effect (after 1968 *Modrý efekt*), Greenhorn (*Zelenáči*), or Rangers (*Plavci*).

free elections, and civil rights overcame the communist rule and caused it to collapse. The non-violent revolution (from which it takes its name The Velvet Revolution) took place from the 17th of November to the 29th of December 1989, when former dissident¹³ Václav Havel was elected President of Czechoslovakia.

The shift to democracy, the re-opening of borders (together with the international trade), and the overall liberalization of the country resulted in increased awareness of the significance of the growing global language. The fall of communism completely reshaped the government language policy, as Russian was no longer a compulsory language and, in furthermore, was almost entirely removed from the curriculum. German, in contrast, was the most popular language among Czech students in the 1990's (Hnízdo, 2016, p. 28).

On the 1st of January 1993 the Czechoslovak Republic ceased to exist, as the Slovak nation had seceded from the unified country, resulting in the establishment of the Czech Republic. In the following years, the appeal of English continued to grow. It is interesting to note that in the years immediately after the Velvet Revolution it was German that replaced Russian as the first foreign language. The shift to English only occurred later, as noted by Neustupný and Nekvapil (2003, p. 292) in their monograph “[I]n 1998/99, English was the top language with 390,000 students, closely followed by German, which was studied by 344,000 students.” To this day the position of English in the curricula has remained unchanged, for it still ranks as the most common first foreign language to be taught in schools.

Together with the expanding number of students interested in the language, the number of American citizens in the Czech Republic also began to rise. The opening of borders allowed thousands of western foreigners to travel to and live in the country. Interestingly enough, the incomers were not strictly of American or British nationality; they were actually coming from countries all over the world. Sherman (2001) notes that these North Americans who came to the country for other reasons than economic, might have found it difficult to integrate, for the Czech nation was said to be quite cold and reserved towards foreigners. Sherman further points out that other misunderstandings on a cultural level were just as common, offering an example of an American who gives compliments to defuse a situation. Czech people, in response, begin to act nervously and uncertainly, and start to question the validity of the foreigner's statements.

¹³ A dissident is a term which refers to a person who openly opposes the policy of an authoritarian state.

English in the Czech Education System

The following section will focus mainly on the English language as a subject in the Czech education system. Each part, except for this introduction and education reforms, will be dealing with a specific level of education – from kindergartens to universities – with respect to language schools and private schools.

Following the events of 1989, which were accompanied by numerous sociocultural changes in Czech society, English began to draw the attention of not only common citizens, but also of the newly formed government. The position of the language dramatically improved in the newly established democratic country, as people now had the opportunity to decide which language would be of most significance and relevance in the future curricula. As mentioned previously, in spite of the initial choice being German, English soon became recognized as the most essential foreign language in the country. This might have been the result of progressing globalization, which in the late 1990's, due to liberalization of the central Europe, began to influence the lives of the majority of Czech people.

It is also necessary to point out the difficulties and challenges the Czech education system had to face in the early days of the new republic. As Russian used to be a compulsory foreign language, it is not surprising that the number of Russian teachers in the country was accordingly high. However, the fact that English replaced it at the turn of the millennium had an enormous impact on teachers who specialized in foreign language teaching. The demand for English teachers forced a large number of former Russian teachers to requalify, which in consequence often affected the quality of English teaching. There were numerous instances of underqualified personnel in schools, for there simply was not a satisfactory number of English speakers who were competent to hold the position (Čermáková, 2014, p. 30).

Throughout the years the language policy has been changing, together with the age of students, for whom the first foreign language would be compulsory. In the early 1990's the appropriate age was considered to be 10 or 11; in other words it became obligatory to take the subject in the 5th grade. In the middle of the decade, this was changed to the 4th grade and the curriculum subsequently modified to allow children to study other languages than Czech as early as in the 3rd grade. Until 2006 the foreign language was a voluntary subject (students were only obliged to take it in the 4th grade, not in the 3rd); nevertheless, when the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports (from now on only the term 'Ministry of Education' will be used') established a new policy (by producing the National Program for Development of

Education¹⁴, the National Plan for Teaching Foreign Languages¹⁵ and the Program of Development of the Ministry of Education¹⁶) the first foreign language became compulsory in the 3rd grade (Najvar, 2010, pp. 47-54).

All of these changes were in accordance with the language policy of the European Union, of which the Czech Republic had become a member state on 1st of May 2004. Integration into the EU offered a large number of possibilities to Czech citizens as well as to foreigners who were interested in moving into the country. This considerably helped the process and progress of globalization in Central Europe, as other neighbouring countries (Poland and Slovakia) had also become a part of the EU and therefore it became easier for foreigners to live and work on their territory. Moreover, Nekvapil (2009, p. 21) notes that English native speakers who have moved to the Czech Republic for non-financial reasons do not find it necessary to learn the Czech language. Their lack of knowledge of Czech does not affect their work performance or their ability to communicate with Czech people, given that English has become quite common in the country. There are magazines and websites¹⁷ currently being published specifically for native English speakers living in the Czech Republic. Likewise, the demand for native teachers offers attractive benefits, such as free health care and a decent salary. In comparison with Sherman's (2001) description of foreigners struggling to integrate in the late 20th century, it seems that throughout the first decades of the 21st century these difficulties have been occurring much less frequently and there have been efforts to eliminate them completely.

In the 2014/2015 school year a Czech project Native Teachers to Schools¹⁸ received a European Union grant, which allowed over 141 native teachers to teach English, French, German, or Russian in Czech schools all over the country. In the Plzeň region nineteen schools took part in the project (Faberová, 2015, pp. 3-7).

Czech Education Reforms after 1989

Education reform is a term which describes the process of changing public education in order to make it more accessible, beneficial, or affordable. Kalous (1997) notes that four types of reforms always appear in post-communist countries during the years immediately after the fall of the regime: correctional education reform, modernising education reform, structural

¹⁴ *Národní program rozvoje vzdělávání in Czech.*

¹⁵ *Národní plán pro výuku cizích jazyků in Czech.*

¹⁶ *Rozvojový program MŠMT in Czech.*

¹⁷ These websites include for example the Prague Monitor (<https://praguemonitor.com>) or Radio Prague International (<https://english.radio.cz>).

¹⁸ *Rodilí mluvčí do škol in Czech.*

education reform, and systemic education reform. This section of the thesis will focus on each type in the Czech Republic and provide examples of such changes as well.

Correctional education reforms can be described as an immediate reaction to the end of the communist regime, for they mostly took place from 1989 to 1992. These reforms primarily dealt with remnant of the totalitarian education system and led to changes in personnel, textbooks, as well as in the overall politically tainted teaching methods. Their purpose was therefore to remove communist influence in all schools. Subsequently, the position of Russian in the curricula drastically shifted and schools began offering other languages instead (most commonly German or English) in the position of the first foreign language.

Modernising education reforms are responsible for adjustments made in textbooks and in teaching methods from 1992 to 1994. They emphasised the necessity to modernise school equipment and to reach the quality of education of more developed Western European countries. Naturally enough, they also brought about the Russian teachers' requalifying phenomenon of the early 1990's.

The Ministry of Education has been passing structural education reforms since 1995. In the present day, structural reforms generally aim to improve not only the curricula and the methods, but also the whole education system together with its structure and finances. The changes in the middle of the 1990's included for example establishment of new university departments or extension of compulsory schooling to nine years. The period of first structural reforms also brought changes to foreign language teaching, as the first foreign language became compulsory in the 4th grade.

The last type did not appear in the Czech Republic until 2004, when the new Education Act was passed and the first framework educational programme was put into practice. These adjustments influenced all levels of education and the structure of the Czech education system; however, they did not affect the age of students, for whom the first foreign language would be compulsory. Only subsequent systemic reforms in 2006 dealt with this issue.¹⁹

English in Czech Kindergartens

Pre-school foreign language teaching first gained its popularity in the early 1990's as a considerable number of Czech kindergartens launched voluntary English courses which were appealing to both parents and their children. At first, such courses attracted a large number of pre-schoolers, but over the span of the next few years their interest slightly declined, perhaps

¹⁹ The National Program for Development of Education, the National Plan for Teaching Foreign Languages and the Program of Development of the Ministry of Education made foreign languages compulsory in the 3rd grade.

as a result of inefficiency and inadequacy of teaching methods which were being practised. This subsequently led to parents' dissatisfaction with their children's results and an overall lack of knowledge of English (Holubová, 2006, p. 3).

The first and possibly the only research regarding foreign language teaching in kindergartens on a national scale was conducted in 1992 by a group of pre-school inspectors. The data collected for this section of the study are based solely on the results from 1992, which were not part of any official government research, as none was ever conducted in this field. Smolíková (2006) deals with the same data in her article and notes that in 1992 over one quarter of all kindergartens were providing foreign language teaching. English ranked first closely followed by German, especially in the border areas. Most of the English courses were made available only after parents had become interested in the language and made efforts to spread the knowledge of English among their children. They also regularly provided financial support for the courses or newly hired tutors. The lessons were taught by either the tutors or the kindergarten teachers themselves, the courses always taking place two or three times a week. As mentioned above, the subsequent decrease of interest might therefore be the result of inadequate teaching methods of the tutors or insufficient language skills of the kindergarten teachers.

In the present day, pre-school foreign language teaching has become widely available and even more requested than in the past, for the popularity of English has increased enormously. State pre-schools apply two different teaching methods. The first one offers short but intense weekly sessions that are taught by either the kindergarten teacher or a tutor and is generally considered to be the most common. The second method emphasizes integrated teaching namely using English in everyday pre-school activities or in games. In private pre-schools the teaching methods focus mainly on creating a foreign language environment, frequently achieving this goal through employment of a native teacher. However, this might make some private pre-schools even less affordable than they already are, as the tuition fee often changes accordingly to the number of native teachers (Holubová, 2006, p. 5).

Teaching foreign languages in pre-schools has become a topic passionately discussed by many professionals in the field. For example, Kořátková (2002) notes that "teaching foreign languages at an early age may have a negative impact on both the development of a child's native language and the development of its thinking skills." However, the official standpoint of the European Union is stated in the short excerpt below.

Offering another language at an early age is not inherently advantageous, but can only be effective if teachers are trained to work with very young children, classes are small enough, the learning material is adequate and sufficient time is allotted in the curriculum. Children's enjoyment, their openness towards other languages and cultures and their linguistic development must all be worked for and not simply left to chance. (European Commission, 2006, p. 13)

The International Standard Classification of Education puts Czech kindergartens in the ISCED 0 category, which represents pre-primary education.²⁰

English in Czech Elementary Schools

In the 2006/2007 school year the first foreign language became compulsory for students in the 3rd grade of primary education. Naturally, the majority of elementary schools chose to provide English lessons instead of German, French, or Spanish, as the Ministry of Education had strongly recommended this option. In addition, a large number of schools made English lessons available for students as early as in the 1st and 2nd grade. In the event that in the present day, students or their legal representatives decide for them to study any other language than English as their first foreign language, the school is legally obliged to inform them about the possibility of non-continuity of their studies, as some other schools may not provide classes in the language of their initial choice (Ježková, 2011, pp. 113-114).

There are three basic educational programmes²¹ that apply to elementary schools; in this work, however, I will focus solely on the programme most frequently used by a majority of Czech schools – the Elementary School Educational Programme.²² This programme was first introduced in September 1996 and subsequent adjustments have been made through producing new framework educational programmes (the most recent one was published in 2021 and will be put into practice in September 2021). The Elementary School Educational Programme²³ prioritises the concept of European integration which has led to the emphasis on foreign language teaching increasing dramatically. According to the programme, schools should create a friendly environment for future international communication, as well as prepare students for using foreign languages in real life. With this in mind, it is necessary to point out that in the first stage of elementary school, the number of foreign language lessons is

²⁰ International Standard Classification of Education was first introduced in 1976 by UNESCO (the current version is from 2011) and consists of 7 levels of education (from ISCED 0 to ISCED 6), that apply to all 193 member states of UNESCO.

²¹ The three include *Vzdělávací program Základní škola*, *vzdělávací program Obecná škola*, and *vzdělávací program Národní škola*

²² *Vzdělávací program Základní škola* in Czech

²³ Available at: <http://www.nuv.cz/file/194>

limited to only three lessons a week. In the second stage of elementary school the minimum number of three lessons a week remains, but in contrast with the first stage, the head teacher is now allowed to raise this number according to his or her judgement.

The updated framework educational programme divides the first stage of elementary school into two parts. The first part represents skills that need to be acquired by students in the 3rd grade and includes a number of requirements, such as the ability to understand simple questions, commands, short texts and short comprehensible conversations; to repeat and actively use words and short phrases that have been taught in lessons; and to match written and spoken form of learned vocabulary. In the second part of the framework educational programme, or in other words, in the 5th grade, students should be able to participate in simple dialogues; to provide basic information about themselves, their family, school, free time and other simple topics; to write a short text using simple sentences and phrases about the aforementioned topics; and to find necessary information in short texts.

The requirements for the second stage of elementary education are also described in the programme. Whereas the first stage of elementary education is divided into parts, the second stage appears as one whole, and the requirements represent the knowledge necessary for graduation. Students in the 9th grade need to show their ability to understand information in listening exercises; to react appropriately to both formal and informal situations; to talk about topics that have been presented in lessons; to tell a short story together with describing the characters, places, and things; to find information in authentic texts; and to produce a short text about topics that have been presented in lessons.

According to documentation provided by the Ministry of Education²⁴, there are currently 268 approved English textbooks for elementary school education, the majority of which are published by Pearson Education Limited (60 publications), Macmillan (48 publications), or Oxford University Press (31 publications)²⁵.

Andrys and Janotová (2013, p. 2) note that only a small number of elementary schools they had visited employed native teachers. As a matter of fact, the percentage of native English teachers was even lower than of native German teachers, as the latter represented 5.4% of all German teachers, while native English teachers ranked second with 3.1%. In the same publication Nová (2013, pp. 3-4) notes that as a result of receiving a European Union grant,

²⁴ Available at: <https://www.msmt.cz/file/54297/>

²⁵ Some other publishers include Infoa (23 publications), Cambridge University Press (22 publications), and Express Publishing (21 publications).

the 1st Elementary School in Plzeň²⁶ employs a native English teacher whose role is to improve communication skills of young learners. The teacher provides conversation lessons for a group of about fifteen students in each class and his goal is to make communication in a foreign language accessible and as natural as possible for children. However, a number of non-native English teachers find these lessons unsuitable for some learners, as there is always at least one student who finds it difficult to engage in the conversation and to express himself or herself. According to the Czech School Inspectorate's thematic report (2019, pp. 21-33), which focuses mainly on development of language skills and was published for the school year 2018/2019²⁷, more than 70% of schools providing primary education showed no attempt to create a foreign language environment suitable for native English teachers. The Inspectorate recommends that to improve students' language skills the best idea is to employ a native teacher or to make exchange programmes more available.

The first stage of elementary education falls into the ISCED 1 category (primary education), while the second stage could be labelled ISCED 2 (lower secondary education).

English in Czech High Schools

The Czech education system offers upper secondary education to students who have successfully completed lower secondary education (either in elementary school, in grammar school, or conservatoire). Upper secondary education is mainly provided by high schools, secondary vocational schools, conservatoires, or grammar schools. To complete this level of education, one must either pass a school-leaving examination²⁸ (which applies to high schools, conservatoires, and grammar schools), or a final examination (to receive an Apprenticeship Certificate²⁹ from secondary vocational schools). Interestingly, prior to the events of 1989 the school-leaving examination included an obligatory examination in Czech and Russian. This was subsequently altered to represent better the country's approach to foreign language teaching; thus Russian became a voluntary subject. Students could now decide in which foreign language they wanted to graduate, together with the still compulsory Czech (Urieová, 2016, p. 48).

²⁶ The elementary schools in the Czech Republic tend to be named in the order in which they were established (*1. Základní škola v Plzni* in Czech).

²⁷ Available at: https://www.csicr.cz/Csicr/media/Prilohy/PDF_el._publikace/Tematicke%20zpravy/TZ-jazykova-gramotnost-2018-2019.pdf

²⁸ *Maturitní zkouška* in Czech

²⁹ *Výuční list* in Czech

Each type of school providing upper secondary education is obliged to operate in accordance with a specific education programme. Even though the Framework Education Programme for upper secondary education³⁰ (which in this case applies to high schools, conservatoires, and secondary vocational schools) is divided into numerous fields and documents, the requirements for successful completion of foreign language classes remain identical throughout all disciplines. The minimum (English) language level students should reach on the CEFR scale (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) to graduate from high school is B1; however any head teacher is free to decide whether or not the school will provide higher level of foreign language teaching. Some of the requirements include the ability to understand conversations or discussions between native speakers; to give a short speech or a monologue; to express oneself accordingly to the situation; to engage in an everyday conversation; and to have basic knowledge about geographical, economic, political, or cultural aspects of anglophone countries (Rámcový vzdělávací program pro obor vzdělání, 2020, pp. 19-22).

The Framework Education Programme for Secondary General Education³¹ applies solely to Grammar Schools. The programme was first introduced in 2007 and has undergone numerous changes over the past years³². The requirements slightly differ here, as grammar schools are generally considered to provide more in-depth education than regular high schools. In comparison with the minimum requirements of Czech high schools, foreign language teaching in grammar schools is, according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, aimed at attaining the language level B2, which is defined as follows (Rámcový vzdělávací program pro gymnázia, 2007, pp. 16-19).

The pupil expresses himself/herself clearly without reducing the content of the communication. He/she has sufficient means of expression to be able to provide a clear description, express his/her opinions, develop arguments without major problems with finding the right words, for which he/she uses some types of complex sentences. The pupil has a high level of vocabulary in general, although to a lesser degree mistakes occur and incorrect words are selected, which however do not cause problems in communication. The pupil has mastered grammar well and only occasionally makes small or unsystematic mistakes; minor mistakes may occur in sentence structure but are not frequent and can be corrected later. (Rámcový vzdělávací program pro gymnázia, 2007, p. 19)

³⁰ Available at: <http://www.nuv.cz/t/ramcove-vzdelavaci-programy-podle-kategorie-oboru-vzdelani>

³¹ Available at: <http://www.nuv.cz/t/rvp-pro-gymnazia>

³² The current version of the Framework Education Programme for Secondary General Education was last updated in 2016.

According to documentation provided by the Ministry of Education³³, there are currently 30 approved English textbooks for upper secondary education, the majority of which are published by Oxford University Press (10 publications), Pearson Education Limited (7 publications), and Macmillan (3 publications)³⁴.

The Czech School Inspectorate's thematic report (2019, pp. 6-11) notes that multimedia equipment and other didactic aids for foreign language teaching are quite commonly used in all types of high schools; however, in secondary vocational schools the use of such didactic aids appears much less frequently. It is also noted that when comparing the overall atmosphere and organisation of foreign language classes throughout all high schools, secondary vocational schools rank last as well, not to mention that only in this type of high school the evaluation of foreign language classes is in some institutions worse than of other subjects. On the other hand, high schools requiring a school-leaving examination always achieve better results in foreign language teaching, as the educational goals in the final year often focus on skills and knowledge necessary to pass the examination.

The Czech School Inspectorate's documentation³⁵ of all Czech schools provides information on high schools in the city of Plzeň through individual inspection reports, from which it is apparent that only an absolute minority of these institutions consistently employs a native teacher as a member of their staff. In the reports for the Luděk Pik Grammar School and the Catholic Grammar School in Plzeň it is noted that the former employs five native teachers, and the latter at least more than one. The native teachers' role is to offer communication in a foreign language to all students through conversation lessons. On a national scale, the highest percentage of native teachers in high schools was recorded in Prague (13.4%) (Andrys, Janotová, 2013, p. 2).

On the International Standard Classification of Education scale, upper secondary education falls into the ISCED 3 category.

English in Czech Universities

The Czech education system offers tertiary education only to students who have successfully passed the school-leaving examination. In other words, students who want to continue in their studies are obliged to complete upper secondary education in a high school, a conservatoire, or a grammar school in order to be able to apply to a tertiary technical school or to a higher

³³ Available at: <https://www.msmt.cz/file/54682/>

³⁴ Some other publishers include Infoa (2 publications), Polyglot (2 publications), Cambridge University Press (1 publication), and National Geographic Learning (1 publication).

³⁵ Available at: <https://www.csicr.cz/cz/Dokumenty/Inspekni-zpravy?page=4>

education institution. While tertiary technical schools and conservatoires provide solely tertiary technical education, universities can offer higher education³⁶ in three different stages. After completion of the first stage of tertiary education absolvents receive a bachelor's degree. Similarly, the second stage results in receiving a master's degree and in the third and last stage students can earn a doctoral degree. All universities in the Czech Republic are either public (schools established and abolished by law and financed primarily by subsidies from the state budget), private (financed mainly through their own resources, but can receive state subsidies), or state (police and military schools, which are established by law) (Národní ústav odborného vzdělávání, 2001).

There are currently 43 higher education degree programmes that relate to English studies, of which 36 offer lessons in the English language. The overall number of bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree programmes taught in English is according to the Czech National Agency for International Education and Research (2020, p. 7) around one thousand, with the number of international students being 46 429.

In 2014, a strategy for education policy in the Czech Republic was put into practice. According to the relevant document³⁷, it is necessary to internationalise higher education in order to make meeting foreign teachers and conversing with them easier for Czech students. At present, there are various projects and programmes that deal with the same issue; however, the majority focuses on student exchange. Exchange programmes are fairly common in all member countries of the European Union, as the Erasmus project was formulated specifically for European students (Urieová, 2016).

The tertiary technical education ranks lower on the ISCED scale than higher education, as it is labelled ISCED 5B, which is considered inferior in comparison with programmes provided by higher education institutions. Both the bachelor degree programme and master degree programme represent the ISCED 5A category (first and second stage of tertiary education), and the doctoral degree programme represents the ISCED 6 category – the highest ranking level of education students in the Czech Republic can achieve.

³⁶ Higher education is governed by the Higher Education Act and the central governing body is the Ministry of Education.

³⁷ Available at: https://www.msmt.cz/uploads/Strategie_2020_web.pdf

English in Czech Language Schools

Language schools in the Czech Republic can be divided into two branches – language schools with accreditation for state language examinations, and independent language schools, some of which are authorized to offer other internationally recognized language certificate.

According to the Register of Schools and School Facilities³⁸ managed by the Ministry of Education, there are currently 61 language schools with accreditation for state language examinations in the Czech Republic, three of which are situated in the Plzeň region. Individual inspection reports on these schools are available in the Czech School Inspectorate's documentation³⁹ of all schools in the country. From the data it is clear that only two of these institutions employ, or at least employed, a native teacher. However, the native teacher who used to teach at one of the language schools⁴⁰ did not qualify for the position, as her previous studies had not been recognized by Czech authorities as valid, and her certificates had not been nostrified.

Based on the author's personal research, it seems that in the city of Plzeň there are no more than 20 independent language schools that provide foreign language teaching, a number of them can offer preparatory courses for internationally recognized language certificate examinations. The majority of schools focus on the English language; however, other foreign languages are being taught as well. The initial interest in establishing independent language schools in the country only occurred after the events of 1989, when the first such language school in Plzeň⁴¹ was founded. By 2017, the number of both native and non-native tutors in Plzeň language schools had reached 380 lecturers. With this number in mind, it is important to note that over 150 of these tutors were recorded in the Eufkrat Language School, which was founded in 2002 (“Výuka jazyků v Plzni”, 2017).

The option to choose between the two branches of language schools inevitably raises the question of comparisons. As both language schools with accreditation for state language examinations and independent language schools depend on tuition fees, it is impossible to say from a financial point of view which of the two is more economical, as the prices are determined by the schools themselves. However, the prices of state language examinations are fixed, and as there are various levels of this examination, prices range from 1000 CZK⁴²

³⁸ Available at: <https://rejstriky.msmt.cz/rejskol/>

³⁹ Available at: <https://www.csicr.cz/cz/Dokumenty/Inspekni-zpravy?page=4>

⁴⁰ Namely *Vyšší odborná škola, Obchodní akademie, Střední zdravotnická škola a Jazyková škola s právem státní jazykové zkoušky, Klatovy*

⁴¹ The language school POLYGLOT. Available at: <https://www.polyglot.cz/cs/jazykova-skola/>

⁴² 133.43 (April 17, 2021)

(language level A1) to 7000 CZK⁴³ (language level C2). The Ministry of Education provides a list of language certificates and examinations⁴⁴ approved by the Czech government from which it is clear that candidates can choose from numerous internationally recognized language certificates. Although this may be true, independent language schools in the Czech Republic most commonly offer Cambridge English Qualifications. The prices range from 3000 CZK⁴⁵ (language level A2) up to 5000 CZK⁴⁶ (language level C2).

Native English Teachers in the Czech Republic

This section of the thesis will briefly describe some advantages and disadvantages of native English speakers teaching in the Czech Republic. According to Davies (2003, p. 115), the native speaker can be described as someone who uses a language largely without thinking. However, some authors do not agree with this definition, as it neglects the fact native teachers are generally considered to know more about their language than a non-native speaker can ever learn. Cook (1999, p. 187) describes how “[t]he indisputable element in the definition of native speakers is that a person is a native speaker of the language learnt first; the other characteristics are incidental, describing how well an individual uses the language.”

As early as in the 1990’s, professionals in the field began contemplating the most efficient way to prepare future foreign language teachers and whether or not there was a place for native teachers in the Czech education system. For instance, Hendrich (1991/1992) notes that native tutors without proper qualification often do not achieve the expected results, even though their knowledge of their mother tongue may exceed the skills that non-native teachers possess. On the other hand, Hendrich also mentions that when a native tutor is qualified for the position of a foreign language teacher, his or her results are considerably better and comparable to the results of a non-native teacher.

At the present day, the topic of native teachers is being passionately debated among linguists. Richard Clouet (2006, p. 73) provides an interesting comparison of advantages that native and non-native teachers possess.

Native teachers know the language very well; having used it their entire lives. They can give the students insights into the culture which a non-native would find difficult to provide, and they know things about their language, which a non-native teacher might find impossible to learn. For instance, they can point out dialectical variations, which a non-native teacher of English might totally ignore.

⁴³ £233.98 (April 17, 2021)

⁴⁴ Available at: <https://www.msmt.cz/vzdelavani/dalsi-vzdelavani/rozhodnuti-ministerstva-skolstvi-mladeze-a-teleovychovy-1>

⁴⁵ £100.28 (April 17, 2021)

⁴⁶ £167.13 (April, 17, 2021)

In general native teachers can provide a model for acquisition of the sound system, providing their students with an excellent role model in terms of pronunciation and helping them build up their confidence in using language for communication. (Clouet, 2006, p. 73)

On the other hand, there are numerous advantages of non-native teachers as well, as described below.

[T]he non-native teacher has the advantage of being able to make comparisons between the grammar of English and the grammar of the mother tongue in order to help students overcome difficulties in understanding and/or producing new structures. Non-natives, indeed, tend to have far better language analysis than natives. They know what caused them problems learning the language, and can apply that experience to their own lessons. (Clouet, 2006, p. 73)

As mentioned earlier, the Czech School Inspectorate to a great extent supports the employment of native teachers in schools, which reflects the official standpoint of the Czech Republic and the European Union on this matter.

2. SURVEY: NATIVE ENGLISH-SPEAKING TEACHERS IN PLZEŇ

Objectives and Hypotheses

The thesis focuses on the English language and native English speakers who teach in the Czech Republic. The practical part's purpose is to conduct information regarding native speakers' professional background as well as to research their personal teaching experience in the city of Plzeň, to establish to what extent they use the Czech language during lessons, and to determine errors they encounter in schools. Although primarily intuitive, the hypotheses are also based partially on anecdotal evidence and preceding research for the theoretical part of this thesis.

Objective 1: Determine native speakers' professional background.

Hypothesis 1: A majority of respondents are from either North/Central America or Europe.

Hypothesis 2: The largest percentage of respondents will have completed a bachelor degree programme.

Hypothesis 3: Up to a third of respondents will not have had any teaching practice in their home country.

Objective 2: Research native speakers' personal teaching experience

Hypothesis 4: A majority of respondents with full-time employment at an education institution will select 'high school' as their current workplace.

Hypothesis 5: A majority of respondents with part-time employment at an education institution will select 'language school' as their current workplace.

Hypothesis 6: Only a minority of respondents are actively learning the Czech language.

Hypothesis 7: Czech teaching methods will be considered the most different by the largest percentage of respondents.

Objective 3: Establish to what extent native speakers use the Czech language during lessons

Hypothesis 8: Fewer respondents use Czech when explaining English grammar than when teaching English vocabulary.

Hypothesis 9: A majority of respondents never use Czech when explaining English grammar.

Hypothesis 10: A majority of respondents use Czech when teaching English vocabulary.

Objective 4: Determine errors native speakers encounter in schools

Before defining the eleventh and last hypothesis, it is worth saying a few words about common mistakes made by Czech students in general. Although the Czech education system has come a long way after the Velvet Revolution and now places greater emphasis on the ability to communicate internationally, foreign language teachers will always encounter common everyday errors that students should avoid. Such errors, of course, occur on a global scale and differ in every country (depending on the similarities or differences of their mother tongue and the particular foreign language) and it is important to note that mistakes are a crucial part of learning, as described below.

Student errors are evidence that the progress is being made. Errors often show us that a student is experimenting with language, trying out ideas, taking risks, attempting to communicate, making progress. Analysing what errors have been made clarifies exactly which level the student has reached and helps set the syllabus for future language work. (Scrivener, 2005, p.298)

There are five basic categories of mistakes distinguished by teachers (and linguists): grammar, pronunciation, spelling, punctuation, and vocabulary. For the purposes of the current study, this section of the thesis will focus on errors made by Czech native speakers.

Errors in grammar are possibly the most common category and include, for example, the use of a wrong tense, incorrect word order, or verb-noun disagreement. Sparling (1990, p. 104) notes that Czech students frequently struggle with ‘there is/there are’ existential sentences and with grammatical agreement in general.

Pronunciation, a crucial language skill which is often overlooked, can cause numerous difficulties and a lack of correction may lead to a continuous use of a wrong phoneme or incorrect word stress. Pronunciation of the consonant sounds [w] and [v] is very commonly confused by Czech students.

Naturally, errors in spelling will occur solely in written texts or during in-class spelling activities. Ganev (2012, pp. 61-62) offers some typical learner mistakes involving missing letters (‘studing’, ‘tomorrow’, or ‘realy’), or doubled letters (‘oppinion’, ‘parrents’, or ‘thesee’)

Vocabulary errors may occur in both written and spoken form. They are typically a result of misunderstanding the context in which a particular word may appear. Such errors can occur inside one word class (birthdate x birthday, photograph x camera⁴⁷, learn x teach, lend x borrow⁴⁸), or between word classes (advise x advice⁴⁹, true x truth⁵⁰). (Ganev, 2012, p. 64)

⁴⁷ Noun x Noun

⁴⁸ Verb x Verb

⁴⁹ Verb x Noun

For obvious reasons, punctuation errors will not occur in conversation lessons. Nevertheless, these mistakes should not be ignored, as mastering English punctuation in the appropriate context is as important as mastering any other field. Sparling (1990, p. 84) notes that Czech learners have most difficulties with appositions, parentheses, or object clauses.

This brings us to our final hypothesis.

Hypothesis 11: The largest percentage of respondents will state Czech students most frequently commit errors in grammar.

Methodology and Respondents

The purpose of this study is to explore the under-researched topic of native English teachers in the city of Plzeň. The research was conducted by questionnaire and it investigated native speakers' personal teaching experience in the Czech Republic.

The survey consisted of sixteen closed-ended single-choice questions with predefined answers and one open-ended question, combining both the quantitative and the qualitative method. All questions were designed in accordance with the thesis, and with the aforementioned objectives and hypotheses, except for questions 1, 2, 8, and 9 which serve only an informative purpose.

Due to the unfortunate events of the 2020/2021 school year, the questionnaire was published online as a 'Google Form' and subsequently distributed via e-mail to personal acquaintances, head teachers of various schools in Plzeň, and directors of numerous language schools in the same area. A total of 25 responses from native teachers were received.

The data was transferred into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, numbers converted into percentages and the results were recorded tables. The last question is open-ended; therefore, the results had to be put into categories depending on how frequently each error appeared in the native speakers' responses. However, from the total number of respondents, only 21 provided an acceptable answer that could be used for the purpose of this research.

The responses to the first 16 questions are presented in tabulated form below, followed by a descriptive overview of the responses to item 17.

⁵⁰ Adjective x Noun

Q1: Gender	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Male	14	56%
Female	10	40%
Other	1	4%
Prefer not to answer	0	0%
Total	25	100%

Table 1

Q2: Age group	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
18-24	2	8%
25-29	3	12%
30-39	8	32%
40-49	4	16%
50+	8	32%
Total	25	100%

Table 2

Q3: Birthplace	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Europe	7	28%
North America/Central America	9	36%
South America	2	8%
Africa	2	8%
Asia	4	16%
Australia	1	4%
Total	25	100%

Table 3

Q4: Highest degree or level of education completed	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
High school	0	0%
Bachelor's degree	10	40%
Master's degree	9	36%
Ph.D. or higher	4	16%
Business school	2	8%
Total	25	100%

Table 4

Q5: Current full-time employment	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Kindergarten	2	8%
Elementary school	1	4%
High school	6	24%
University	4	16%
Language school	4	16%
None of the above	8	32%
Total	25	100%

Table 5

Q6: Current part-time employment	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Kindergarten	0	0%
Elementary school	0	0%
High school	0	0%
University	4	16%
Language school	8	32%
None of the above	13	52%
Total	25	100%

Table 6

Q7: Length of teaching practice in home country	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
I did not teach in my home country	7	28%
Less than a year	2	8%
1-2 years	7	28%
2-3 years	2	8%
3-5 years	0	0%
5-10 years	4	16%
Over 10 years	3	12%
Total	25	100%

Table 7

Q8: What is the overall length of your stay in the Czech Republic?	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Less than a year	4	16%
1-2 years	4	16%
2-3 years	3	12%
3-5 years	4	16%
5-10 years	4	16%
Over 10 years	6	24%
Total	25	100%

Table 8

Q9: How long is your teaching practice in the Czech Republic?	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Less than a year	7	28%
1-2 years	4	16%
2-3 years	1	4%
3-5 years	5	20%
5-10 years	2	8%
Over 10 years	6	24%
Total	25	100%

Table 9

Q10: Are you actively learning the Czech language?	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Yes	11	44%
No	14	56%
Total	25	100%

Table 10

Q11: Do you ever use Czech when explaining English grammar to students?	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Yes	9	36%
No	16	64%
Total	25	100%

Table 11

Q14: How often do you use Czech when explaining English grammar?	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Often	2	8%
Occasionally	1	4%
Seldom	6	24%
Never	16	64%
Total	25	100%

Table 12

Q13: Do you ever use Czech when teaching English vocabulary?	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Yes	15	60%
No	10	40%
Total	25	100%

Table 13

Q14: How often do you use Czech when teaching English vocabulary?	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Often	3	12%
Occasionally	5	20%
Seldom	7	28%
Never	10	40%
Total	25	100%

Table 14

Q15: Which of the items below do you consider to be the most different from your home country?	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
The grading system	6	24%
The relationship between a teacher and students	6	24%
Czech teaching methods	8	32%
The amount of information presented and taught in each lesson	5	20%
Total	25	100%

Table 15

Q16: What type of errors do Czech students make most frequently?	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Errors in spelling	2	8%
Errors in pronunciation	4	16%
Errors in grammar	13	52%
Errors in punctuation	2	8%
Errors in vocabulary	4	16%
Total	25	100%

Table 16

Q17: Two typical examples of grammar and vocabulary errors made by Czech students

From the total number of respondents, 4 people (16%) did not provide an appropriate answer or avoided the question altogether. Each of the remaining responses deals with a number of errors; therefore, it is necessary to put each mistake into an appropriate category.

Errors in vocabulary were by far the most common answer as ten respondents dealt with this issue to a certain extent. Some of the mistakes provided by the native speakers include for instance ‘give this wrapper to the trash’ (in response 1), ‘check’ (in response 2), ‘say’ x ‘tell’ (in response 3), ‘aunt’ x ‘uncle’ (in response 6), or ‘document’ x ‘documentary’ (in response 9).

Verb tenses also appeared quite frequently. Seven respondents mentioned such errors and noted for example ‘inappropriate use of the future tense in subordinate clauses after a time

conjunction’ (in response 3), ‘using the incorrect verb when giving short answers’ (in response 6), and one respondent simply attached an example ‘I have yesterday eat hamburger in nature’ (in response 16).

Omission or wrong use of articles was mentioned five times. Two examples were attached. In response 1 ‘the nature’ was noted, and response 5 provided a common error of putting the definite article before names or names of places ‘Bob lives in the Prague with the Scooby’.

Prepositions were just as common. One of the five respondents mentioned ‘on/in/at’ (in response 2); while in the remaining four responses it was simply noted ‘wrong use of prepositions’ or ‘prepositions’.

Pronunciation was mentioned twice. The respondents noted ‘some Czechs pronounce the -ed ending as if they were speaking Czech’ (in response 2), and ‘the “th” sound is the main one’ (in response 19).

Word order appeared in responses 13 and 14 (no examples were attached), and phrasal verbs were mentioned twice as well (in response 1 an example was attached ‘May I "do" a question instead of "have a question", is a frequent problem’, and in response 14 it was simply noted ‘phrasal verbs’).

Plurals, 3rd person singular, or possessive ‘s’ each appeared once. In response 5 the respondent noted ‘I need some pencil and paper’; while in responses 15 and 18 it was simply noted ‘3rd person singular’ and ‘mistakes about possessive ‘s’.

Analysis of the Objectives and Hypotheses

Objective 1: Determine native speakers’ professional background.

Hypothesis 1: A majority of respondents are either from North/Central America or Europe.

Question 3 deals with this issue. From table 3 it is apparent that the largest percentage of respondents (9 people, 36%) was born in North/Central America, while the second most frequent answer was Europe (7 people, 28%). Hypothesis 1 was thus confirmed.

Hypothesis 2: The largest percentage of respondents will have completed a bachelor degree programme.

The results from table 4 show that 10 people (40%) have completed a bachelor degree programme, confirming hypothesis 2.

Hypothesis 3: Up to a third of respondents will not have had any teaching practice in their home country.

Table 7 provides an answer to this hypothesis. From the total number of respondents, 7 people (28%) had not taught in their home country, which confirms hypothesis 3.

Analysis of Objective 2: Research native speakers' personal teaching experience

Hypothesis 4: A majority of respondents with full-time employment at an education institution will select 'high school' as their current workplace.

Question 5 was designed with a view to this hypothesis. The largest percentage of respondents (8 people, 32%) do not have a full-time employment at any education institution; however, the majority of people with a full-time employment (6 people, 24%) do teach at a high school. Hypothesis 4 was thus confirmed.

Hypothesis 5: A majority of respondents with part-time employment at an education institution will select 'Language School' as their current workplace.

Table 6 shows that the majority of respondents (13 people, 52%) do not have part-time employment at any education institution; however, 8 people (32%) do teach at a language school, and 4 people (16%) teach at a university. This confirms hypothesis 5.

Hypothesis 6: Only a minority of respondents are actively learning the Czech language.

According to the results in table 10, the majority of respondents (14 people, 56%) are not actively learning the Czech language, while the remaining 11 people (44%) are. Hypothesis 6 was confirmed.

Hypothesis 7: Czech teaching methods will be considered to be the most different by the largest percentage of respondents.

From table 15 it is apparent that the largest percentage of respondents (8 people, 32%) thinks that Czech teaching methods are the most different, thus confirming hypothesis 7.

Analysis of Objective 3: Establish to what extent native speakers use the Czech language during lessons.

Hypothesis 8: Fewer respondents use Czech when explaining English grammar than when teaching English vocabulary.

Tables 11 and 13 provide an answer to this hypothesis. 9 people use the Czech language when explaining English grammar to students, while 15 people use Czech when teaching English vocabulary. This confirms hypothesis 8.

Hypothesis 9: A majority of respondents never use Czech when explaining English grammar. The results in table 12 prove that the majority of respondents (16 people, 64%) never use Czech when explaining English grammar, which confirms hypothesis 9.

Hypothesis 10: A majority of respondents use Czech when teaching English vocabulary.

According to the results in table 14, the largest percentage of respondents (10 people, 40%) never use the Czech language when teaching English vocabulary; however, 7 people (28%) use it seldom, 5 people (20%) use it occasionally, and 3 people (12%) use it often. Therefore, the majority of respondents (15 people, 60%) do use Czech, thus confirming hypothesis 10.

Analysis of Objective 4: Determine errors native speakers encounter in schools.

Hypothesis 11: I presume that the largest portion of respondents thinks that Czech students most frequently make errors in grammar.

Question 16 deals with this issue. The results in table 16 prove that the majority of respondents (13 people, 52%) think that Czech students make most frequently errors in grammar. This confirms hypothesis 11.

The 21 responses to question 17 also provide an interesting insight into the issue of errors made by Czech students. Sparling (1990) offers a completely different set of errors to those mentioned by questionnaire respondents was received; nevertheless, some similarities can be found. For instance, Sparling (1990, p. 90) notes that in indirect questions, prepositions are often omitted (“Was there any decision how to proceed? x Was there any decision **on** how to proceed?”). One of the five respondents mentioned ‘on/in/at’ (in response 2), which, to a certain extent, relates to this prepositional error. A different example of similarity between Sparling’s publication and the answers from the questionnaire can be found in response 1. The respondent attached an example ‘give this wrapper to the trash’, an error that is noted by Sparling (1990, p. 41) as well “Could you **give** the groceries somewhere else, please?’ x ‘Could you **put** the groceries somewhere else, please?” A complete list of respondents’ reactions to this question can be found in Appendix B.

To sum up, it may be stated that all the original hypotheses were confirmed; therefore, all the set objectives were met.

CONCLUSION

This thesis focuses on the history of the English language in the Czech Republic and its position in the Czech education system, together with the under-researched topic of native teachers in Czech education institutions. Common mistakes that Czech students make were also mentioned and analysed in the practical part of the thesis.

The objective was to conduct information regarding native speakers' personal teaching experience in the city of Plzeň as well as to research their professional background. The aim was also to determine the typical errors they encounter in schools, and to establish to what extent they themselves use the Czech language during lessons. A questionnaire was distributed to native teachers in Plzeň and the data from the total number of 25 responses were subsequently analysed. From the results it was apparent that the largest portion of respondents does not have a full-time employment at any education institution; however, the majority of people with a full-time employment teach at a high school. The results also showed that the largest portion of respondents has completed the bachelor degree programme, and almost a third of them did not teach in their home country. Another key discovery was the fact that the majority of respondents use Czech when teaching English vocabulary and the most common errors are by the majority of native teachers considered to appear in grammar. All of the objectives were successfully met, as all hypotheses were confirmed.

Further research regarding both native speakers of English and English native teachers in the Czech Republic could be carried out in the future. The study would attempt to determine what portion of native speakers living in the country voluntarily chose the career of a foreign language teacher.

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Appendix A: Questionnaire

The aim of the questionnaire is to gather information regarding English native speakers who teach in the city of Plzeň. The questions below focus on your personal teaching experience in the Czech Republic. The data collected are solely for academic purposes; responses will remain anonymous.. If a question is irrelevant, please select 'None of the above'.

1. What gender do you identify as?

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Prefer not to answer.

2. Your age group

- 18-24
- 25-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50+

3. Where is your birthplace?

- Europe
- North America/Central America
- South America
- Africa
- Asia
- Australia

4. What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed?

- High school
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's Degree
- Ph.D. or higher
- Business school

5. Where is your current full-time employment?

- Kindergarten
- Elementary school
- High school
- University
- Language school
- None of the above

6. Where is your current part-time employment?
- Kindergarten
 - Elementary school
 - High school
 - University
 - Language school
 - None of the above
7. How long was your teaching practice in your home country?
- I did not teach in my home country
 - Less than a year
 - 1-2 years
 - 2-3 years
 - 3-5 years
 - 5-10 years
 - Over 10 years
8. What is the overall length of your stay in the Czech Republic?
- Less than a year
 - 1-2 years
 - 2-3 years
 - 3-5 years
 - 5-10 years
 - Over 10 years
9. How long is your teaching practice in the Czech Republic?
- Less than a year
 - 1-2 years
 - 2-3 years
 - 3-5 years
 - 5-10 years
 - Over 10 years
10. Are you actively learning the Czech language?
- Yes
 - No

11. Do you ever use Czech when explaining English grammar to students?

- Yes
- No

12. How often do you use Czech when explaining English grammar?

- Often
- Occasionally
- Seldom
- Never

13. Do you ever use Czech when teaching English vocabulary?

- Yes
- No

14. How often do you use Czech when teaching English vocabulary?

- Often
- Occasionally
- Seldom
- Never

15. Which of the below do you consider to be the most different from your home country?

- The grading system
- The relationship between a teacher and students
- Czech teaching methods
- The amount of information presented and taught in each lesson

16. What type of errors do Czech students make most frequently?

- Errors in spelling
- Errors in pronunciation
- Errors in grammar
- Errors in punctuation
- Errors in vocabulary

17. Could you provide two typical examples of grammar and vocabulary errors Czech students make?

Appendix B: Responses to Question 17

- 1) Often Czech students say, We had a weekend in "the nature". Nature doesn't usually have an article. Article use is very difficult, one because Czech language doesn't have articles, and two, the rules are not really regular. I can't explain, why at a restaurant I would have "the steak" but after the meal, I'll have "a coffee" or "a cappuccino." But it is sort of the same with Czech prepositions, why in the fall, na podzim but in the summer v létě? The same logic applies to phrasal verbs which works on the level of idiom. I can't really explain why the house burns up at the same time it burns down. May I "do" a question instead of "have a question", is a frequent problem. as "delat" is such a robust verb. Same for "dat"--"to give". So often Czechs give things that native English speakers would not, "give this wrapper to the trash", etc. Complicated verb forms are tough, "By the end of the week I will have graded 100 papers". In Czech this would some how have a simpler verb form and be accompanied with "Už".
- 2) Most often errors are prepositional (on, in , at). Some Czechs pronounce the -ed ending as if they were speaking Czech. Regarding vocabulary, I find Czech students have quite a wide range- often better than native speakers of their age, but certain words such as 'check' get changed to control or anything that is difficult is demanding.
- 3) Grammar: (1) inappropriate use of the future tense in subordinate clauses after a time conjunction, e.g. I'll see you when I *will be in Prague; (2) incorrect plurals of such uncountable nouns as "advice" or "information". Vocabulary: (1) confusion of "say" and "tell"; (2) using the expression "only several" instead of "only a few".
- 4) Articles a/the usually missing since they don't exist in Czech. Vocabulary: students usually translate words from Czech instead of think of them directly in English.
- 5) Putting 'the' before people's names or names of places 'Bob lives in the Prague with the scooby'. And not adding 's' to words. 'I need some pencil and paper'
- 6) Using the incorrect verb when giving short answers (e.g. Have you been to Brazil? Yes, I do.) aunt vs. uncle
- 7) some grammar mistakes include I is, you is..., vocabulary mistakes include 'theyre', 'their', 'there'
- 8) Failure to know the correct word (so use of Google to find it), mixing of he/she during speaking
- 9) Document instead of documentary, They should learn people instead of teach people

- 10) Grammar: "And then I have leaved home." Vocabulary: "And then I have leaved home."
- 11) Using the wrong tense of the word or using the wrong vocabulary choice.
- 12) British vs. English vocabulary Omission of articles (the, a, an)
- 13) They tend to have problems with word order and tenses.
- 14) Articles, word order, prepositions, phrasal verbs.
- 15) 3rd person singular. Using wrong prepositions.
- 16) "I have yesterday eat hamburger in nature."
- 17) Using the wrong tense. Prepositions.
- 18) Mistakes about the possessive "'s"
- 19) The "th" sound is the main one
- 20) No articles and prepositions.
- 21) Use of correct tenses.

SUMMARY IN CZECH

Bakalářská práce *English Native Teachers in Plzeň* se zabývá jak tématem anglicky mluvících rodilých mluvčích, kteří učí v českých vzdělávacích institucích, tak i historií anglického jazyka na území České republiky. Dále se zaměřuje na pozici angličtiny v českém školství a stručně také rozebírá chyby, jež čeští studenti v anglickém jazyce dělají.

Výzkumnými cíli této práce bylo získat informace týkající se anglicky mluvících rodilých mluvčích v Česku a provést výzkum, z něhož bude zřejmé, jakou mají pedagogickou praxi nebo do jaké míry užívají českého jazyka při výuce angličtiny. Důraz byl kladen také na jejich osobní zkušenost s výukou na našem území a na chyby, se kterými se respondenti na školách při výuce setkávají.

Respondentům (rodilým mluvčím, kteří učí v Plzni) byl distribuován dotazník, jehož výsledky byly posléze zpracovány a přeneseny do tabulek v programu Microsoft Excel. Z výsledků například vyplývá, že nepočtenější skupina respondentů získala bakalářský titul nebo také, že téměř třetina z nich nikdy neučila ve své rodné zemi. Výsledky zkoumání také naznačují, že většina respondentů, kteří mají pevný úvazek ve vzdělávací instituci, učí na středních školách. Je z nich také patrné, že více než polovina respondentů užívá českého jazyka při výuce nové slovní zásoby, či že za nejčastější chyby jsou respondenty považovány chyby, které studenti dělají v gramatice.