

Západočeská univerzita v Plzni

Fakulta pedagogická

Katedra anglického jazyka

Diplomová práce

**POSTOJE STUDENTŮ K ANGLICKÉMU JAZYKU A
JEHO STUDIU**

Tereza Golčáková

Plzeň 2022

University of West Bohemia

Faculty of Education

Department of English

Thesis

**LEARNERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS ENGLISH
AND LEARNING ENGLISH**

Tereza Golčáková

Plzeň 2022

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

V Plzni dne 7. června 2022

.....

Jméno Příjmení

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my appreciation to my supervisor Mgr. Gabriela Klečková, Ph.D., for her support, time and useful advice.

ABSTRACT

Golčáková, Tereza. The University of West Bohemia. June, 2022. Learners' attitudes towards English and learning English. Supervisor: Mgr. Gabriela Klečková, Ph.D.

The thesis deals with the topic of learners' attitudes towards English and learning English. The thesis provides an examination of the current role and status of English in the world. Then it focuses on learners' attitudes towards English as a foreign language and the process of learning it. The main purpose of the paper is to explore such learners' attitudes. The conducted research realized with 9th-grade learners of elementary school sought to do so. Based on the results of the research, it is concluded that the surveyed learners have overall positive attitudes towards English and learning English. They understand the current status of English and the importance of learning it. However, they do not sense the presence of English in their everyday personal life. Most of them see it only as a tool for international communication. The thesis proposes possible ways for the teachers how to use information about learners' attitudes and try to improve them.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	4
ABSTRACT	5
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND	3
State of the English Language	3
Spread of the English Language.....	3
English Language Today.....	5
Status and Role of the English Language in the Czech Republic	6
Teaching the English Language as an International Language	7
Standard English	8
Native Speaker Standard	9
Issues in Teaching the English Language Nowadays	9
Assessing EIL.....	12
Attitudes in Language Learning.....	12
Attitudes	13
Types of Attitudes	14
Attitudes in Relation to Other Factors that Affect the SLA.....	15
Attitudes and Stereotypes.....	17
Attitudes Towards EIL	17
Attitudes Towards the English Language as a School Subject	17
Teacher's Role in Learners' Attitudes	18
Studies in Learners' Attitudes towards the English language and the English Language Learning	19
III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	23
Purpose of the Research.....	23
Participants.....	23
Research Instrument	24
Procedure	25
Data collecting procedure.....	25
Data analysis process	25
IV. RESULTS AND COMMENTARIES	27
Learner	27

Commentaries.....	27
Learners' Perception of English	28
Commentaries.....	29
Factors Affecting Learners' Attitudes towards English and Learning English	30
Commentaries.....	33
Learners' Attitudes towards Learning English	34
Commentaries.....	36
Learners' Attitudes towards Learning English at School	37
Commentaries.....	39
V. IMPLICATIONS	42
Implications for Teaching	42
Limitation of the Research.....	43
Suggestions for Further Research	44
VI. CONCLUSIONS	45
REFERENCES	46
APPENDICES	53
Appendix A – Strukurovaný rozhovor.....	53
Appendix B – Structured Interview	56

I. INTRODUCTION

Second language acquisition is a complex process that may be influenced by various factors. One of the most important factors to affect it is learners' attitudes. Learners' attitudes may be of various types and include learners' attitudes towards the language itself, the language course, the target culture, etc. The constantly evolving role and status of English and its today's predominant use as an international language are causing learners' attitudes to shift. It is not only the learners' attitudes that are changing, so is the learners' motivation, which is closely related to their attitudes. Many scholars object that today's English as a foreign language education does not reflect such changes.

As it has already been stated, learners' attitudes play an important part in the EFL learning process. Nevertheless, it is very complicated to learn about the learners' attitudes, and it is very hard to improve them. In this thesis, learners' attitudes towards English and learning English as a foreign language are examined. The core of the research is to explore these attitudes, what factors may influence them and what the possible ways to improve learners' attitudes towards English and learning English are.

In the first part of the Theoretical Background chapter, the essential information regarding today's role and status of English is described. Several current issues connected to it and to teaching English as a foreign language that is used for international communication are examined. Then the role and status of English in the Czech Republic today is explained. The second part focuses on learners' attitudes towards English and learning English. There is defined what attitude is in general, what its types are and what attitudes are part of the second language acquisition process. Learners' attitudes towards English and learning English specifically are then examined. Further, several suggestions for improving such learners' attitudes are offered. In the final section, the results of several recent studies on learners' attitudes are summarized.

In the next chapter, Research Methodology, the details of the research realized for the purpose of this thesis are described. The next chapter, Results and Commentaries, includes a presentation of the results acquired in the research accompanied by the author's commentaries. The following chapter (Implications) discusses possible

implications for teaching that emerged from the research. Further there are explained the possible limitation of the research and suggestions for further research. In the final chapter (Conclusions) the main ideas of the whole thesis are reviewed.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This chapter provides a theoretical framework regarding the topic of learners' attitudes towards English. Firstly, it explores the English language as such. The status of English in the world and the causes that led to its worldwide spread are discussed. Pedagogical issues that arise with the nowadays status of English are further described. Secondly, this chapter defines learners' attitudes, analyses learners' attitudes towards English, and encompasses possible ways to improve learners' attitudes.

State of the English Language

The English language is the only language used on all continents. It has undergone an enormous change in its status and form during the last century.

Spread of the English Language

According to Crystal (2003), the most significant change in the status and form of English has happened since the year 1950. McCrum (2010) adds that the two factors that contributed the most to the spread of English around the world were historical and pragmatic factors. According to Richards (2015), it was mainly the British colonisation and American expansion that significantly contributed to the global spread of English. As McCrum (2010) puts it, the countries which were part of the British Empire were located in many different parts of the world. It would have been understandable for those countries to renounce the English language for good since it was perceived as the language of the colonial power. However, as McCrum (2010) points out, the exact opposite happened. In these former colonies, the English language was embraced and took on local characteristics. This process gave rise to the so-called "New Englishes" – localised and standardised forms of English (Schneider, 2010). Another factor that contributed to the global spread of English is globalisation. According to Richards (2015), it was globalisation that caused the English language to become a primary language used for communication in international organisations (e.g. the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the European Union...).

In many countries, the English language is also thought to be an essential factor in promoting economic development. Recent studies revealed that countries with high English-language skills are more likely to have higher trade, innovation and income levels. The connection between the English language and the economy is also related to the fact that the United States became a global economic power after World War II. That caused international commerce and trade to be highly dependent on the use of English (Richards, 2015). As Graddol (2006) puts it, English is crucial for a global business. He even claims it to be the only language in global business.

According to Richards (2015), it is also today's education that has been promoting the use of English around the world. In many countries, the English language used to have only the status of a school subject – a foreign language. However, lately, it has also become the medium of instruction. This use of English is mainly at the university level, but there are also elementary and secondary schools that teach other subjects using the English language. In Europe, this procedure is referred to as CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) (Richards, 2015). Graddol (2006) agrees that in many countries, English is considered an essential skill. He adds that in many countries, there are taking place extensive curricula reforms. According to Graddol (2006), the main goal of these reforms is to improve national proficiency in English.

There are other minor, however no less important, factors promoting the global spread of English. One of them is the fact that English has become the language of tourism. Travelling abroad is one of the main reasons why many people wish to learn English. Tourism is dependent on foreigners and thus on providing resources in English for international visitors and travellers (Richards, 2015). As Graddol (2006) puts it, the growth of international tourism has caused the number of encounters involving native speakers of English to decline. By contrast, the number of encounters involving non-native speakers of English is constantly on the rise (Graddol, 2006).

Richards (2015) accents the fact that English surrounds people all over the world. One might encounter the English language in sports, in advertising and also on a large number of consumer items in packaging and labelling. He also mentions that English has become the language used in media, which is intended for an international audience. There is also a

highly developed global English language teaching industry that promotes the use of English worldwide. (Richards, 2015).

English Language Today

English is a language which has a very complex status and is disparately perceived and handled in different parts of the world. Therefore, there is not only one English language. There has not yet been given one way of classifying the English language and its variants or fields of use. There are various classifications, and many linguists have different views on English.

Frequently scholars divide English according to its group of users in ENL (English as a native language), ESL (English as a second language) and EFL (English as a foreign language). ENL is described as the English language, which is used by those who were born and raised in one of those countries where English serves the first language purpose. Those are, for instance, countries such as the UK, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. ESL is then the English language used in countries that used to be British colonies (e.g. Nigeria, India, Bangladesh, Singapore). The last type is then EFL - the English language used in countries which were never British colonies. The English language serves very little or no purpose in such countries (Jenkins, 2003).

This idea of English largely corresponds to Kachru's (2019) conception of English. However, as Jenkins (2003) suggests, Kachru's division of the English language is to a greater extent based on geography and history. His conception does not take into account the way speakers of English identify with and use the English language. Kachru (2019) suggests a three-circle model of English, which consists of the Inner Circle, Outer Circle and Expanding Circle. The Inner circle countries are said to be those countries where English is used as a first language (e.g. Australia, the UK, the US...). Outer circle countries are those countries where the English language is institutionalised (e.g. India, Nigeria, Singapore...). The last circle, the Expanding circle, includes countries where English serves no official purpose (e.g. China, Japan, Korea...). Even though Kachru's three-model of World Englishes is presumably the one most well-known and used among scholars, it is also the one model of English which has faced probably the most criticism.

Kachru's model is often criticised for its grey areas – divergent speakers of English who do not fit in one of the circles but rather overlap between two of them. The model also does not consider linguistic diversity inside the circles (Jenkins, 2003).

Jenkins (2003) then provides another term that has been increasingly used alongside the term EFL. It is ELF – English as a Lingua Franca, sometimes also referred to as EIL (English as an International Language). According to Jenkins (2003), this term is used for English which is used as a contact language among speakers from countries where English serves no official purpose (e.g. mainland Europe, China, Brazil...). McKay and Brown (2015), however, argue that the terms EIL and ELF are not interchangeable. According to McKay and Brown (2015), EIL is a concept that focuses on the English language in relation to other issues – the cultural background, the role of L2 speakers as English teachers, economic and educational power of English. ELF, on the other hand, is a concept that focuses on English as a 'contact language'. The focus of ELF research is then mainly cross-cultural exchanges.

McKay (2002) claims that English is the only language that has earned the attribute International. She adds that language is considered to be international when it serves as a language used for broader communication among not only its native speakers but also among native speakers of other languages. McKay (2002) draws attention to other features which make a language international. According to her, language is considered international when it is not associated with only one culture or nation and when it develops alongside other languages. Matsuda (2021) points out that the attribute international does not refer to a type of English but rather to its function of being a language that is used to communicate between users from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Status and Role of the English Language in the Czech Republic

In the Czech Republic, English has the status of a foreign language. Recently it has also been perceived as the lingua franca for communicating with other European countries. The Czech legal system acknowledges English as a language that might be used for international arrangements alongside Czech and Slovak (Kaderka and Prošek, 2014).

In the Czech educational system, English has two roles: medium of instruction and a school subject. As a medium of instruction, it is used very rarely. Its prevailing role in Czech education is being a school subject. (Kaderka and Prošek, 2014). In the Framework Educational Programme for Elementary Education, one foreign language is entered as compulsory from the third grade. Each school might choose a different language. However, it is recommended to select English due to its importance and status. Consequently, most elementary schools opt for English as a compulsory first language (Kaderka and Prošek, 2014).

As Kaderka and Prošek (2014) put it, English is also increasingly becoming the primary language of research since it is in researchers' interest to get the attention of a wider, international audience.

English is also the language of communication in multinational companies that are located in the Czech Republic, but their headquarters are placed outside of the Czech Republic. In these regional offices, English is not used only as a language for external communication with other regional offices and their headquarters. It is also very often used for internal communication since such companies do not employ exclusively people who speak Czech (Kaderka and Prošek, 2014).

According to Kaderka and Prošek (2014), the overall attitude towards English is neither exclusively positive nor negative in the Czech Republic. They claim that the Czech users' attitudes are mostly in favour of English. They perceive English as a language that is increasingly being used for international communication, and thus it is necessary to learn it in order to be able to communicate internationally (Kaderka and Prošek, 2014).

Teaching the English Language as an International Language

As has already been mentioned in the previous sections, there are more non-native speakers of English than there are native speakers of English. More people are thus learning English as their other/international language. I have already discussed the reasons for English becoming an international language. Now I will thoroughly examine the possible issues and misconceptions that accompany teaching English as an international language (EIL). According to Matsuda (2021), traditionally, the concept of English was

that the UK and US varieties are the well-known norms and those that should be taught to learners of English around the world. However, since English has become an international language, several objections have challenged this approach (Matsuda, 2021).

In order to fully understand today's view on teaching English as an international English, we must first examine what the term standard English includes and excludes.

Standard English

According to Trudgill (1999), a language is considered to be standardised when one of its varieties has undergone the process of standardisation – language determination, codification and stabilisation. Nevertheless, Trudgill (1999) states that amongst linguists, there has not yet been reached an agreement about the definition of Standard English. Trudgill (1999) thus does not provide a clear definition of Standard English but rather its characteristics. He points out that the term Standard English should not be mistaken for the term English language. According to Trudgill (1999), Standard English is one variety of the English language. He also states that Standard English is a social dialect that was historically associated with social groups which possessed a high degree of power, prestige and wealth. Today Standard English is presumably the most important variety of English since it has a leading status in the English-speaking world. It is the one variety which is typically used in books, newspapers and magazines. It is also the one variety that is associated with the education system in all English-speaking countries (Trudgill, 1999). Trudgill suggests that Standard English is not in any way associated with any accent. He states that Standard English is often associated with Received Pronunciation (social accent associated with speakers from upper- and upper-middle-class). According to Trudgill (1999), all speakers of Received Pronunciation speak Standard English. However, he suggests that speaking Standard English does not in any way require using Received Pronunciation. Received Pronunciation is said to be a standardised accent of English; however, it is not Standard English itself (Trudgill, 1999). He also clarifies other misconceptions which tend to arise when defining Standard English. According to him, Standard English should neither be mistaken for a style of English nor for its register.

McKay and Brown (2015) draw attention to the fact that the Standard English concept has historically been the one to drive English language teaching. According to them, Standard English may be explained in two slightly different manners. The first possible perception of Standard English is that it is a norm or an average of English that is spoken by people (usually native speakers). Nevertheless, according to McKay and Brown (2015), it is a norm that seems complicated to determine since there are all different kinds of native speakers of English. There are also different norms of English used for different dialects and different educational levels. The second possible perception of Standard English is that it is a fixed acceptable level of English (a certain benchmark or criterion) that all native speakers learn with a fluctuating level of success. It is a system regulated mainly by grammarians and lexicographers, and it is, to a high degree, the same across Englishes all over the world (McKay and Brown, 2015).

Native Speaker Standard

McKay and Brown (2015) point out that it is the idealised native speaker standard that keeps being promoted in EIL classrooms. Trudgill and Hannah (2017) share the same opinion on using native-speaker varieties in EFL classrooms. They state that in the past, there was a strong inclination towards using only the British variety as a model in EFL teaching and requiring it from the students. Current EFL teaching still inclines towards the variety, but there is no longer present a strict requirement for students to use only the British variety. Students are now usually permitted to speak and write either the British variety or the American variety. Nevertheless, they are given that permission so long as they are consistent with one of the varieties (Trudgill and Hannah, 2017).

Issues in Teaching the English Language Nowadays

Even though it may seem reasonable to use native speaker standards in EFL teaching, McKay and Brown (2015) argue that for most learners all over the world, it is a standard almost impossible to achieve. According to them, language classes tend to set up the native-speaker standard as a goal regardless of the fact that for most of the students who get only six years of English instruction, it is an unrealistic goal to achieve. Trudgill and Hannah (2017) add that recent researches point out the numerical superiority of non-native speakers of English over the native speakers of English. According to them, there is a

prevailing number of encounters where English is used as a lingua franca among non-native speakers.

McKay and Brown (2015) propose two possible solutions to the problems that accompany using the native speaker standard in EFL classrooms. Firstly, they suggest using a construct of Global English Standard (GES). GES would not be based on a native speaker standard but instead on the system of English. It would recognise that there is a system of English taught across the world to both native and non-native speakers. It would assert the occurrence of a fairly homogenous English Grammar across all Englishes, its dialects and learners. This standard would promote the idea that English is not owned only by its native speakers but by all its speakers. The main ambition of this concept would be to maximise effective communication in English around the world by creating and acknowledging a common system. Their second proposal is to apply the intelligibility principle according to which the learners need to be understandable in order to communicate effectively in English. McKay and Brown (2015) then suggest narrowing the target to the English most students might need and can attain – locally defined English. Locally defined EIL considers local needs for English and its international use when setting pedagogical goals. It is motivating for students since the teachers of locally defined EIL make use of materials that are based on local language and are directly relevant to the students' lives. The curriculum is then adjusted to the local needs for English, and learning goals are set as realistic and attainable (McKay and Brown, 2015).

Matsuda (2021) examines teaching EIL in a different manner. According to Matsuda (2021), there is a need for learners of English to be familiarised with the multiple varieties and various users of English that they might possibly encounter when using English on an international level. As Matsuda (2021) puts it, the learners should be aware that English as an international language, English might be unpredictable and, to a certain extent, utterly different from English which they typically encounter in classrooms.

Matsuda (2021) provides suggestions that might help students to better understand the concept of EIL. According to her, when teaching English as an international language, it is sufficient to expose students to the multiple varieties of English that they might possibly encounter. This can be done by bringing authentic materials to the classroom (e.g. using

authentic videos, recordings, texts...). The students should be made aware of the fact that, except for those traditionally favoured varieties (such as US or UK), there are also other varieties of English which are no less important or right. Some of them might be even more appropriate in different contexts. Having the students learn about these varieties might also help them gain confidence when communicating in English. Matsuda (2021) also suggests bringing English users from different backgrounds into the classroom. According to her, it is convenient to invite speakers of English from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds since it is an opportunity for the students to experience authentic communication and be exposed to different varieties of English. It might also help the students to understand that it is not necessary to be a native speaker to be a successful user of English. Another way of raising the awareness of non-native varieties of English is by bringing materials from diverse cultural backgrounds (not only from the US or the UK). It is convenient to have the students explore other cultures and their own culture in relation to those others (Matsuda, 2021). Jenkins (2000) shares a similar view on this matter and points out that learners should be presented not only with English spoken by native speakers but also with English spoken in foreign accents in order to increase their level of tolerance towards other non-native speakers of English.

McKay (2002) also seeks to explore the possible role that culture should or should not have in teaching EIL. She draws attention to the fact that English as an international language is no longer connected exclusively to Inner Circle countries and their culture. According to McKay (2002), traditionally, it was the Inner Circle countries' culture which was included in English teaching. However, as she argues, when teaching English as an international language, it is vital to reconsider such an approach. McKay (2002) suggests that when teaching EIL, students should also be introduced to the international target cultures. According to McKay (2002), furthermore, students should be provided with a sufficient number of opportunities to reflect on their own culture. She argues that when using English in cross-cultural encounters, students will most definitely be sharing insights about their own culture with others.

Assessing EIL

According to Jenkins and Leung (2014), there is not only the challenge of teaching EIL but also the challenge of testing EIL. They point out that the vast majority of those high stakes language assessment frameworks which call themselves 'international' still keep on accepting only the native English varieties. Jenkins and Leung (2014) criticise them for that and argue that tests that claim international status should react to the international use of English. According to them, international high stakes language assessment should take into account EIL, which does not necessarily match the native speaker standard (Jenkins and Leung, 2014).

Attitudes in Language Learning

When learning any second language, there are several factors that, to a greater or lesser extent, may affect the acquisition process, both in a positive and a negative way. The same applies to learning English as a second language. As Ellis (1999) puts it, sometimes there is made a distinction between the terms second and foreign language acquisition. However, according to him, this distinction is relevant only in terms of what is learnt and how it is learnt. Ellis (1999) argues that in the case of examining the sociolinguistic conditions of learning that determine the learning process and its outcomes, it is not necessary to make that kind of distinction. Khastgir and Neogi (2017) share a similar view. They state that second language acquisition (SLA) is the process of learning any other language in addition to your first language.

Brown (2007) points out that SLA is a very complex and lengthy process that demands physical, intellectual and emotional commitment and involvement. There are various factors that affect SLA. Different scholars classify these factors in various ways. The standard classification of these factors is psychological, sociocultural and linguistic (Brown, 2007). According to Brown (2007), psychological factors involve learner's language aptitude, age, motivation, intelligence, learning styles and strategies. Among psychological factors, he also includes so-called affective factors such as learner's self-esteem, willingness to communicate, risk-taking, inhibition, anxiety, empathy and extroversion (Brown, 2007). The second group that Brown (2007) describes is the sociocultural factors. According to Ellis (1999), these sociocultural have a significant yet

indirect influence on SLA. Sociocultural factors involve attitude, age, sex, social class and ethnic identity (Ellis, 1999). Then there are the linguistic factors which include the learner's first language (Brown, 2007).

Many scholars have sought to answer the question, "What factors and to what extent affect the SLA process?". According to Fakey (2010), most of the studies that have been carried out on that subject have identified that possibly the most critical factor affecting the SLA process is the learner's attitude. Littlewood (1991) shares a similar opinion on that matter. According to him, it is mainly the motivation, communicative need and attitudes towards the second language community that play a crucial role in SLA.

Attitudes

According to Latchanna and Dagnev (2009, p. 53), attitudes have usually been defined as "a mental and neutral state of readiness, organised through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related". Latchanna and Dagnev (2009) also state that an attitude is a complex mental state comprising feelings and beliefs. Brown states that (2007), attitudes play a crucial role in how we perceive and interpret ourselves (self-esteem), others and the culture in which we are living. Roos (1990) defines attitudes as a perception of objects in our environment which governs our beliefs, emotions and behaviour. According to her, an attitude consists of three elements: cognitive, affective and conative. These three components are tightly linked together, and a change in one might possibly affect the others, which then might cause a change in the attitude (Roos, 1990).

According to Brown (2007), attitudes usually tend to begin to develop in early childhood, and their form is affected by attitudes of parents and peers, contact with people who differ from us in some way and the effective interacting factors. According to Brown (2007), very young children usually tend to be less affected by attitudes since they are not cognitively developed enough to possess attitudes towards languages, classes of people, ethnic groups and cultures. Smith (1971) suggests that attitudes are learned, and thus they may be taught. According to him, students are never born disliking or liking a particular foreign language. Smith (1971) then points out that attitudes are situational. According to

him, students who dislike learning in general, school, teachers and homework may gain a negative attitude towards a language if they have to learn it as a school subject.

Ellis (1999, p. 198) suggests that learners of a language hold a set of attitudes that contains attitudes towards "(1) the target language, (2) target language speakers, (3) the target-language culture, (4) the social value of learning the L2, (5) particular uses of the target language and (6) themselves as members of their own culture". As Ellis (1999) puts it, attitudes play an essential role in the SLA, and there is not only one attitude affecting the learning process. Gardner (1985) mentions two sets of attitudes that are important in the SLA. It is the attitudes towards the process of learning a particular language and the attitudes towards the community related to that language. According to him, attitudes towards learning the language are frequently directly proportional to the level of achievement. In comparison, attitudes towards the other-language community are more variable.

Roos (1990) also draws attention to the importance of recognising the difference between an attitude and an opinion. According to her, attitudes are stored in the subconscious part of our brain, and we cannot ultimately realise them. Therefore, it is not usually possible to ascertain someone's attitudes by asking them direct questions. Opinions, on the other hand, are part of our consciousness. They are the expressions of our beliefs, and usually, they are not accurate reflections of our attitudes. She suggests that opinions might be influenced by various situational factors (Roos, 1990).

Types of Attitudes

Gardner (1985) recognises various approaches to the classification of attitudes. First, attitudes might be classified according to their level of specificity/generality. As an example of a specific attitude, he suggests an attitude towards a particular language. In contrast, a general attitude might be an overall interest in foreign languages (Gardner, 1985).

Another classification of attitudes is based on their relevance to the achievement in learning a second language. It is obvious that certain attitudes are more relevant to the

process of learning a second language. Those are mainly the attitudes towards the language itself and towards the language course (Gardner, 1985).

According to Gardner (1985), attitudes may be both positive and negative. As he puts it, there is a common belief that learners with positive attitudes achieve higher learning outcomes than those with negative attitudes. Nevertheless, he suggests that this belief does not apply exclusively to all students. As he points out, some learners, despite their positive attitude towards a language and its community, might not succeed in the language learning process due to their learning environment. Such learners might, for instance, not prefer to study the language in the school setting (Gardner, 1985). Elyildirim and Ashton (2006) state that negative attitudes towards the foreign language and the culture surrounding it may or may not have a detrimental effect on the language learning process. On the contrary, positive attitudes towards the foreign language and its culture may benefit the learning process (Elyildirim and Ashton, 2006). Ellis (1999) states that, in general, positive attitudes towards the language and its culture benefit the learning process, and negative attitudes impede the learning process. However, according to Ellis (1999), that is not a rule that could be considered valid for all learners. He points out that with some learners, their negative attitudes may benefit the learning process if they possess a strong reason for learning that particular language. Elyildirim and Ashton (2006) point out that positive attitudes of students are strengthened when those students experience success. On the other hand, negative attitudes of students may become even more negative if these students fail to progress (Elyildirim and Ashton, 2006). Ellis (1999) also suggests that learners' positive attitudes may become negative if they do not progress the way they expect to or if they lack sufficient learning opportunities.

Another possible classification of attitudes is educational and social. (Gardner, 1985). Educational attitudes are those that are closely related to the language course, the teacher, the learning process, etc. Social attitudes are then related to the cultural implications of SLA (Gardner, 1985).

Attitudes in Relation to Other Factors that Affect the SLA

According to many scholars, there is a strong link between motivation and attitudes in

SLA. Ahmed (2015) defines motivation as part of the SLA in terms of two factors: the learners' attitudes towards the second language community and learners' communicative needs. Gardner (1985) describes motivation in SLA as a set of components: the learner's effort and desire to succeed in the learning process and his or her attitudes towards the learning process. Gardner (1985) states that both motivation and attitudes play a crucial role in the SLA. According to Gardner and Lambert (1972), two terms concerning motivation are part of the language learning process: integrative motivation and instrumental motivation. Integrative motivation refers to learning a language for the purpose of learning more about a culture or even integrating into it (Gardner and Lambert, 1972). In comparison, instrumental motivation refers to learning a language for rather practical and immediate reasons (academic, professional...). Gardner and Lambert (1972) claim that it is integrative motivation that is more powerful in the language learning process. However, Oroujlou and Vahedi (2011) argue that later studies' results suggest that it is the instrumentally motivated learners who are more successful in the SLA process. According to them, later studies also suggest that most second language learners tend to be instrumentally motivated (Oroujlou and Vahedi, 2011). Littlewood (1991) points out that the terms integrative and instrumental motivation is, to a certain extent, comparable to the more commonly used terms intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Brown (2007) explains that most learners are affected by both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation at the same time. The presence of one does not exclude the presence of the other (Brown, 2007). Ahmed (2015) draws attention to the possible effect extrinsic motivation may have on learners' attitudes. He claims that external pressure for language learning may cause the learner to create negative attitudes towards the whole language learning process. On the contrary, internal motivation may support learners' positive attitudes and thus may enhance the learning process (Ahmed, 2015).

Lubis (2015) agrees that motivation plays a crucial role when learning English as a foreign language. Nevertheless, according to her, a learner's success in the English acquisition process may also be affected by the number of English practice learners have outside of the school settings (courses, clubs...). Lubis (2015) suggests that learners who practice and learn English in their free time, in addition to lessons at school, may develop a more positive attitude towards English and English learning. On the other hand, learners who learn English only at school as a compulsory subject may sometimes develop negative

attitudes towards English and English learning due to the environment of their school classroom. Such negative attitudes may be caused by various factors. Some learners might feel shy or even afraid to practice English in front of their classmates. Such feelings might be caused by the learner's lack of self-confidence but also by their fear of making a mistake and being laughed at (Lubis, 2015).

Attitudes and Stereotypes

Roos (1990) proposes that language attitudes contain stereotypes as a part of their cognitive component. According to her, stereotypes as part of an attitude are formed by personal experience and emotional needs. They are also influenced by what we are told by others. Roos (1990) suggests that stereotypes might become an obstacle in the learning process since they might cause us to categorise people according to their accent or pronunciation. Consequently, stereotypes about a particular language community might cause us to hold a negative attitude towards that language.

Attitudes Towards EIL

As I have already mentioned in the previous sections, English is no longer primarily taught for use with its native speakers. As Littlewood (1991) puts it, English becoming an international language changed the point of view on its learners' attitudes. When learning English for international purposes, the learner's attitudes towards native-speaking English communities do not have such a significant influence on the learning process. (Littlewood, 1991). Dörnyei et al. (2006) share a similar view on this matter. According to them, English has lost its national cultural base and today is rather associated with the global culture. Consequently, they claim that the attitudinal base of learners' integrative motivation, as described by Gardner (1985), has shifted. Dörnyei et al. (2006) claim that learners no longer wish to learn English in order to be able to integrate into Inner Circle English cultures. These days, learners of English wish to learn it so that they would be able to integrate into and communicate with the whole world (Dörnyei et al., 2006).

Attitudes Towards the English Language as a School Subject

If we speak about learners' attitudes towards the English language, it is essential to

mention that perception of English is different for learners who learn English obligatory and those who learn it voluntarily. Learning English as an obligatory foreign language at school significantly shapes learners' attitudes towards the language itself.

Pavelková and Škaloudová (2004) suggest that learners' positive attitudes towards a school subject encompass their overall interest in the subject. According to them, it is primarily the learner's attitude towards a school subject that shapes their motivation to learn.

Pavelková and Škaloudová (2004) suggest that learners' levels of motivation and their attitude toward a school subject are influenced by various factors. Some of them are, for instance, the learner's abilities to learn the specific subject, how demanding the teacher is, the overall difficulty of the subject, the teaching methods he or she uses, learner's perception of the subject's importance, the characteristics of the subject and how it is enshrined in the curriculum, learner's interests and motivational dispositions (Pavelková and Škaloudová, 2004).

Teacher's Role in Learners' Attitudes

As I have already mentioned in the previous sections, teachers play a significant role in affecting learners' attitudes toward English. As Moon (2004) points out, it is not only the teacher's behaviour towards the learners that affect learners' attitudes but also the teacher's own attitudes towards English and teaching it. Moon (2004) suggests some steps that a teacher might take in an attempt to improve learners' attitudes towards English and English learning. According to her, the teacher could encourage the learners to bring their own English-written materials to class and then use them in the teaching process. When improving learners' attitudes towards English, Moon (2004) also points out the need for the teacher to adapt his or her teaching to the level of the learners. She suggests that the teacher should seek to ensure that each student has a chance to succeed during the class. It is also important to let the students express their reasons and goals for learning English. This procedure may help them with their self-motivation. The teacher might even encourage the learners to create their own goals for the term and then help them reach those goals (Moon, 2004). Learners' positive attitudes towards learning English may also be supported if the teacher assures that every activity has a purpose and that the students are aware of it (Moon, 2004). She also suggests using teaching materials that the learners

can relate to. The teaching materials should correspond to the interest of the learners' age group. According to Moon (2004), it is also highly beneficial if the teacher brings authentic materials from English-speaking learners of the same age to class.

Roos (1990) agrees that teachers play a vital role in affecting learners' attitudes towards a particular language. She suggests that it is also the teacher's attitude towards "non-standard" varieties of a language and its speakers that may have a positive or a negative effect on the learner's attitude. According to Roos (1990), if a teacher disapproves of "non-standard" varieties of a language, the learner may feel highly uncomfortable when his or her variety of language diverges from the "standard" one. Such students also tend to copy the teacher's attitude in a way that they themselves disapprove of "non-standard" language variety (Roos, 1990). Lubis (2015) concludes that English teachers' aim should not only be to teach and motivate learners but, most importantly, to encourage the learners to practice English.

Studies in Learners' Attitudes towards the English language and the English Language Learning

In this section, I present the results of a few selected studies that have been carried out on EFL learners' attitudes towards English and English language learning in the last twenty years. Most of the studies that are available online in English and focus on this theme were carried out in Asia. The vast majority of these studies were realized with university students as the participants of the research. If we compare the results of studies carried out with university, high school or elementary school students, significant differences are found.

Research in higher education in different countries shows similar themes. University students tend to possess positive attitudes towards English and English language learning (Ahmed, 2015; Eshghinejad, 2016; Gömleksiz, 2010; Pengwichai, 2021; Tahaineh et al., 2013; Zeinivand et al., 2015). The results of most of the university level studies also suggest that university students are well-aware of the status and importance of the English language and are instrumentally motivated to learn it (Abu-Snoubar, 2017; Al-Tamimi et al., 2009; Gömleksiz, 2010; Pengwichai, 2021; Tahaineh et al., 2013). In most of the

studies, there is not a significant difference between attitudes in terms of the students' gender or age. Nevertheless, there are a few studies whose results' imply that females tend to have more positive attitudes towards learning English than males do (Abu-Snoubar, 2017; Gömleksiz, 2010).

The research in secondary education shows different results. In most of the countries' secondary schools, English is a compulsory subject. Most of the learners' do not perceive English as a tool that might be useful for them in their life. On the other hand, they perceive it as an obligatory part of their education. Consequently, their attitudes tend to be very often rather negative (Abidin et al., 2012; Delić, 2020). Such negative attitudes are then usually shaped by the school policy, the overall school setting or the difficulty of mastering the English language (Abidin et al., 2012; Delić, 2020; Getie, 2020).

Very little research has been carried out on elementary school learners' attitudes towards English and English language learning. Most of the studies focus on overall learners' attitudes towards school and school subjects in general. In 2017 Asmali conducted a study with 192 2nd-grade learners. The study sought to explore young learners' attitudes and motivation to learn English. The results of this study indicate that most young learners enjoy learning English and consider it fun. Most of the learners' attitudes and motivation are then affected by their enjoyment of English language learning and by the attitudes of their parents (Asmali, 2017). Pavelková and Škaloudová (2004) undertook research in which they sought to explore Czech learners' attitudes towards all school subjects. The learners were from the 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th grades. The results indicate that learners realise the importance of the English language and that they assign it medium difficulty compared to other school subjects (Pavelková and Škloudová, 2004). Foukalová (2009) conducted a questionnaire survey with 4th, 5th, 8th and 9th-grade learners. The result of her research showed that most learners have positive attitudes towards English, English language learning and their English teacher. When asked about their personal motivation for learning English, they stated being able to communicate worldwide and having an advantage in their future profession options. They ranked games as their most favourite activities during English lessons and grammar exercises as their least favourite ones.

The results of most of the studies on learners' attitudes at different education levels indicate that learners' target is to master English like a native speaker and that they would like their teacher to either be or speak like a native speaker (劉怡昕 et al., 2009; Almusharrar, 2022; Brabcová et al., 2018). None of the studies mentioned above seeks to explore the relationship between learners' success in English language learning and their attitude towards it. However, Zeinivand et al. (2015) conducted research with 70 university students from Iran and sought to explore the relationship between their attitudes towards English and speaking proficiency in it. The research findings suggest that there exists a strong correlation between these two factors. According to Zeinivand et al. (2015), the results of this research correspond to Gardner and Lambert's (1972) findings that learners with positive attitudes towards English tend to reach high results in English speaking proficiency.

The English language has constantly been evolving in its worldwide role and status for decades. Its changing role is affecting not only its native speakers but also its worldwide users. It is no longer a language predominantly used by its native speakers. Today, English is most frequently used for broader communication among non-native speakers of English who come from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. In many countries, the English language is developing new status and roles or extending the ones it already had. Today English is the predominant language of tourism and international commerce and trade. In several countries, it is also becoming the language of education as a medium of instruction. Some scholars argue that such development of English is not, however, reflected in the way how English as a foreign language is being taught. They suggest that the role of English as an international language should be reflected in the way how EFL is being taught and assessed. They are mainly arguing about the purposeless perseverance of the native speaker standard as a goal of EFL education. They also claim that learners of EFL should be in various ways prepared for communicating in English with its non-native speakers. The changing role and status of English are also reflected in the whole process of its acquisition as a foreign language. Such changes are reflected primarily in learners' attitudes towards English and learning English. Different learners possess different attitudes. The nature of learners' attitudes is then affected not only by the learners

themselves (their beliefs, thoughts, feelings, motivation) but also by the environment where they learn English and by the attitudes of their parents, peers and teacher. Several researchers worldwide sought to explore the role of learners' attitudes in the English language acquisition process. Most of such studies indicate that learners have overall positive attitudes towards English and learning English and that their attitudes are predominantly affected by their motivation to learn English.

The following chapters focus on the research that was realized for the purposes of the thesis.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As shown in the theoretical part, learners' attitudes play an essential part in the English as a foreign language acquisition process. The questions to be researched are the following:

- What are the learners' attitudes towards English as a foreign language?
- What are the learners' attitudes towards learning English?
- What are the possible factors that affect learners' attitudes towards English and learning English?

This chapter describes the research methodology used to examine learners' attitudes towards English and learning English. First, there is explained the purpose of the research. Then there are described the research participants and the instrument used for data collection. Subsequently, there is included a description of the data collection and analysis process.

Purpose of the Research

The main focus of the research was on issues that were discussed in the theoretical part of the thesis. The research was aimed at learners who attend 9th grade of a lower secondary school in Pilsen. These learners are a specific group of learners because they have almost finished their first level of education and soon are about to begin upper secondary education. The aim of the research was to explore such learners' attitudes towards the English language and towards learning English. It sought to explore how the learners feel and think about English and what their overall perception of it is. Another aim was to explore the factors that might possibly influence these learners' attitudes.

Participants

The participants chosen for this research were pupils of the 22nd elementary school in Pilsen. For the purpose of the research, it was required for the pupils to attend 9th grade at the time of the interviews. There were chosen nine pupils who had a similar teacher, and all of whom were in the 9th grade of their studies – the last grade of elementary school. At the time of the interviews, all nine pupils had already applied to secondary schools and had already done the entrance exams. However, only three of them knew for sure that they had been accepted, and six of them were still waiting for their results. Three of the pupils

wished to study electrical engineering, two commerce, and the four remaining pupils wished to study pedagogy, waitressing, public law and public safety and law. Six of the learners were male, and three were female. Four of them were 15 years old, and five of them were 14 years old. All of the pupils had three lessons of English per week, and they all started to learn English at school in the first grade. None of the pupils was currently attending any English language courses or taking tutoring lessons.

Research Instrument

The research was done through a structured interview. This research instrument was chosen because the topic demanded a wide range of questions focusing on learners' beliefs, ideas and thoughts in detail. In some cases, it was also necessary to include additional unprepared questions in order to better understand or further explore students' ideas.

The interview was realized in Czech. Realizing this interview in English would not be possible because of the learners' insufficient level of English. Using the Czech language made the learners feel more comfortable, and it allowed them to fully express their ideas and understand the questions they were given.

There were five main parts to the interview. The first part was called Learner, and it consisted of questions regarding the learners themselves and their background information, e.g. what school they would like to study after 9th grade, if they like languages and if they travel abroad. The second part also consisted of questions, and its focus was on learners' attitudes towards the English language in general. The following three parts consisted not only of questions but also statements. The learners were supposed to express their level of agreement with the statements by choosing one grade from a scale that was introduced to them: 1 – I absolutely agree, 2 – I rather agree, 3 – neutral, 4 – I rather disagree, 5 – I absolutely disagree. The third part focused on two of the factors that possibly affect learners' attitudes towards English and learning English. The aim of the fourth part was to explore learners' attitudes towards learning English in general. The last fifth part focused on learners' attitudes towards learning English at school. The questions and statements included in the interview were adopted from or inspired by the research instruments of Gardner (2004), Foukalová (2009), Asmali (2017) and Sougari and Hovhannisyan (2013). The full version of the interview is embedded in the Appendix.

Procedure

Data collecting procedure

The research was realized at the 22nd elementary school in Pilsen in April 2022. The interviews were conducted in the pupils' teacher's room. There was always present only one pupil and the interviewer during the interview. It was essential to exclude the teacher and remaining pupils since there was an assumption that the pupils' answers might not be honest and genuine in their presence. The teachers' room was also chosen because the interviews required a quiet and calm space where the pupils' attention would focus only on the interview and where the learners would not be distracted. All of the interviews took place during the pupils' English lessons.

At first, all of the pupils were asked if they would agree to be interviewed. Then they were introduced to the topic and focus of the research. The pupils were assured that the interview would be realized in Czech and that all of their answers would be collected anonymously. It was made clear to the pupils that their names would not appear anywhere in the thesis and that all of their answers would be used exclusively for the purpose of the research and would not be revealed to their teacher or classmates. The pupils were told that there were no right or wrong answers and that it was vital for them to answer spontaneously and honestly.

Before each interview took place, the structure of the interview was explained to the pupil. The sections of the interview were introduced to the pupils, and they were also informed that there were not only questions but also statements which required them to express their degree of agreement. All of the questions and statements were read to the pupils. If there was any uncertainty in the pupil's understanding of the question or statement, it was explained to them. When the pupils' answer was too general or incomprehensible, it was required to ask additional questions in order to understand the pupil's idea fully.

Data analysis process

First of all, the results from each interview were revised individually. It was noted down if there was an interesting connection between the individual pupil's answers. Then results of all of the pupils were reviewed, and if there were occurring repeating the same or similar answers of the pupils, it was noted down. It was also noted down if there were appearing

completely different answers. Regarding the statements which required learners to express their degree of agreement, all grades from the scales were noted down. It was noted down if there were appearing the same, similar or completely different answers.

The following section of the thesis presents the results of the research supplemented with discussion and additional commentaries.

IV. RESULTS AND COMMENTARIES

This chapter presents the results of the study. They are presented mainly through narration since the character of the interview and the students' answers required written form. As stated in the previous sections, the interview was divided into five parts. The results of each part are presented individually, accompanied by commentaries.

Learner

The main purpose of this part of the interview was to acquire general information about the learners. There were also questions regarding learners' relationship to travelling and languages in general. In the first question, learners were supposed to express their degree of agreement with a statement whether they enjoy learning foreign languages. Most of the learners expressed agreement with this statement. Five of the learners stated that they absolutely agree, two rather agree, and two were neutral. Then the learners were asked to say what foreign languages they speak. First of all, all of the learners stated English. Then six of the learners added that they also speak German, and one of these six stated that he also speaks Italian. In the next question, learners were supposed to say whether there are any foreign languages which they would like to learn. Four of the learners did not state any language. Two learners stated Russian. One learner stated French, one Italian and one Greek. Then there was a set of questions concerning learners' relationship with travelling. In the first question, learners were asked about the frequency of their travels abroad with their family. Three learners stated that they travel abroad once a year during holidays. Two learners stated that they travel abroad with their family several times a year, two learners said they travel abroad rarely, and two said they have never been abroad. There were two learners who both stated that they travel very often because both of their fathers are businessmen and make business trips to foreign countries. Then the learners were asked whether they travel to any particular country on a regular basis. Four learners' answers were Egypt, Germany, Slovakia and the Balkans. One respondent said that on a regular basis, he and his parents travel to France and Belgium.

Commentaries

The aim of this part of the interview was mainly to acquire background information about the learners. Thus, I did not really expect to be surprised by any of the learners' answers.

Nevertheless, many of the learners' answers surprised me. In the first question, I expected different answers from the individual learners. I assumed that there would be some learners who enjoy learning foreign languages and then at least one or two who do not enjoy it. However, the learners' answers did not correspond with my expectation. I was surprised that all of the learners expressed either positive or moderate attitudes towards learning foreign languages. Concerning the questions about travelling, I expected that all of the learners had already visited some foreign countries. What surprised me was that there were two learners who stated that they had never been abroad.

Learners' Perception of English

This part of the interview was aimed at learners' perceptions of the English language. In the first question, learners were asked to say where they think English is spoken. Two of the learners' answer was everywhere, adding that it is a language used all over the world. One learner answered that it is spoken in Canada and England. Another learner answered Australia, Canada, England and America. One learner then said that it is spoken all over the world and added that it is spoken in countries such as Australia, Canada, Great Britain and America. Another learner also stated that it is spoken all over the world, but then added countries such as Australia and Great Britain. One pupil then answered that English is spoken everywhere where you go to work and on the street when you meet a foreigner. One learner's answer was that English is spoken by people who learn it or were born with it and that it is spoken everywhere.

The next question focused on what speaking English well meant to the students. Seven of the learners' answers were very similar. There were answers such as he can express himself, he can make himself understood, and he is able to communicate. One learner said that speaking English well means speaking fluently in a standard language. One of the learners stated that to speak English well means that a person is able to communicate with "those people". When asked what people she had in mind, she answered that she meant people who live abroad where English is spoken.

The following question asked the students where they personally come into contact with the English language. The most common answers to this question were at school, abroad when travelling, and on the street when a foreigner approached me. All of these answers

were mentioned four times. Three learners then also stated that they come into contact with the English language in games. Two times the learners then repeated movies, TV series, the internet and everywhere. Then there were answers which were stated by one learner only. Those were books, songs, online chatting with a foreigner, social media and public signs.

The next question followed the previous one. The students were asked whether they had ever used English outside of school and where. The most common answers were abroad when travelling (four times) and on the street when approached by a foreigner (three times). Then there were answers which were mentioned twice by the learners. Those were: online chats with a foreigner and games. Three of the learners stated that they had never used English outside of school.

The next question sought to explore how the learners would react if someone approached them speaking English. When asked how they thought they would react, all of the learners said that they would ask how they could help and that they would try to make themselves understood. Three of the learners stated that they would be caught by surprise. One of the learners mentioned that he would feel nervous about whether the foreigner would be able to understand them.

Commentaries

The results in this part of the interview indicate that the learners have overall positive attitudes towards the English language. In the first question, I expected most of the learners to state two countries - the USA and Great Britain. I had such an assumption since, as had been stated in the theoretical part of the thesis, most of today's EFL education still prefers the British and American standards. What surprised me was that four of the learners did not think about English in connection with these two countries exclusively. One of the learners even thought about English in relation only to the Czech Republic. The form of the question was intentionally not asking about countries or nationalities since I wanted to acquire unprompted answers from the learners.

In the following question, I expected most of the learners to say that speaking English well means speaking without mistakes, speaking like a native speaker or speaking fluently. However, the answers did not confirm my assumption. Most of the learners' answers

shared a similar meaning that speaking English well means being able to make oneself understood.

I was surprised by the answers to the next question where the learners were supposed to say where they personally come into contact with the English language. I assumed that most of the common answers would be school, travelling, movies and games. This assumption of mine was partially confirmed. However, there was another common answer that I did not expect to hear. Three of the learners said that they come into contact with English on the street when a foreigner approaches them. I expected their answers to be more connected to their personal life and their free time.

The learners' answers to the following two questions were not anyhow surprising for me taking into consideration the learners' answers to the previous questions. Most often, the learners stated that they have already used the English language when travelling or when speaking to a foreigner in Pilsen. All of the learners then stated that if they were approached by a foreigner, they would be willing to help him. I was surprised and glad to hear that. One learner then added that she would like to be approached by somebody speaking English so that she could experience spontaneous and on spot conversation. I expected more of the learners to say that they would feel nervous or shy. Nevertheless, there was only one learner who stated that she would feel anxious in such a situation because of her lack of confidence in speaking English.

Factors Affecting Learners' Attitudes towards English and Learning English

This part of the interview sought to explore to what extent learners' attitudes towards English and learning English are affected by their motivation and their parents' attitudes. In the beginning, there were two statements to which the learners were supposed to express their degree of agreement. The first statement asked them whether they think it is important to know English. All of the learners expressed some degree of agreement with this statement. Six of the learners stated that they absolutely agreed, and three learners stated that they rather agree. The second statement asked whether, for them personally, it is important to know English. With this statement, five learners absolutely agreed, and four learners rather agreed.

Following these two statements a question about the reason learners learn English was

posed. In this question, learners were supposed to define their reasons for learning English. The most frequent answer was that they learn English because it is a subject at school (four times). Two of the learners said that they learn English because they enjoy it. Then there were answers mentioned by individuals. Those were: I want to be able to communicate in English, it is easy for me, I would like to travel to countries where English is spoken, and it is an international language. One learner said that he learns English because it may come in handy to him in the future. Another learner said that he learns English because he will have better chances when applying for a job in the future if he knows English well.

In the next question, learners were asked what they think they need to know the English language for. There was one very frequent answer to this question (five times), and it was that they needed to know English to be able to communicate abroad when travelling. Three of the learners then said that they need to know English well to be able to make themselves understood when speaking to foreigners. Two of the learners said that they need English for searching information online. One of these two learners also added that when interested in some topic, he is able to find more information online about it in English than in Czech. One of the learners then mentioned that he needed to know English because people may judge him if he was not able to speak English.

The next question, in a way, reflected the previous question. The learners were supposed to say what they “would” do if they knew English well. To this question, the answers were very diverse. One of the learners answered that if he knew English well, he would start travelling, reading books in English and overall making use of it. Another learner mentioned that if he knew English well, he would not be afraid to speak in English and would no longer be scared to travel abroad. Another participant also mentioned that he would no longer be afraid to speak in English and that if he knew English well, he would have a good feeling about himself and that it would bring him joy. Then there was a learner who said that knowing English well would come in handy to him and that it would help him when communicating abroad. One learner then said that if he knew English well, he would have an advantage over those people who would not speak English well. The four remaining learners mentioned being able to understand people, being able to communicate abroad and speaking English well.

Then there were five statements with which the learners were supposed to express their degree of agreement. All of these statements focused on learners' future with the English language. The first statement was whether knowledge of English will be useful for them in the future. Seven of the respondents stated that they absolutely agree, and two stated they that rather agree. The next statement was whether, for their future studies, it is important to know English. To this statement, the degree of agreement was a bit lower. Six respondents stated that they rather agreed, two of them absolutely agreed, and one of them rather disagreed. The next statement was similar to the previous one. However, this time it was about the importance of English for the learners' future profession. The statement was whether for their future profession, it is important to know English. With this statement, four of the learners absolutely agreed, four rather agreed, and one rather disagreed. Following were two statements which sought to explore learners' attitudes towards studying or living abroad. The first of these two statements was whether in the future, they would like to study abroad. With this statement, five of the learners rather agreed, two rather disagreed, one absolutely disagreed, and one expressed neither agreement nor disagreement. The second of these statements was whether, in the future, they would like to live abroad. Here the answers were noticeably different from the previous statement. Four of the learners stated that they absolutely disagreed. Three learners said that they neither agreed nor disagreed. One learner stated that he absolutely agreed, and one learner said that he absolutely disagreed.

Then there was one question, and two statements, all of which focused on the role parents have in learners' attitudes towards English and learning English. In the first question, learners were asked whether their parents speak English. Three of the learners stated that both of their parents could speak English at some level. Three of the learners said that one of their parents could speak English and three of the learners said that none of their parents could speak English. Following was a statement about whether their parents want them to speak English well. To this statement, all of the learners expressed some degree of agreement. Six learners stated that they absolutely agree, and three of the learners said that they rather agree. Next was a statement about whether, according to their parents, it is important to know English. Seven of the learners said that they absolutely agree, one rather agree, and one neither agrees nor disagrees.

Commentaries

In this part of the interview, I hoped to learn more about the learners' motivation towards English. I also sought to explore to what extent the learners' attitudes towards English and learning English might be or are influenced by their parents.

In the first two statements, the aim was to explore whether the learners think that knowledge of English is somehow important and needed. I was surprised to learn that all of the learners more or less agreed that generally, it is important to know English. When they were then asked if it was important for them personally, the answers were again more or less positive. What surprised me in this part was that when the learners were asked about the importance of English for them personally, most of them mentioned English as being important to them in relation to their future. They did not think about English in terms of presence and how it surrounds them in the Czech Republic.

The aim of the next question was to learn about the learners' reasons for learning English. I expected the learners to state reasons connected to their free time and their personal life. However, the most often answer was that they learn English because it is compulsory at school. I was then surprised by two of the learners' answers. Those learners stated that they learn English because they think it will be of advantage for them in the future.

In the following question, learners were supposed to say what they think they need English for. Here vast majority of the learners' answers circled about the meaning of being able to communicate abroad and with foreigners. There were only three learners who also added other reasons. The results of this question and their motivation to learn English correspond to the main role of English that has been defined in the theoretical part – being a language used for international communication.

The focus of the next question was similar to the previous one. Nevertheless, the learners' answers to this question were different. When asked what they would do or feel if they knew English well, most of the learners' answers indicated that knowing English well would help them or make them feel better in some way. From the answers, it is possible to draw one conclusion - for many learners, English represents a tool that opens certain doors for them.

The following five statements discussed learners' opinions on the importance of English in

their future. I expected big differences between the individual learners since each of them claimed to have different plans for their future. Nevertheless, all of them said that they think knowledge of English will be useful for them in the future. When asked if it would be important for their future studies or profession, their answers differed. I was surprised by one learner's answer who stated that he is going to study electrical engineering. I expected that he would not find English important for his future profession. Nevertheless, he stated that he thinks he will need English when going through manuals.

At the end of this part, the aim was to explore the degree to which parents' attitudes towards English may affect the learners' own attitudes. From the results, it was evident that all of the learners' parents wanted them to be able to speak English and that the vast majority of them considered the knowledge of English to be important. There were two learners who stated that their parents were not able to speak English. These learners also said that their parents want them to speak English so that they would speak for them when travelling.

The findings in this part of the interview suggest that learners are both externally and internally motivated. Nevertheless, it seems that with most of the learners, there is prevailing internal motivation. The results correspond with what has been stated in the theoretical part. None of the learners' motivation for learning English is integrative. The learners do not wish to learn English to be able to integrate into its culture. All of the learners' motivation is instrumental. They all wish to learn English for practical reasons.

Learners' Attitudes towards Learning English

This section aimed to explore learners' attitudes towards learning English in general. In the first question, learners were asked how long they had been learning English. All of the respondents said that they began to learn English at school in the first grade. Two of the students recalled some kind of English learning already at kindergarten. However, they were not certain about it, and they stated that they only remember learning the names of colours in English.

Following was a question which asked the learners to rate their knowledge of English. Students were supposed to self-evaluate their English knowledge using marks like they are used at school (1 – excellent, 2 – commendable, 3 – good, 4 – sufficient, 5 – insufficient).

The vast majority of the learners had trouble evaluating themselves. Most often, the learners evaluated their knowledge as commendable (five times), two learners evaluated their English as good, one of the learners as sufficient and one as excellent.

In the next question, learners were asked to explain what it would look like and what it would mean if they were satisfied with their level of English. One of the learners said that he is satisfied with his current level. Three of the learners mentioned that being satisfied would mean for them to be able to understand someone speaking English and their own speaking to be intelligible. One learner answered that if he was satisfied with his English, he would be able to communicate spontaneously and would be able to create a sentence in English on the spot. According to two learners, being satisfied with their English would mean being able to communicate fluently. One learner stated that he would be satisfied if he was able to speak standard English. Then there was one learner who said that being satisfied with his English would mean being able to understand a native Englishman.

In the following question, learners were supposed to say whether and how they learn English in their free time. Learners had trouble answering this question. Only two of the nine learners stated that they learned English intentionally. One mentioned learning English with his brother at home, and one mentioned using the app *Duolingo* on his phone. None of the remaining seven learners claimed to learn English intentionally. However, when added that they can mention both intentional or unintentional learning of English, the learners answered that they think they learn English through watching movies or TV series in English, reading books in English, following English speaking people on social media, watching videos of English-speaking YouTubers, playing games in English, online chatting with foreigners, online searching for information in English and listening to songs in English.

In the next question, learners were asked whether learning English was difficult for them. Four of the learners stated that learning English is easy for them. Four said that it is sometimes difficult and sometimes easy and only one learner stated that learning English is difficult for him. In the following question, learners were asked to say at least two matters that are easy for them when learning English. Four of the learners stated that speaking is easy for them. Four considered learning vocabulary easy. One learner said listening comprehension was easy, and another learner said irregular verbs were. Overall, it was

very complicated for the students to come up with an answer to this question since they stated that there is not one particular aspect of English that would always be completely easy for them. They said that there is some grammar that they find difficult to understand, and then there is some grammar that they find easy. In the following question, the learners were supposed to state two aspects of English that are difficult for them. Five of the learners stated that grammar (or some grammar) is difficult for them when learning English. Three of the learners stated speaking English to be difficult for them. One learner said he finds learning vocabulary to be difficult for him. Another learner mentioned learning to speak the standard language, and one learner mentioned listening comprehension.

Commentaries

During this part of the interview, there were many things that surprised me about the learners' answers. The first thing that surprised me probably the most was that the vast majority of the learners had trouble evaluating their own knowledge of English. Many of the learners then gave themselves bad marks. It is hard to tell whether the learners were underestimating themselves because they think their level of English is really not that good or if they did not want to look over-confident. The first one seems to be true because, in the following question, seven of the nine learners stated that they were not satisfied with their knowledge of English. When I asked them what it would look like if they were satisfied with their level of English, only two of the learners said that they were already satisfied. Concerning the results from the previous parts of the interview, I expected the learners to say that being satisfied with their English would equal being intelligible. However, there were only three learners who stated that. I was surprised by the learners' answers, such as speaking fluently, speaking standard English and being able to understand a native Englishman.

What also surprised me during this part of the interview was that even though the learners seemed to have positive attitudes towards English and learning English, only two of them stated that they learn English intentionally outside of school. I assumed that the learners would learn English outside of school since the preceding parts of the interview implied the learners' motivation for learning English to be high.

The aim of the last questions in this part of the interview was to find out whether the learners consider English language learning to be difficult for them. I expected the vast majority of the learners to state that sometimes it is difficult and sometimes not. What surprised me was that four of the learners stated that learning English was easy for them. Those learners were male, and their marks from English were not among the best ones.

From the interviews, I realized that these learners like English and enjoy learning English. Their internal motivation to learn English seemed to be high. Nevertheless, the external pressure on them to learn English causes their attitudes towards learning English at school to decline, and it sometimes overshadows their internal motivation. This finding, to some extent, corresponds to what has been stated in the theoretical part of the thesis, specifically that extrinsic motivation and external pressure for language learning may create learners' negative attitudes towards the language learning process (Ahmed, 2015).

When the learners were supposed to discuss the aspects of English that are difficult and easy for them, I expected that all of them would find grammar the one most difficult and listening comprehension as the second one. However, the results did not correspond with my assumptions since there were only five learners who stated grammar and only one who stated listening comprehension. I was then surprised by one of the learner's answers that the most difficult for him is to speak the standard language. When I asked him to specify it, he said that he plays games a lot and is used to the non-standard language which appears in them. He said that sometimes he has trouble not using the same language when speaking in the classroom.

Learners' Attitudes towards Learning English at School

This part of the interview sought to explore learners' attitudes towards learning English as a school subject at school. First, learners were asked about the mark they were given in the middle of the school year. Five of the learners stated getting mark 1 (excellent), two learners mark 2 (commendable), and two learners mark 3 (good). Then the learners were asked what mark they thought they would be given at the end of the school year. To this question, four learners answered that they think they will be given mark 1, three answered mark 2, and two answered mark 3. There was only one learner who stated that he thinks there will be a difference in his mark between the middle and the end of the school year. According to him, his mark 1 will worsen to 2. When asked why he said that it was

because, in the second part of the school year, he focused on his entrance exams and didn't study for exams at school.

In the next question, learners were supposed to imagine dividing school subjects into three groups: subjects that I like, subjects that I don't mind, and subjects that I don't like. Then they were asked in what group they would put the English language as a school subject. All of the learners stated that English is a subject which they like. Most of them also added that they like English in general.

Following this question were two statements to which the learners were supposed to express their degree of agreement. The first statement was whether they enjoy English lessons at school. Four of the learners stated that they absolutely agree, four rather agree and one neither agrees nor disagrees. Then there was a statement that was similar to the previous one. However, the degree of agreement with this statement differed. It was whether they look forward to English lessons at school. Five of the learners stated that they rather agree, three absolutely agree, and one neither agrees nor disagrees.

Following were two questions which sought to explore what learners like or do not like to do in their English lessons at school. It was not specified whether they should answer activity or curriculum. In the first question, learners were asked to say at least two things they like or enjoy doing in the English lessons at school. The most frequent answer, which was mentioned six times, was conversation. Two of the learners' answer was exercises in a workbook. One learner said that he enjoyed reading comprehensions, one movies and one projects. Two of the learners said that they didn't know, and one learner said that he enjoyed everything.

The next question was contrary to the previous one. Here the learners were supposed to say at least two things they did not like or enjoy doing in their English lessons. Three of the learners stated that there was nothing, in particular, that would come to their minds. Two learners stated doing exercises in a workbook. One learner said that he did not enjoy learning grammar. Then there were answers by one learner. Those were revision, writing down new vocabulary and writing tests on vocabulary.

The next question aimed to explore learners' overall feelings during English lessons. Five of the learners stated that during English lessons, they feel relaxed. Two of the learners

said that in English lessons, they feel good, and one of them added that he feels calm. Two learners said that their feelings during English lessons are neutral, neither good nor bad.

In the following question, learners were supposed to express what feelings they have when they speak out loud in front of their classmates and teacher during an English lesson. Four of the learners said that they feel neither good nor bad. Two learners stated that they feel good when they have to speak out loud in English lessons. Then there were three learners who claimed to feel negative feelings when speaking out loud in English at school. One of them stated that he felt shy, one was nervous, and one said that he felt frightened.

The final question of this part asked the learners to say whether there is anything they would change about their English lessons at school and what it is. Five of the learners would not change anything. Three learners would welcome more speaking practice during the English lessons. Two of them also mentioned less work with a workbook. One learner said that he would welcome it if speaking out loud was not obligatory during the English lessons.

Commentaries

The results of some of the questions in this part of the interview surprised me. In the first question, where the learners were supposed to say how they feel about English as a subject at school, all of the learners stated that it is one of the school subjects that they like. I did not expect that. Findings of this part of the interview then indicate that the learners have positive to moderate attitudes to the English lessons that they take at school. Even those learners whose interest in school is overall low. I assume that the learners' attitudes towards the English lessons are positively affected by their English teacher. I personally know their teacher and her teaching style. I also know that she has a positive attitude towards the learners. This is also reflected in the final question of this part of the interview, where the learners were supposed to say how they felt in their English lessons. I thought that maybe some of the learners would say bored or stressed. Nevertheless, I was surprised when the vast majority, seven of the nine learners, stated that they felt somehow calm or relaxed during the English lessons. I asked the learners why they felt like that. One of the learners' answers was that English is not one of those subjects which are complicated to understand, such as chemistry. The other learners stated that it is due to the overall positive atmosphere of these lessons. Surprising for me were also the learners' answers to the

question of how they feel when they have to speak out loud in the English lessons. I expected most of the learners to feel nervous or shy, especially since most of the learners stated that they were not satisfied with their English. Nevertheless, there were only three learners who stated that they felt some kind of discomfort. When I asked the learners if they would change anything about their English lessons, I did not expect any answer since, from the previous questions, it seemed that the learners were generally satisfied with everything. Nevertheless, I was surprised to hear that some of the learners would welcome more speaking practice and some of the learners stated that they would welcome less work with workbooks.

The questions to be answered by the results of the research were these: What are the learners' attitudes towards English as a foreign language?; What are the learners' attitudes towards learning English?; What are the possible factors that affect learners' attitudes towards English and learning English?

The overall results indicate that the learners have positive or rather positive attitudes towards English as a foreign language. All of the learners seemed to realize the role and status English has in today's world. The results also indicated that all of the learners somehow found English to be important in their own lives.

Concerning learners' attitudes towards learning English, the results showed that learners tend to have generally positive attitudes towards learning English. The results of the interviews then indicate that learners tend to feel no need to learn English on their own.

The findings of the research uncovered that there are many factors that positively or negatively influence learners' attitudes towards English and learning English. Learners' attitudes towards English are positively affected by the fact that for many of them, knowledge of English represents some kind of advantage. They assume it to be important for them, especially important in their future. The results showed that the vast majority of the learners see knowledge of English as something they need to be able to travel. The learners' attitudes towards English and learning it then also seem to be, to some extent, affected by their parents' attitudes. The results then indicate that learners' attitudes towards learning English sometimes tend to be negatively affected by the compulsory nature of

English as a school subject. Nevertheless, it was obvious from the results that English teacher has a great power to positively influence learners' attitudes towards learning English. From the results, it was obvious that motivation plays a big role in affecting learners' attitudes towards learning English.

In this chapter, the results of the research that was realized for the purpose of this thesis were presented, along with commentaries on the results. In the end, the major findings of the research were summarized in relation to the research questions. The aim of the following chapter is to provide possible pedagogical implications that arise from the issues discussed in the theoretical part of the thesis and from the research findings.

V. IMPLICATIONS

This chapter builds on the previous one. The aim of the first part of this chapter is to provide pedagogical implications that emerge from the results of the research. Then it discusses possible limitations of the research and suggestions for further research.

Implications for Teaching

The findings of the interviews showed a lot of interesting facts regarding 9th-grade learners. The main goal of the interviews was to explore learners' attitudes towards English and learning English and what the factors that affect them in a positive or a negative way are.

One of the most important things regarding these learners' attitudes is that they realize the importance of English. Nevertheless, most learners realize its importance only as a contact language. From the interviews, it is obvious that learners do not think about English in terms of its presence in their everyday life. Therefore, the learners' motivation to learn English is mostly connected to travelling abroad and communicating with foreigners. The implication here is to show learners how English surrounds them in their everyday life. Teachers could also show learners how English may be helpful for them in other ways than only as a contact language. Teachers should seek to raise learners' internal motivation for learning English because, as it was apparent in the interviews, external motivation has very little value in improving learners' attitudes towards learning English.

The findings then suggest that learners lack enough speaking practice in their English lessons. When asked what the learners would change about their English lessons, the vast majority of the learners stated that they would welcome more speaking practice. Teachers should include meaningful speaking activities in which learners could experience spontaneous and genuine communication. The more learners practice unguided speaking, the more they will feel comfortable and relaxed when speaking English outside of school. Learners should then be made aware that the native speaker standard is not necessarily the one they have to achieve. Teachers could also provide learners with effective strategies when communicating with a foreigner so that learners would be mentally prepared for that. The findings of the research indicate that learners' attitudes towards learning English are to a high degree influenced by the atmosphere learners experience in the lessons. It is

important for the teachers to try to create a positive atmosphere where all learners would feel relaxed, positively motivated and pleased.

The results of the interviews indicated that most learners do not learn English intentionally in their free time. This may be caused by either the fact that learners do not know how to learn English on their own or by the fact that they feel no need to do so. In the first case, it may help if teachers showed learners ways to learn English by themselves. In the second case, teachers could try to raise learners' internal motivation.

Another interesting finding of the interviews was that most of the learners are not able to self-evaluate their own knowledge of English. Self-evaluation is a complicated process. However, it is important for learners to master it. Teachers should show learners how to self-evaluate and what its importance and advantages are.

Limitation of the Research

It is necessary to say that the results of the interviews cannot be over-generalized. Nevertheless, it is possible to find useful information in them. The first problem arises from the fact that all of the pupils chosen for interviews had the same teacher. There would probably appear slightly different results if the interviews were done with learners who have a different teacher.

Another issue was the number of pupils chosen for the research. There were only nine learners, all of which were from one class and one English group. Therefore, the findings of the research cannot be generalized.

There was a prevailing number of male pupils over female pupils. As was stated in the theoretical part, there can be found differences between these two groups of learners' attitudes, so it would be convenient to include the same number of female and male pupils.

The results of the interviews might have also been affected by the fact that at the time of the interviews, learners had already done their entrance exams to upper-secondary schools, and some of them had already been accepted. Therefore, their overall motivation and attitudes towards learning at school had declined. Most of the learners seemed to be passive and uninterested in anything, including the interviews.

In the process of doing the research, there were also discovered some weaknesses and

problems concerning the questions in the interviews. Learners' attitudes, as it has been stated in the theoretical part, are very complex and hard to realize through interviews only. To fully uncover the nature of learners' attitudes towards English and learning English, it would have been necessary to use more complex research instruments.

During the interviews, in many cases, it was necessary to add additional questions and explanations of questions to acquire just the information that was desired. It was then difficult to do so and, at the same time, make sure not to foist the learners. Very often, the learners had to be reminded that it is necessary for them to answer sincerely and that their answers were going to be analysed anonymously and were not going to be shown to their teacher or anyone else.

Suggestions for Further Research

I assume that for the purpose and size of this research, choosing the structured interview was the best option possible. If questionnaires were used, it would not be possible to really get to the learners and acquire detail and personal information from them. It could be useful to research learners' attitudes using a combination of structured interviews and observations. Such a combination of methods might help to gain even more true and relevant information about learners' attitudes. It also could be convenient to include an interview with the learners' teacher to learn more about his own teaching style and the methods he uses. The teacher could also provide objective information about the learners. Such data could be compared with the learners' answers. The learners' answers could then be discussed with the teacher, if the learners would agree.

It could be interesting to realize the same research with pupils from different grades of a lower-secondary. It could, for instance, be convenient to interview pupils from 6th grade and compare their results with 9th-grade pupils to see how learners' attitudes towards English and learning English differ across age groups. It could also be interesting to do the same research with pupils whose marks in English differ and then compare the attitudes of learners who have better marks with those who have worse marks. It could also be interesting to do the same research with 9th-grade learners from different schools. The same research could also be done with learners who are at a different level of education, upper-secondary or university.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

As described in the theoretical background section of this thesis, learners' attitudes play an important role in the second language acquisition process. The same applies to the attitudes of those learners who learn English as a foreign language. Such learners' attitudes are then closely related to their motivation towards learning English. Since the role and status of English are changing, learners' attitudes and their core are also changing. Learners' motivation towards learning English as a foreign language is also changing. The current predominant function of English is being used as an international language for communication between non-native speakers. Some scholars, however, argue that EFL education does not reflect this.

Different learners have different attitudes towards English and learning English. The attitudes are influenced by several factors, mainly by learners themselves, their parents, peers and teacher. For the purpose of this thesis, I have investigated the attitudes of a specific group of learners – 9th-grade elementary school learners - learners who have almost finished their first level of education and soon are about to begin upper secondary education. It was found out that learners' attitudes towards English are positive, in a way, that learners realize its importance as a contact language. The results, however, showed that most learners do not feel the presence of English in their everyday personal life. For many learners, English represents a tool which may be useful for them when travelling and when communicating with foreigners. Learners' attitudes towards learning English were found to be also generally positive. It was obvious that such learners' attitudes are, to a great extent, affected by learners' motivation to learn English in general. Very often, it was obvious that learners' motivation for learning English is mainly external due to the status of English as a school subject. Teacher's influence was then found to be one of the major ones in affecting learners' attitudes towards English and learning English.

Teachers could use the evidence and try to positively influence learners' attitudes. It is mainly the teachers who are able to affect learners' attitudes in a positive way. It is important for teachers to learn about learners' attitudes and motivation and then seek to improve them. Teachers could show learners how English surrounds them in their

everyday life and what the advantages and importance of knowing English are. Teachers should also seek to reflect on the current role and status of English in their way of teaching.

REFERENCES

- Abidin, M. J. Z., Pour-Mohammadi, M., & Alzwari, H. (2012). EFL students' attitudes towards learning English language: The case of Libyan secondary school students. *Asian social science*, 8(2), 119. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v8n2p119>
- Abu-Snoubar, T. K. (2017). An evaluation of EFL students' attitudes toward English language learning in terms of several variables. *International Journal of English Language Teaching*, 5(6), 18-34. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2010.12.258>
- Ahmed, S. (2015). Attitudes towards English Language Learning among EFL Learners at UMSKAL. *Journal of education and practice*, 6(18), 6-16. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1079681.pdf>
- Ali Ahmed, S et al. (2021) Students' Attitudes towards Learning English in the Kurdistan region of Iraq. *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences*, 6(3), 072-087. <https://dx.doi.org/10.22161/ijels.63.11>
- Almusharraf, A. (2022). EFL learners' confidence, attitudes, and practice towards learning pronunciation. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 32(1), 126-141. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijal.12408>
- Asmali, M. (2017). Young Learners' Attitudes and Motivation to Learn English. *Novitas-ROYAL (Research on Youth and Language)*, 11(1), 53-68. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1167207.pdf>
- Al-Tamimi, A., & Shuib, M. (2009). Motivation and attitudes towards learning English: A study of petroleum engineering undergraduates at Hadhramout University of Sciences and Technology. *GEMA: Online Journal of Language Studies*, 9(2), 29-

55. http://journalarticle.ukm.my/2306/1/Vol.9_issue2_%283%29.pdf

Brabcová, K., & Skarnitzl, R. (2018). Foreign or native-like? The attitudes of Czech EFL learners towards accents of English and their use as pronunciation models. *Studie z aplikované lingvistiky-Studies in Applied Linguistics*, 9(1), 38-50.

<https://fonetika.ff.cuni.cz/wp-content/uploads/sites/104/2018/10/BraSka18-accents.pdf>

Brown, H. D. (2007). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (Vol. 5). New York: Longman.

Crystal, D. (2003). *English as a global language*. Cambridge university press.

Delić, H. (2020). Attitude towards learning English as a foreign language. *Journal of Education and Humanities (JEH)*, 3(1), 67-80.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.14706/JEH2020316>

Dörnyei, Z., Csizér, K., & Németh, N. (2006). *Motivation, language attitudes and globalisation*. Multilingual Matters.

Ellis, R. (1999). *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*. Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

Elyildirim, Selma & Ashton-Hay, Sally (2006) Creating Positive Attitudes Towards English as a Foreign Language. *English Teaching Forum*, 44(4), 2-21.

<https://eprints.qut.edu.au/225192/1/12256.pdf>

Eshghinejad, S. (2016) EFL students' attitudes toward learning English language: The case study of Kashan. *Cogent Education*, 3(1), 1-13.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2018.1526515>

Fakeye, D. O. (2010). Students' personal variables as correlates of academic achievement in English as a second language in Nigeria. *Journal of social sciences*, 22(3), 205-

211. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09718923.2010.11892803>

- Foukalová T. (2009). Teachers' and pupils' attitudes in teaching English [Graduate thesis, University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice]. Theses.cz.
<https://theses.cz/id/vjyioj/>
- Gardner, R. C. (2004). Attitude/motivation test battery: International AMTB research project. Canada: The University of Western Ontario.
- Gardner, R. C., Lalonde, R. N., & Moorcroft, R. (1985). The role of attitudes and motivation in second language learning: Correlational and experimental considerations. *Language learning*, 35(2), 207-227. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1985.tb01025.x>
- Gardner, R. C., & Smythe, P. C. (1975). Second Language Acquisition: A Social Psychological Approach. *Research Bulletin*, 332, 1-335.
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED163754.pdf>
- Gardner, R. C. (1985). *Social psychology and second language learning. The role of attitudes and motivation*. London.
- Getie, A. S. (2020). Factors affecting the attitudes of students towards learning English as a foreign language. *Cogent Education*, 7(1).
<https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2020.1738184>
- Gömleksiz, M. N. (2010). An evaluation of students' attitudes toward English language learning in terms of several variables. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 9, 913-918. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2010.12.258>
- Graddol, D. (2006). *English next* (Vol. 62). London: British council.
- Jenkins, J. (2000). *The Phonology of English as an International Language: New Models, New Norms, New Goals*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Jenkins, J. (2003). *World Englishes: A resource book for students*. Psychology Press.
- Jenkins, J., & Leung, C. (2014). English as a lingua franca. *The companion to language assessment*, 4, 1607-1616. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118411360.wbcla047>
- Kachru, B. B. (2019). World Englishes and culture wars. *The handbook of world Englishes*, 447-471.
- Kaderka, P., & Prošek, M. (2014). English in the Czech Republic: Linguists' perspectives. *Sociolinguistica*, 28(1), 173-198. <https://doi.org/10.1515/soci-2014-0014>
- Khastgir, T. and Neogi, S. 2017. Attitude towards English Language Acquisition. *International Journal of Development Research*, 7, (07), 13634-13637. <http://dx.doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.17768.08964>
- Latchanna, G., & Dagnev, A. (2009). Attitude of teachers towards the use of active learning methods. *E-journal of All India Association for Educational Research*, 21(1), 53-60. <https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.541.5086&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- Lee McKay, S., & Brown, J.D. (2015). *Teaching and Assessing EIL in Local Contexts Around the World (1st ed.)*. Routledge.
- Littlewood, W. T. (1991). *Foreign and Second language learning*. Cambridge University Press.
- Lubis, T. (2015). Students' language attitude toward English. *Jurnal Bis-A: Jurnal Bisnis Administrasi*, 4(1), 17-21. <https://www.ejurnal.plm.ac.id/index.php/BIS-A/article/view/128/110>
- Matsuda, A. (2021). Teaching English as an International Language. In Quinn, J. & Kleckova, G., *Anglophone Literature in Second-Language Teacher Education* (pp. 24-35). Routledge.

- McCrum, R. (2011). *Globish: How English Became the World's Language*. W. W. Norton & Company.
- McKay, S. L. (2002). *Teaching English as an international language: Rethinking goals and perspectives*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Moon, J. (2004). *Children learning English: A guidebook for English language teachers*. London: Macmillan.
- Oroujlou, N., & Vahedi, M. (2011). Motivation, attitude, and language learning. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 29, 994-1000.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.11.333>
- Pavelková, I., & Škaloudová, A. (2004). Postoje žáků k předmětům jako projev motivovanosti. In Profese učitele a současná společnost. *Sborník příspěvků z XII. Konference ČAPV* (pp. 1-8). <https://capv.cz/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Pavelkova-Skaloudova.pdf>
- Pengwichai, C. (2021). THAI EFL STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING: A CASE STUDY OF WEEKEND NON-ENGLISH MAJOR STUDENTS AT PHRANAKHON RAJABHAT UNIVERSITY. *Academic Journal Phranakhon Rajabhat University*, 12(1), 88-103. <https://so01.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/AJPU/article/view/242454/167529>
- Richards, J. C. (2015). *Key Issues in Language Teaching (1st ed.)*. Cambridge University Press.
- Roos, R. (1990). Language attitudes in the second language situation. *Per Linguam*, 6(2), 25-30. <https://doi.org/10.5785/6-2-350>
- Schneider, E. W. (2010). *English around the world: An introduction*. Cambridge University Press.

- Smith, A. N. (1971). The Importance of Attitude in Foreign Language Learning. *The Modern Language Journal*, 55(2), 82–88. <https://doi.org/10.2307/321854>
- Sougari, A. M. & Hovhannisyan, I. (2013). *Delving into young learners' attitudes and motivation to learn English: comparing the Armenian and the Greek classroom*. Research Papers in Language Teaching and Learning. 4. 120-137. <https://rpltl.eap.gr/images/2013/04-01-120-Sougari-Hovhanisyan.pdf>
- Tahaine, Y., & Daana, H. (2013). Jordanian undergraduates' motivations and attitudes towards learning English in EFL context. *International review of social sciences and humanities*, 4(2), 159-180. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/319481211_Jordanian_Undergraduates'_Motivations_and_Attitudes_towards_Learning_English_in_EFL_Context
- Trudgill, P. (1999). Standard English: What it isn't. In T. Bex, & R. J. Watts (Eds.), *Standard English: The widening debate* (pp. 117-128). London: Routledge.
- Trudgill P. (2000). *Sociolinguistics: An introduction to language and society*. Penguin books.
- Trudgill, P. & Hannah, J. (2017). *International English: A Guide to Varieties of Standard English (6th ed.)*. Routledge.
- Zeinivand, T., Azizifar, A., & Gowhary, H. (2015). The relationship between attitude and speaking proficiency of Iranian EFL learners: The case of Darrehshehr city. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 199, 240-247. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.07.512>
- 劉怡昕, & Liou, Y. (2009). Who Wants EIL? Attitudes towards English as an International Language: A Comparative Study of College Teachers and Students in the Greater

Taipei Area. *College English: Issues and trends*, 3, 133-157.

<https://ah.nccu.edu.tw/bitstream/140.119/79946/1/1.pdf>

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Strukturovaný rozhovor

1. Learner

I. General information

- Věk:
- Pohlaví:
- Jaký obor bys chtěl studovat až dokončíš základní školu?

II. Languages and travelling

- Jak bys vyjádřil svoji míru souhlasu s následujícím výrokem? (1 – naprosto souhlasím, 2 - spíše souhlasím, 3 – neutrální, 4 – spíše nesouhlasím, 5 – naprosto nesouhlasím)

Učit se cizí jazyky mě baví

- Jakými cizími jazyky mluvíš?
- Jaké cizí jazyky bys chtěl naučit?
- Jak často jezdíte s rodinou do zahraničí?
 - Několikrát za rok
 - Jednou za rok
 - Výjimečně
 - Nikdy
- Cestujete do nějaké země pravidelně?

2. Learners' perception of English

- Kde se mluví anglicky?
- Co podle tebe znamená, když se řekne, že někdo umí dobře anglicky?
- Kde se ty osobně můžeš setkat s anglickým jazykem?
- Už jsi někdy použil anglický jazyk mimo školu? Kde?
- Představ si, že jdeš v Plzni po ulici a někdo tě osloví anglicky – jak myslíš, že bys reagoval? Co by ti běželo hlavou?

3. Factors affecting learners' attitudes towards English and learning English

- Jak bys vyjádřil svoji míru souhlasu s následujícími výroky? (1 – naprosto souhlasím, 2 - spíše souhlasím, 3 – neutrální, 4 – spíše nesouhlasím, 5 – naprosto nesouhlasím)
 - Myslím si, že umět anglicky je důležité.
 - Pro mě osobně je důležité umět anglicky.
- Proč se učíš Anglický jazyk? Jak bys dokončil následující větu: „Anglický jazyk se učím, protože...“?
- K čemu si myslíš, že potřebuješ umět anglicky?
- Jak bys dokončil následující větu: „Když budu umět dobře anglicky, tak...“?
- Jak bys vyjádřil svoji míru souhlasu s následujícími výroky? (1 – naprosto souhlasím, 2 - spíše souhlasím, 3 – neutrální, 4 – spíše nesouhlasím, 5 – naprosto nesouhlasím)
 - Znalost anglického jazyka mi bude v budoucnu užitečná.
 - Pro mé budoucí studium je důležité umět anglicky.
 - Pro mé budoucí povolání je důležité umět anglicky.
 - V budoucnu bych chtěl studovat v zahraničí.
 - V budoucnu bych chtěl žít v zahraničí.
- Tvoji rodiče umí anglicky?
- Jak bys vyjádřil svoji míru souhlasu s následujícími výroky? (1 – naprosto souhlasím, 2 - spíše souhlasím, 3 – neutrální, 4 – spíše nesouhlasím, 5 – naprosto nesouhlasím)
 - Moji rodiče chtějí, abych uměl dobře anglicky.
 - Podle mých rodičů je důležité umět anglicky.

4. Learners' attitudes towards learning English

- Jak dlouho se učíš anglický jazyk?
- Jak bys ty sám oznámkoval své znalosti anglického jazyka? (1 – výborně, 2 – chvalitebně, 3 – dobře, 4 – dostatečně, 5 – nedostatečně)
- Kdybys byl spokojený s tím, jak umíš anglicky, co by to znamenalo? Jak by to vypadalo?
- Navštěvuješ kurzy anglického jazyka mimo školu?

- Učíš se nějak anglický jazyk ve svém volném čase? Jak?
- Je pro tebe náročně učit se anglický jazyk?
- Uveď alespoň dvě věci, které jsou pro tebe lehké při učení se anglickému jazyku.
- Uveď alespoň dvě věci, které jsou pro tebe těžké při učení se anglickému jazyku.

5. Learners' attitudes towards learning English at school

- Jakou známku jsi měl z anglického jazyka v pololetí? Jakou známku si myslíš, že budeš na konci školního roku?
- Kdybys měl všechny předměty ve škole rozdělit do následujících tří skupin, do které skupiny bys zařadil anglický jazyk?
 - Předměty, které mám rád
 - Předměty, které mi nevadí
 - Předměty, které nemám rád
- Jak bys vyjádřil svoji míru souhlasu s následujícími výroky? (1 – naprosto souhlasím, 2 - spíše souhlasím, 3 – neutrální, 4 – spíše nesouhlasím, 5 – naprosto nesouhlasím)
 - Hodiny anglického jazyka ve škole mě baví.
 - Na hodiny anglického jazyka ve škole se těším.
- Jak bys dokončil následující větu: „V hodinách anglického jazyka ve škole se cítím...“?
- Co tě baví/máš rád v hodinách anglického jazyka? Uveď alespoň dvě věci.
- Co tě nebaví/nemáš rád v hodinách anglického jazyka? Uveď alespoň dvě věci
- Jak se cítíš, když máš v hodině anglického jazyka mluvit anglicky nahlas před spolužáky a učitelem?
- Kdybys mohl změnit cokoli v hodinách anglického jazyka, co by to bylo?

Appendix B – Structured Interview

1. Learner

I. General information

- Age:
- Gender:
- What field would you like to study after elementary school?

II. Languages and travelling

- How would you express your degree of agreement with the following statement? (1 – I absolutely agree, 2 – I rather agree, 3 – neutral, 4 – I rather disagree, 5 – I absolutely disagree)
 - I enjoy learning foreign languages.
- What foreign languages do you speak?
- What foreign languages would you like to learn?
- How often do you and your family travel abroad?
 - Several times a year
 - Once a year
 - Rarely
 - Never
- Do you travel to any country on a regular basis?

2. Learners' perception of English

- Where is English spoken?
- What, according to you, does it mean to speak English well?
- Where can you personally come into contact with the English language?
- Have you ever used English outside of school? Where?
- Imagine that you are walking down the street in Pilsen and someone addresses you in English – how do you think you would react? What would go through your mind?

3. Factors affecting learners' attitudes towards English and learning English

- How would you express your degree of agreement with the following statements?
(1 – I absolutely agree, 2 – I rather agree, 3 – neutral, 4 – I rather disagree, 5 – I absolutely disagree)
 - I think it is important to know English.
 - For me personally, it is important to know English.
- Why are you learning English? How would you finish the following sentence: “I learn English because...”?
- What do you think you need to know English for?
- How would you finish the following sentence: “If I knew English well, I would...”?
- How would you express your degree of agreement with the following statements?
(1 – I absolutely agree, 2 – I rather agree, 3 – neutral, 4 – I rather disagree, 5 – I absolutely disagree)
 - Knowledge of English will be useful for me in the future.
 - For my future studies it is important to know English.
 - For my future profession, it is important to know English.
 - In the future, I would like to study abroad.
 - In the future, I would like to live abroad.
- Can your parents speak English?
- How would you express your degree of agreement with the following statements?
(1 – I absolutely agree, 2 – I rather agree, 3 – neutral, 4 – I rather disagree, 5 – I absolutely disagree)
 - My parents want me to speak English well.
 - According to my parents, it is important to know English.

4. Learners' attitudes towards learning English

- For how long have you been learning English?
- How would you rate your knowledge of English? (1 – excellent, 2 – commendable, 3 – good, 4 – sufficient, 5 – insufficient)
- What level of English would you be satisfied with? What would it look like?
- Do you learn English somehow in your free time? How?

- Is learning English difficult for you?
- State at least two matters that are easy for you when learning English.
- State at least two matters that are difficult for you when learning English.

5. Learners' attitudes towards learning English at school

- What mark (from English) did you have in the middle of this school year? What mark do you think you will have at the end of the school year?
- If you were to divide all the school subjects into the following three groups, in what group would you put English?
 - Subjects that I like
 - Subjects that I don't mind
 - Subjects that I don't like
- How would you express your degree of agreement with the following statements? (1 – I absolutely agree, 2 – I rather agree, 3 – neutral, 4 – I rather disagree, 5 – I absolutely disagree)
 - I enjoy English lessons at school.
 - I look forward to English lessons at school.
- What do you enjoy/like to do in the English lessons? State at least two matters.
- What don't you enjoy/like to do in the English lessons? State at least two matters.
- How would you finish the following sentence: „In English lessons at school, I feel...“?
- How do you feel when you are supposed to speak out loud in front of your classmates and teacher in the English lessons?
- What would you change if you could change anything about the English lessons?

SHRNUTÍ

Diplomová práce je zaměřena na postoje žáků k Anglickému jazyku a učení se Anglickému jazyku. Teoretická část se nejprve věnuje současnému stavu Anglického jazyka ve světě ve spojitosti s výukou Anglického jazyka jako jazyka cizího. Dále se teoretická část zabývá postoji žáků a jejich vlivu v procesu učení se Anglickému jazyku jako cizímu jazyku. Výzkum byl realizován pomocí strukturovaného rozhovoru s žáky deváté třídy základní školy. Data byla nejprve zpracována a zhodnocena samostatně, následně byly srovnány odpovědi všech studentů. Výsledky jsou popsány a doplněny komentáři. Následně jsou všechny výsledky hromadně shrnuty a jsou popsány doporučení pro učitele vyplývající z výsledků výzkumu.