Západočeská univerzita v Plzni

Fakulta pedagogická
Katedra anglického jazyka

Diplomová práce
POSTOJE ŽÁKŮ K ANGLIČTINĚ A UČENÍ SE ANGLICKÉMU JAZYKU

Markéta Müllerová

Plzeň 2023

University of West Bohemia

Faculty of Education
Department of English

Thesis
EXPLORING CZECH LEARNERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS ENGLISH AND LEARNING ENGLISH

Markéta Müllerová

Plzeň 2023

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

V Plzni dne 29. června 2023   …………………………….
                                                                                    Jméno Příjmení

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ABSTRACT

Müllerová, Markéta. The University of West Bohemia. June, 2023. Exploring Czech learners' attitudes towards English and learning English. Supervisor: Mgr. Gabriela Klečková, Ph.D.

This thesis deals with the topic of Czech learners' attitudes towards English and learning English. Firstly, the thesis briefly summarises the history and development of the English language, and then it examines the role of English in the world. Then the thesis focuses on the attitudes towards learning English and factors that could affect the attitudes. The primary purpose of this thesis is to examine Czech learners' attitudes towards learning English and what factors are affecting them.

The research was realised with 6th and 8th graders of elementary school. The research results showed that students have an overall positive attitude towards English and learning English. They understand the current status of English and are aware of its importance in the world. The students, however, feel that there needs to be more communication in English lessons and to learn more things they can use outside of school. The thesis then proposes possible ways for the teachers to use the information from the research and influence learners' attitudes.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF GRAPHS

I.   INTRODUCTION

Knowledge of English is one of the most critical skills in today's world, as English has the role of a global language. However, the learning process is very complex, and several factors influence it. One of those factors is learners' attitudes. There are different types of attitudes, like attitude towards English as a language, attitude towards learning English, attitude towards the culture of English-speaking countries etc. Each of these attitudes has an effect on the learning process and influences why the students are learning English.

Attitudes play an important role in the second language learning process. However, it is very difficult to learn about learners' attitudes as attitudes are very complex. In this thesis, Czech learners' attitudes towards English and learning English are explored. The main focus of the research is to explore the learners' attitudes towards English and learning English, whether there are any differences in the attitudes with age, grade or gender and what factors affect and, therefore, can modify students' attitudes.

The first part of the Theoretical background chapter describes the evolution of the English language. Then there is important information about English in today's world, how it became the global language and how it influences the world and education. Then follows the second part, where there is the definition of attitude, what types of attitudes there are, and what role it plays in English learning. This part also contains a description of factors that can influence learners' attitudes. The results of several studies on learners' attitudes are presented in the next part. In the final part, the position of the English language in the Czech Republic is described, and there are also presented some results of studies about Czech learners' attitudes.

The next chapter, Research and Methodology, describes the realisation process of the research conducted for this study. The following chapter is Results and Commentaries. In this chapter, the results collected in the research are presented, and authors' commentaries accompany them. The next chapter, Implications, presents possible implications for teaching based on the research results. Then follows an explanation of the research limitation and possible suggestions for further research. The final chapter is the Conclusion, where the main ideas of the whole thesis are summarised.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This chapter focuses on the theoretical background and provides the framework for Czech learners' attitudes towards English and learning English. At first, this chapter concentrates on the history of the English language, how it spread worldwide and how it became a global language. This part also describes what it means that English is the global language and how it affects the world and education. The next chapter then focuses on attitude, what it is, and its role in English language learning. It also deals with factors that have an effect on students' attitudes, like learners' personalities or the foreign language teacher. The following part analyses some studies that have been conducted on the topic of students' attitudes towards learning the English language. The final part is focused on the situation in the Czech Republic. It explores the position of the English language in the Czech education system and examines some studies about Czech learners' attitudes toward learning English that have been done so far.

Brief History of English

If we want to find the origin of the rise of the English language, we must go back to the fifth century. English did not originate in Britain, but it was actually an immigrant language. English arrived in England from northern Europe and began to spread around the British Isles. English was brought to the British Isles by Germanic invaders, Anglo-Saxons from what is now the northwest of Germany and the Netherlands.

English then entered parts of Wales, Cornwall, Cumbria, and southern Scotland, traditionally the strongholds of the Celtic languages. However, when we compared this with the later events, English was spreading only on a local scale. It was at the end of the sixteenth century that English began the process of becoming a global language. The United Kingdom needed to expand its borders, which led to the spread of English throughout the globe (Mijwil, 2018, pp. 1-2).

As Baugh and Cable (2002) state, the history of a language is intimately bound up with the history of the people who speak it. The English we know today reflects many centuries of development. Different social and political events during those centuries did not only affected people who were using the language but also the language itself. For example, the Roman

Christianizing of Britain in 597 brought England not only into contact with Latin civilisation but also affected the language and vocabulary (p. 1).

Another historical event that influenced English development was the 1066 Norman invasion. At that time, many nobles from England ran off to Scotland, which led to not only the fusion of culture, nations, and language. This conquest also reduced English in the sense that it became the language of only the lower classes whilst the nobles were using primarily French. As the status of England was changing, so was its prestige in English. Thanks to the growth of industry and commerce, literature and science, the English language was constantly developing (Baugh & Cable, 2002, p. 2).

The evolution of English began 1500 years ago. Within this era, we can recognise three main periods of development - Old English, Middle English, and New English, with Modern English as part of it. Each of these periods has specific phonology, grammar, and vocabulary features. For this thesis, our main concern lies in New English and especially Modern English.

New English

The beginning of the New English period was classified as the seventeenth century. By that period, almost all the grammatical forms that are found in the language had been formed, significant phonetic changes had already happened, and the ability to pick whatever lexeme, wherever possible, was already developed (Verba, 2004, p. 17).

Overall, the period from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries was crucial for opening the way for English to become a world language. From the eighteen century forward, we can talk about the expansion of the English language. Geographically, English was spread worldwide by British colonisation and empire-building and, more recently, by American activities in world affairs.

 Two major factors led to the present-day status of English. The first is the expansion of British colonial power in the nineteenth century. The second is the rise of the USA as the leading economic power in the twentieth century. The increase of native speakers was and still is connected to America. Nowadays, the USA has nearly 70% of all English mother tongue speakers (Crystal, 2017, pp. 30-31).

The spread of the English language is quite complex. The US linguist Braj Kachru described English in "three circles.". These were concentric circles, and he called them the inner, outer and expanding circles. The inner circle encompasses traditional countries, where English was the first language of the majority of the speakers. The US, UK, Ireland, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand are those countries. The outer circle includes those countries where the language has become part of a country's chief institutions and plays an important 'second language' role in a multilingual setting: Singapore, India, Malawi, and over fifty other territories. And lastly, the expanding circle includes those countries that see the importance of English as an international language. Still, they do not have a history of colonisation of the lands in the inner circle, and English was not given any special status. Those countries are, for example, Japan, China, or Russia (Crystal, 2017, pp. 60-61).

Modern English

It is necessary to bear in mind that English is still growing and changing. The changes are constantly going, and they are most easily seen in vocabulary. New words are formed, and old ones are dying out. Moreover, there are still more and more people using the language all over the world, which has led to the development of different varieties of English (Baugh & Cable, 2002, p. 2).

In spite of English spreading worldwide, the language has stayed uniform. Of course, we can find differences within particular varieties, but those differences are insignificant. There are, however, two major national varieties: British English and American English. British English has been taught in Western Europe for a long time, but nowadays, both variants are significant in speaking English *(*Alego, 2009, p. 183).

English nowadays

English is the first language for more than 370 million people and the second for over 1 billion. This number of speakers makes English the most spoken language in the world. It is also an official language in almost 60 countries all over the world (Yadav, 2023).

English as a global language

As Kachru (1990) said, English has "touched the lives of so many people, in so many cultures and continents, in so many functional roles, and with so much prestige" (p. 5). It is thanks to globalisation that so many people speak English, and therefore it has become a global language. But what does it even mean to be a global language?

According to Crystal (2017), "A language achieves a genuinely global status when it develops a unique role that is recognised in every country" (p. 3). Language cannot become global by being used as a mother tongue. As Crystal (2017) continues to explain, "To achieve such a status, a language has to be taken up by other countries around the world. They must decide to give it a special place within their communities, even though they may have few (or no) mother-tongue speakers" (p. 4).

McKay (2002) provides another definition. She says that "serving as the common vehicle of communication among speakers with or without the same linguistic and cultural background, English is the language of air and maritime navigation, the Internet, politics, business, education, media, diplomacy, sports, and international scientific exchange" (p. 2).

These are a few of many definitions of global language. Still, if we want to truly understand what it means for English to be a global language, we also need to explore how it became one. Northrup (2013) mentioned in his book that the Second World War made knowing English a high priority as the USA gained massive political, military, economical and intellectual weight (p. 23). After the war, the use of English, especially in Europe, took off. As Northrup (2013) continues to explain, American voices seemed to be everywhere, namely "running the occupation of Germany, directing the Marshall Plan, chatting in the streets and teaching it in the schools" (p. 113).

Another significant contributor to the rise of English was United Nations. In 1945 the number of members increased. Many of those countries use English as their official language. The dominance of English became dominant in 2001 when two-thirds of the state in the UN preferred receiving emails in English (Northrup, 2013, p. 114).

According to Northrup (2013), English gained the status of a global language around 1990. He

states that there is not a single tipping point that would make English the international language, but rather it was a long process and a series of events, as mentioned above. However, we might find the one tipping point that gave English the label. In 1990 the World Wide Web was created, nowadays known as the Internet. It is a fact that communication was mainly in English for many years. Northrup (2013) then says that the dominance of English on the Internet was purely practical and historical. In the early days, keyboards worked only with Roman and Cyrillic alphabets. Another critical fact is that the US was on top when it came to internet technology; therefore, they were on top of internet posting and usage.

Nevertheless, it is not only the internet that helped English to become a global language. The entertainment industry had its share in spreading the language worldwide. For example, the movie industry is an essential tool for transmitting communication. Crystal (2017) says that from 1915 dominance in the movie industry was passed to America thanks to the grand studio in Hollywood, California. Even though the industry has developed, English – language movies still dominate (pp. 98-99).

Llerena and Hurtado (2018) state that Hollywood considerably impacts the expansion of English because most of the movies are transmitted and preferred in English worldwide. They say that "Hollywood movies have identified the importance of art by using English as the official language in their performance" (p. 13). They also conclude that Hollywood movies make English more attractive as movie technology has allowed them to spread English around the world in an entertainment form. Furthermore, the English language catches the audience's attention as the viewers want to hear the voices of actors and actresses (Llerena & Hurtado, 2018, p. 14).

Crystal (2017) also mentions the contribution of popular music. Crystal (2017) states that all major recording companies had English origins thanks to the technology being developed in the USA. Crystal (2017) stresses that many people make their first contact with English through popular music and that no other source has spread English worldwide so rapidly and pervasively. Crystal (2017) then says that even though every country has their famous singers, only a minority of them manage to succeed internationally. Even then, they need to be singing in English. Another critical factor is that people can hear music wherever there is a radio – in a restaurant, a supermarket, or a car (pp.100-104).

The spread of English as a global language has both positive and negative effects. The positive effect is the possibility of international communication and that English serves as a link between people with the same interest but no common language. The negative effect is that the spread of English could be a threat to other languages and that minority languages could be seen as irrelevant. In conclusion, English becoming the global language is a part of the complex process we call globalisation. Many people say that social and economic mobility barriers are lower than years ago (Aponte, 2018).

English as a global language in education.

Thanks to English being the global language, students throughout the world study the language. In the context of education, British and American English are the most common varieties. As Northrup (2013) states, not everybody needs to speak English with Oxford or Ivy–League accents because, as a global language, it needs to be pretty standard to be understood (p. 5).

British English is the one that is taught in our primary schools. Granting that teaching British English is not fixed in the Czech curriculum, most of the available material (meaning school books and such) deals with British English. Therefore, British English is the variety taught across Czech primary schools. Nonetheless, it is only possible to be flexible about what variety the students use. Although the British variant is the one used at schools, we have to consider that American English has become the most critical and influential dialect of the language. Many different influences touch pupils daily, whether it is social media, movies and series or computer games, where many communicate with foreign people. It is impractical to demand the use of only one variety of English since when teaching the language, it is essential to let students come in touch with it outside the school (Vít, 2008).

Overall, English has become the most popular second language in schools across Europe. Nearly 90% of non-native students study English (Northrup, 2013, p. 143). Northrup (2013) also states that English has become an international academic language. This day English is not only a language that is "good to know" but also a language that is acquired in order to get advanced training in many disciplines such as diplomacy, economics or science (p. 149).

Attitude towards learning English

Before we can emerge into the topic of attitude towards learning English, we need to define the term attitude itself. Colin Baker (1992), in his book *Attitudes and Language*, define the term as follows: "Attitude is a hypothetical construct used to explain the direction and persistence of human behaviour" (p. 10). Baker (1992) then continues to describe attitude as something that cannot be directly observed and that "attitudes are a convenient and efficient way of explaining consistent patterns in behaviour" (p. 11).

Brown (2007) provides another definition of the term. He says that attitude is something one acquires early in childhood and is related to feelings, emotions and thoughts. Many things, such as parents or peers, can influence it. In conclusion, according to Brown, "attitudes form a part of one's perception of self, of others, and of the culture in which one is living" (pp. 174-175).

Gardner (1985) divides attitudes into two main categories: attitudes towards learning the language and attitudes towards the other-language community. According to him, each type has its role and is essential for second language learning. Each attitude has a different relationship with achievement in the second language. Gardner (1985) states that the studies involving attitudes towards learning the language generally obtain a higher connection with achievement than studies of attitudes towards the second language community (p. 41).

Another potential division is also provided by Gardner (1985). He classifies the attitudes as educational and social, where educational attitudes are focused on the teacher, the course and learning the language. On the contrary, social attend to attitudes that focus on the cultural implications of second language acquisition (p. 41-42). Still, according to Gardner (1985), attitude can be either positive or negative. In the following sections, I would like to focus on the factors that can affect one's attitude and its role in the second language learning process.

Attitudes to English learning

The role of attitude in English learning is undoubtedly significant. Both positive and negative attitudes have their effects on learning English. According to Gardner (1985), if the student's perspective is positive, it is reasonable to expect that the experience with the language will be positive as well. On the other hand, if the attitudes are negative, the experiences will tend to be

perceived negatively (p. 8). Gardner (1985) then Continues to suggest that attitudes are necessary because they determine how active individuals will be in the language learning process and that attitudes have a definite motivational component (pp. 60-61).

Littlewood (1991) says that attitudes towards the second language community are fundamental. He states that "the learner with more favourable attitudes will wish for more intensive contact with the second language community… If the attitude is negative, there may be strong internal barriers against learning" (p. 55). Littlewood (1991) also states that if the learners are successful, they will develop positive attitudes in the learning process and encourage more success.

In the article Creating Positive Attitudes towards English as a Foreign Language, the authors identify the role of negative attitudes as follows "Negative attitudes towards the foreign language and group, which often comes from stereotypes and superficial contact with the target culture, can impede the learning of that language" (Elyildirim & Ashton, 2006, p. 3). On the contrary, Elyildirim & Ashton (2006) define the role of a positive attitude as "positive attitudes towards the foreign language and group increase language learning success" (p. 3). Ultimately, attitudes play a significant role in learning a second language. Both positive and negative attitude influences the learning process and, later on, the achievements.

As A. Asghar et al. (2018) mention, "learning a second language does not only depend upon the language learning method but on learners' attitude towards it. An optimistic attitude towards the second language would lead to the successful learning of the second language. If learners would not communicate with the native speakers of the target language, they will have a pessimistic attitude and not learn the target language conveniently " (p. 82).

Abu-Snoubar (2017) states, "Language learning can never be separated from the learners' attitudes because these attitudes are supporting and motivating when positive and demotivating when negative "(p. 18). Attitudes have a significant role in one's learning process. Teachers can gain a lot by understanding students' attitudes. As Abu-Snoubar (2017) puts it, "An understanding of the students' attitude allows educators to gain a more realistic insight into what goes inside the learners' heads, their fears, sources of anxiety and preferences instead of relying on how we as teachers view these points" (p. 19).

Delić (2020) then says that the student's attitudes towards learning are the main predictors for teachers to establish a productive and successful learning environment. The measurement of language attitude affords information that can be used in language learning and teaching (p. 68).

Lubis (2015) explains that attitude is essential in order to learn the language successfully. Attitude influences students' behaviour and inner mood, and therefore it also has an effect on the learning process. It was already mentioned that attitudes could be both positive and negative. Lubis (2015) continues that positive and negative attitudes are crucial when students want to succeed in language learning. She highlights the role of a positive attitude, as learners with a positive attitude are more likely to try various learning strategies that can help develop their language skills. According to Lubis (2015), positive attitudes can bring out better effort, resulting in better success (p. 19).

However, as Dörneyi (2003) mentions, the English language is not only a "learnable "school subject but also socially and culturally bound. Therefore learning a foreign language is a social event that requires adding some elements of the foreign language culture. Dörneyi (2003) says that in order for the studying process to be effective, teachers need to introduce students to everything that the foreign language is associated with, such as its culture, its influence and its speakers (p. 54).

Smith (1971) focuses on the importance of attitude in foreign language learning. Smith (1971) states that students' attitude is crucial in foreign language learning and is often ignored until a problem is present. Smith (1971) explains that attitudes can be learned and that students' attitudes can change accordingly to the learning situation (p. 82). According to Smith (1971), teachers, parents and the community they live in can influence students' attitudes. Smith (1971) says that if a student's parents have an unpleasant experience with foreign language learning, they can transfer this attitude onto their children (p. 84). Smith (1971) also points out that personality factors may affect students' attitudes (p. 87). Those factors will be discussed in the next chapter.

Factors affecting learners' attitude towards learning English

Baker (1992) reads that attitude can or should be changed. He says that attitudes change over time and that they are rarely static. According to Baker (1992), "Attitudes can change through an

activity that is self – directed and purposefully planned, as well as through the need for security and status within a group and through societal demands" (p. 105). Bakers' opinion is shared by Elyildirim and Asthon (2006), who say that attitudes can be modified. They can be changed by experience or effective language teaching strategies. Those strategies can encourage students to be more positive towards the language they are learning (p. 3).

Getie (2020) concludes from various research that there are a lot of factors influencing students' attitudes which consecutively affect their language proficiency. Those can be, for example, personality factors, educational factors, social factors, and others like age and sex (pp. 8-15). Altogether it is apparent that students' attitude is affected not only by their congenital qualities but also by outer influences like parents, teachers or peers.

Learners' personality

The most critical factors affecting the attitude are the learners themselves. Their inborn traits and social influences will have an impact on their attitude. It is, however, a very complex situation. As Naiman and co (1978) have found, specific personality and cognitive style factors are related to success in language learning. According to their study, there are two factors that are the most essential: tolerance of ambiguity and field independence. It is a highly complex situation, and it is impossible to attach only some personality attributes to a successful learner. However, as Naiman and co (1978) mention, we can look at the situation from the teachers' perspective (p. 100).

Gardner (1985) then puts their results as follows: successful students are viewed as perfectionists, mature, responsible, self-confident, outgoing, independent, passive, shy and introverted. On the other hand, unsuccessful students are described as demonstrating a lack of self-confidence, timid, shy, careless, afraid to express themselves and nervous (p. 25). Some of the traits are the same both for successful and unsuccessful students.

Littlewood (1984) then follows Naiman (1978) by stating that several personality characteristics are likely to influence second language learning. He pays attention to the issues of extroversion and introversion. Littlewood (1984) points out that outgoing people have some advantages. For example, outgoing learners may become involved in more social interactions, they can attract more attention from their teachers, and they may feel more comfortable during an oral interview.

Their communication performance may also seem more confident (p. 64).

Brown (2006) goes after the affective domain. He characterises the affect as emotion or feeling and the affective domain as the emotional side of human behaviour. Brown (2006) says that all second language learners need to be receptive to those with whom they are communicating and to the language itself. He says that "language is so pervasive a phenomenon in our humanity that it cannot be separated from the larger whole—from the whole persons that live and breathe and think and feel "(p. 154). Brown (2006) also believes that self–esteem, risk-taking, anxiety, empathy, extroversion, and motivation are the critical factors in second language learning. For self–esteem, it is vital to believe in one's own knowledge and capability in order to perform an activity successfully. If the learner believes that she/he is capable of accomplishing the given task, she/he is more likely to prosper.

The duplicate listing can be found in Larsen – Freeman (1991). She points out that different personality characteristic interacts differently with other types of instruction. While it was already discussed that extroverts might have some advantages in second language learning, Larsen – Freeman observes that shy children will have better progress in a more teacher–oriented and structured classroom (pp. 207-208).

In conclusion, learners' personality has a significant impact on second language learning; however, it is a very complex issue. Different learners have unique personality traits, such as their level of extroversion or introversion, their openness to new experiences, and their level of dutifulness. A student with different personality traits will do well under different circumstances.

Language teacher

It is well known that teachers have a significant role in student's life, whether it is to educate them, guide them or affect their attitude towards learning. Teachers' attitudes towards learners can, of course, affect the learning process and the learners' attitudes. Positive experiences and feelings with a teacher can produce positive attitudes towards learning the language. Larsen – Freeman (1991) mentions that teachers' approaches and attitudes are even more important than parental attitudes when it comes to learning (p. 179). Getie (2020), in his article, says that "the influence can be either positive or negative depending upon the teacher's knowledge of the

subject matter, his attitude towards the students and the subject" (p. 10).

Students often see their teachers as role models, and therefore they can adopt similar attitudes and beliefs. Dörnyei (2001) reported that teachers' behaviour is the most effective tool for affecting motivation and attitude. Across all the students' age groups, the results of Dörnyei's survey (2001) were the same. Everything teachers do in a classroom has a significant motivational influence on pupils and, therefore, can influence their attitude towards the subject (pp. 31-32).

Moon (2004) also highlights teachers' role in influencing students' attitudes. Moon (2004) points out that teachers' attitudes towards their English may affect their pupils' attitudes. Teachers worried about their own English or how they teach it may be less enthusiastic in the classroom and affect students' attitudes. Moon (2004) says that each student comes to class with his attitude towards the language already formed. Those attitudes are shaped by the social – environment they grew up in and the people around them. Teachers have no control over those attitudes; however, they can take them into account and work with them in their lessons or influence them through their positive attitude (pp. 15-25).

Teachers can influence pupils' attitudes through their positive attitudes and by creating a positive learning environment. The teachers' role is to support the students and ensure they succeed. To accomplish that, it is also essential to choose suitable teaching materials that can influence their attitude.

Teaching materials

The materials that teachers use in their classrooms are undoubtedly necessary. Wilkins (1974) emphasises the importance of teaching materials and resources. Wilkins (1974) says that the teaching situation depends on what resources are available. Those resources are textbooks, workbooks, exercise books, writing paper, drawing paper, pens, pencils, blackboard, chalk, wall pictures, and charts. Wilkins also talks about tape recorders, television, and radios; however, the book was published in 1974. Nowadays, there would be resources such as computers, interactive boards and projectors taken into consideration. Wilkins points out that the absence of particular resources will lead to severe limitations in achievements. The language lessons' objectives should be planned with the knowledge of what materials are available. The lack of them can influence

the attitude of both the learners and the teachers (p. 47).

However, as it is stated by Tomlinson (1998), "It is clear that materials could be designed to help foster study skills, it is less obvious that they could foster helpful attitudes" (p. 295). However, Tomlinson (1997) says that the materials should at least try to do that. Tomlinson (1997) then argues that the most beneficial way to change an attitude and gain study skills is to encourage the students to reflect on what they are doing and why and that the development is an outcome of reflective practice. Tomlinson then says that reflective practice also needs a certain attitude from the students and the teacher. He emphasizes two parts of the attitude: critical thinking and a desire to continue to learn. Therefore, the materials should allow the teacher to learn more about the language and new teaching approaches. The materials will be helpful if they are designed to encourage teachers' development (pp. 296 – 297).

Students' attitude is essential to learning a second language. Positive attitudes have favourable effects on the learning process. However, the perception of English and attitudes towards it might change when English is an obligatory school subject.

Studies in attitudes towards learning English

This section focuses on a few sample studies on attitudes towards learning English that have been done with English language learners in the last fifteen years. One of these studies was carried out by Mašić and Bećirović (2021) with Bosnian high school students. The authors wanted to explore the learners' attitude" considering the three aspects of attitude: cognitive, behavioural and emotional. In addition, it attempts to determine the effects of students' gender, grade level, Grade Point Average (GPA), and GPA in learning English as a foreign language (EFL) on students' attitudes as well as the influence of EFL attitudes on the student's achievement " (pp. 2-3).

Mašić and Bećirović's study (2021) shows that gender has a significant role in influencing attitude, and it also affects behavioural and emotional aspects of the attitude (p. 13). Another factor that affects learners' attitudes, according to Mašić and Bećirović's study (2021), is grade level. The results showed that "young learners were more inspired and were able to master languages better and on a higher level than the older ones " (p. 14). Other factors that have been proven to have an effect on learners' attitudes, according to Mašić and Bećirović's study (2021),

are GPA and GPA in learning English (p. 16). Mašić and Bećirović's study (2021) concludes that "learners cannot achieve EFL's long-term goals without a positive attitude and adequate motivation, even if they possess tremendous intellectual capacity " (p. 16).

Another study, conducted in Bosnia and Herzegovina, was written by Delić in 2020. Delić's study (2020) also examines the attitude of high school students, and it aims to "investigate what kind of attitudes, positive or negative, towards language learning will Bosnian high school students demonstrate while learning the English language in a school setting " (p. 76). Delić's study (2020) concludes that the predictors for students' negative attitudes are teaching methodology, school policy and learning environment. The study showed that school policy has the most considerable effect on students' negative attitudes (p. 76).

When it comes to the effect that gender and grade have on attitudes towards learning English, Delić's study (2020) is in conflict with Mašić and Bećirović (2021). Delić's (2020) results show that "gender and grade level did not significantly differ in reporting the types of attitudes asked in the questionnaire " (p. 76). According to Delić (2020), gender and grade level do not significantly affect learners' attitudes as "both male and female participants, across all four grade levels, shared more or less the same attitudes towards the English language learning experience " (p. 76).

Another study on attitudes towards English language learning comes from Turkey. Asmali (2017) focuses on Turkish primary school students. According to Asmali's (2017) findings, over 85% of interviewed learners found the English language fun to learn, and almost 80% liked learning the language (p. 61). Asmali (2017) also mentions the role of parents' attitudes. Following Asmali's (2017) findings, "learners' parents supported them in having positive attitudes because they were both pleased that their kids learned English, and they explicitly stated that learning English was important for young learners " (p. 61). Asmali (2017) suggests that younger learners have a more positive attitude towards understanding the language than older learners, which corresponds with Mašić and Bećirović's (2021) findings.

Arda and Doyran (2017) provide another study among Turkish students. Arda and Doyran's study (2017) focuses on the differences in attitudes between young learners and teenagers. Arda and Doyran conclude that the attitude towards learning English changes with age. Arda and Doyran's results show that while almost all third-graders chose English as their favourite subject,

the seventh-grade learners rated English significantly lower (p. 193). Overall, Arda and Doyran's study (2017) shows that younger learners were more enthusiastic and motivated to learn English (p. 194). Those results are in accordance with Asmali's and Mašić and Bećirović's findings about the learners' grades affecting attitude.

Attitudes of Czech people towards education

According to Czesaná and Kofroňová (2004), even though the attitude towards education has changed since 1989, the Czech population still sees education as a less critical factor in success than more developed countries (p. 30). Czesaná and Kofroňová (2004) found that even though education was not the main factor influencing success in life, it was ranked among the first half of the list. According to their research, most respondents chose personal qualities, ambitions and the capacity to work hard as the essential factors to succeed in life. However, Czesaná and Kofroňová (2004) see a significant change in attitudes as in accord with the research, young students do not longer pay importance to factors like social background, religion or gender, but instead, they believe in their own efforts (p. 32).

However, Czesaná and Kofrňová's research (2004) is quite old, and many changes happened during that time. Prokop et al. introduce a study from 2020 that focuses on the attitudes of Czech parents towards education and its development through the last decade in regard with Covid -19 pandemic. According to Prokop et al. study (2020), the parents' attitudes towards school are ambivalent, meaning that many parents do not have any particular opinion or have mixed feelings about the education standards. The study also points out that the parents are more critical (p. 2).

Prokop et al. (2020) agree with Czesaná and Kofrňová's research (2004) about the unimportance of social background, religion and gender. According to Prokop et al. (2020), over 85% of parents agree with education being available to everyone without distinction (p. 4).

The role of English in Czech education

According to Kaderka and Prošek (2014), English has two roles in the Czech educational system. One role is English as a language of instruction, and the second is English as a school subject. The role of English as a school subject is essential for this diploma thesis. As Kaderka and Prošek (2014) continue, English learning is available as early as preschool. The authors state that "98,4%

of elementary school pupils learn English as their first foreign language " (p. 175). Kaderka and Prošek (2014) conclude that the English language is seen as a basic social skill that needs to be developed in elementary school (p. 195).

As Kaderka and Prošek's study is nine years old, the number of learners that chose English as their first language might differ. According to the annual report of the Czech school inspection (ČŠI), the number of learners in 2021/2022 is 98,6%, which concludes that the numbers are not significantly changing and that the majority of students still choose English as their first foreign language (Zatloukal, 2022, p. 98).

Based on Zormanová (2015), parents in the Czech Republic are aware of the importance of learning the English language. Zormanová (2015) points out that knowledge of English is essential when students are looking for jobs and is one of the fundamental conditions for being accepted. Zormanová (2015) states that a first foreign language is compulsory from the third grade in primary school. As mentioned, about 98,6 % of pupils choose English as their first foreign language. Many schools start with English in the first grade.

Dvořáková (2006) focuses on problems in English education in the Czech Republic. The author states that a competent teacher is the most critical condition for successful learning. It was already mentioned that the foreign language teacher is one of the key factors affecting students' attitudes. Moon (2004) pointed out that teachers worried about their own English might transfer this attitude to their students, and therefore teachers should have the appropriate education. Dvořáková (2006) also points out that the grammar–translation method is still the most used, and the targeted language is not even used as the primary source of communication in the classroom (p. 62).

The education of the English language is also covered in the Concept of Language Education 2017 – 2022 (Koncepce jazykového vzdělávání 2017–2022) published by the Ministry of Education (MŠMT) and the National Institute for Further Education (NIDV). This document presents a long-term objective of language education, which is a reinforcement of the communication competence of pupils in foreign languages. The paper works with globalisation as a factor affecting pupils' everyday life (p. 3). According to the concept of language education (2017) results, schools see the education of foreign languages as very important, and further

progress in this field is one of their top priorities. (p. 12). The concept of language education (2017) also provides results regarding students. The document states that students feel a communication level deficit when they leave high school (p. 12). It is noticeable from the analysis that students' results do not fulfil their practical needs. However, the concept of language education (2017) sees as positive that schools are aware of the deficit and they want to improve the situation (p. 15).

Attitudes of Czech learners towards English

As this diploma thesis proceeds, it is now essential to look at the attitudes of Czech learners specifically. As Pavelková and Škaloudová (2004) mention, there are a lot of different attitudes towards different subjects. Again some of them are negative, and some of them are positive. The authors mention one negative attitude that can be seen chiefly in eighth and ninth-grade learners. They say that if the subject is not part of the school entrance exam, the learners' attitude is dismissive, meaning: I do not need to learn that (p. 1).

Pavelková and Škaloudová (2004) then state that many aspects influence pupils' attitudes. Namely, those factors are the character of the subject and its realization in curriculum, the student's competence (abilities), the difficulty of the subject, assessing strategy of the teacher and their teaching method, interest orientation of the student, and subjectively seen the importance of the subject. (p. 1) According to Pavelková and Škaloudová's study (2004), the English language is seen (among students) as favoured, moderately complex and very significant. The research also shows little to no differences between grades or gender (p. 5).

Foukalová (2009) then provides another research result. According to Foukalová's research, the most common answer to the question "why we learn English" was that knowledge of the English language is helpful in job searching. Another frequent answer was that students want to learn English because they want to travel abroad and be able to communicate. Foukalová concludes that those answers show students' understanding of why it is important to learn English and that the students are learning the subject of their own will.

As stated in Foukalová's research conclusion (2009), the English language subject is mainly viewed positively among Czech students. She states that a lot of Czech students are aware of the

fact that English is a global language, and therefore it is crucial to know the language in order to communicate with people all over the world (pp. 71-73).

Koldová (2002) provides another research study on this topic; however, it focuses on motivation rather than attitudes. According to Koldová's research (2002), students learn English to avoid getting bad marks or because it is inevitable, meaning it is a compulsory subject that is fixed in the school curriculum. It follows that students often learn English because they are forced to do so by external factors such as school curriculum, bad marks or parents (p. 37).
In agreement with Koldová's and Foukalová's statement is Odložilová's research in her undergraduate thesis (2017). Odložilová (2017) states that a certain amount of students learn English because they want to avoid getting bad marks and try to have excellent marks in every subject, including English. This is called academic achievement. On the other hand, according to Odložilová (2017), some students want to learn English because they see its use in everyday life (p. 19).

Odložilová (2017) also states that the "phenomenon of Facebook could change Czech learners' attitude towards English." Odložilová (2017) says that thanks to Facebook, students have the opportunity to find people all around the world, and they need English in order to communicate with them (p. 19).

The significance of studying attitude

Before examining and studying Czech learners' attitudes towards English, it is necessary to establish why it is important to study learners' attitudes. According to Noursi (2013), investigating students' attitudes is an effective method for obtaining a better understanding of the learning/teaching process. Every student has different needs, learning styles, preferences and educational backgrounds and demanding a change in those factors could lead to a negative reaction. Another reason that Noursi (2013) states is that every learner has some views on the learning process and, therefore, can articulate them (p. 22).

Hrubá (2011) then states that to blame the negative attitude on curriculum reformation, today's consumer society, decreasing intelligence of students or incompetent teachers is a simplification of the problem, and it should be important to learn why the attitudes are changing, and the

motivation to learn is decreasing. Hrubá (2011) also mentions that thanks to investigating learners' attitudes, teachers can obtain important information on what can be done to preserve the positive attitude.

English has been around since the fifth century, and since then, it has constantly been evolving. Thanks to globalisation, the English language has spread worldwide and become a global language which has affected not only its native speakers but also users all around the world. English is the most spoken language in the world. It is the primary communication means in global organisations like the UN and has also become the dominant language of the internet and tourism. Over one billion people use English as their second language (Berlitz, 2023), giving English the status of lingua franca, and therefore it needs to be treated as such in education as well. Students all over the world study English and the English language has also become an international academic language.

Nowadays, knowledge of English is beneficial to communicate worldwide and is also required by many employers. Therefore it has affected students' attitudes towards language learning. Attitudes are an essential aspect of students' education. A positive or negative attitude can affect students' performance and also their overall achievements. A few factors can affect students' attitudes, such as their personality traits, the teacher, or the available materials. Attitudes can be changed and learnt, so teachers must investigate their students' attitudes. Some studies have proven that some aspects influence attitudes towards English, such as gender and grade. Many pieces of research have shown that students have an overall positive attitude towards learning English and are aware of its role in the world. The following chapter focuses on the research conducted for the thesis and focuses on Czech learners' attitudes towards English and learning English.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The theoretical part showed that learners' attitudes play an essential role in English language learning. Various factors, such as learners' personalities, language teachers and teaching materials, seem to affect students' attitudes towards English and English learning. It was also shown in presented studies that some demographical factors, such as age or gender, have some effect on attitude. The questions to be researched are as follows:

- Do students consider the English language important and realise its role as a global language?
- What are the learners´ attitudes towards learning English?
- Do the demographical factors affect learners' attitudes towards English and learning English?
- What factors affect learners´ attitudes towards English and learning English?

This chapter describes the methodology used to answer the questions above and to examine the learners' attitudes. First, the purpose of the research is explained. Then the research participants are introduced. Later this chapter describes the instruments used to collect the data and the collection procedure. Lastly, there is a description of the process of data analysis.

Purpose of the research

This research focuses on things that were discussed in the theoretical part. The main focus is on Czech students' attitude towards English and learning English in elementary school in Nýřany. The research concentrates on 6th and 8th graders of said school and their attitude, whether it differs with age, gender and how given factors affect it. Another aim of this research is to examine how students think about English and if they perceive it as important in the world and their everyday life.

Participants

The research sample consisted of 82 students from the elementary school in Nýřany. The research includes 34 females and 48 males. The age of the students ranged from 11 to 16 years old. Of the 82 participants, there were 37 6th graders and 45 8th graders. A precise description of the participants is detailed in Table 1.

	Number	Percent
Gender		
Male	48	58,5%
Female	34	41,5%
Grade		
6th grade	37	45,1%
8th grade	45	54,92%
Age		
11	3	4%
12	28	34%
13	14	17%
14	32	37%
15	4	5%
16	1	1%

Table 1: Demographic data of the participants

All participants are attending the elementary school in Nýřany. All of the students have three English lessons in a week. Most of the pupils (76,8%) started to learn English in third grade in elementary school. 22% of the participants started learning English before third grade, either in 1st or 2nd grade or even kindergarten. Only one student started to learn English in 7th grade in elementary school. Those numbers are in correlation with the statistics from Czech school inspection (ČŠI), which says that 98,6% of pupils chose English as their first language. 17% of the students attend additional English language courses or take tutoring lessons.

The 6th and 8th graders were explicitly chosen to showcase the difference in answers within some age range.

Instruments and procedure

Instruments

The research used questionnaires (Appendix A – Dotazník and Appendix B – Questionary) for data collection. The questionnaires were carried out online in Google Forms. For the assurance that all students would be able to understand and to avoid any difficulties, the questionary was made in the Czech language. The research used this method mainly to gather data from many subjects. The questionnaire consisted of 36 questions. The first six questions were focused on demographical data – the age, gender and grade of the subjects.

 The next part of the questionnaire was aimed towards the use of the English language in the subjects' free time (questions 7 to 11). The following seven questions were aimed to explore the subjects' attitude towards English and their point of view on the importance of the use of the language. The main focus of the following six questions was the subjects' attitude towards learning English and the English language as a school subject. The last twelve questions were targeted to examine the factors that could affect the subjects' attitudes, like the parents, teachers and the teaching materials.

The questionnaire contains three types of questions. Seven questions were single-answer multiple-choice questions. Twenty-eight questions were rating scale questions, where seven of them were 3-point scale questions focused on the frequency of given actions. Students could choose one of three statements (never, sometimes, often). Eighteen questions were 4-point Likert scale, where the students could choose one of four statements (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree). The remaining three questions were specific rating scale questions about English as a school subject. Students could choose from four statements concerning the difficulty, engagement and usefulness of the school subject. There were seven open-ended questions where students could express their opinion and explain why they chose some of the answers in the rating scale questions.

Procedure

Data collecting procedure

The data were collected at an elementary school in Nýřany in May 2023. The questionnaire was given to students in their classroom, and they filled them in on lent tablets, ensuring that all students could participate. One teacher was always present in the classroom to instruct the students and help them when needed. Students were encouraged to ask any question concerning the questionnaire. The students spent about 30 to 40 minutes filling out the questionnaire.

In order to reduce the likelihood of receiving inaccurate responses, the participants were assured that the questionnaire was entirely anonymous and would not impact their grades. The students were also told that the results would be used for the purpose of this study only and would not be revealed to their teachers or classmates. Before each class started to fill in the questionnaire, the structure of it was explained to the students, and they were told how to respond to each type of question.

Data analysis procedure

With the aim of analysing the data collected from the participants, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 29.0, was used. Specifically, it was descriptive statistics in terms of frequencies and the percentage that was used. The crosstabs analysis also analysed some results. The open-ended questions were analysed individually. All the answers were reviewed, and if some answers were the same or similar, it was noted down. If there was a completely unique question, it was also noted down.

The research findings are presented in the following section of the thesis, accompanied by additional commentaries.

IV. RESULTS AND COMMENTARIES

This chapter presents the results of this study. The results of quantitive data are presented in tables and graphs. The open-ended questions are presented through narration since the character of students' answers was required in written form. The research is divided into four sections. The results of every section are presented individually. The first section, which focuses on demographical data, was already evaluated in the description of the participants.

English in students' free time

The primary purpose of this part is to determine whether or not the students are in contact with the English language in their free time. As stated in the theoretical part, both the internet and the entertainment industry extensively impacted English as it became the global language. Things like music, movies or the internet can influence how students perceive English and help them learn it. Thanks to those things, students are in contact with English differently – they can hear different accents and pronunciations or notice different phrases or idioms. The internet or music also makes contact with English more frequent.

The first two questions focused on computer games as they also affect the students and their use of English. According to the research, 56,1% of students play computer games in English very often, 34,1% responded that they sometimes play the games, and only 9,8% said they never play computer games in English. The exact numbers can be seen in Table 2.

Question 7: In my free time, I play computer games in English
 1. Never
 2. Sometimes
 3. Often

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
1	8	9,8	9,8
2	28	34,1	34,1
3	46	56,1	56,1
Total	82	100,0	100,0

Table 2 The use of English while playing computer games

The second question focused on whether the students communicate in English while playing computer games. 31,3% of students responded that they often speak in English, 43,8% stated that they do it sometimes, and 25% said they never communicate in English while playing games. The detailed results can be seen in Table 3. The fact that the percentages are lower in the communication category could also depend on what types of games the students are playing and whether or not they even require communication with other players.

Question 8: I communicate with others in English while playing computer games.
1. Never
2. Sometimes
3. Often

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	1	20	24,4	25,0
	2	35	42,7	43,8
	3	25	30,5	31,3
	Total	80	97,6	100,0
Missing		2	2,4	
Total		82	100,0	

Table 3 Communication in English while playing computer games

The following three questions focused on watching movies/series in English. As stated in the theoretical part, movies and series help spread English worldwide. This part of the research concentrates on the willingness of the pupils to watch movies and series in English and whether they are able to watch them without subtitles, and, if not, whether they use English or Czech subtitles. The exact numbers can be seen in Graph 1.
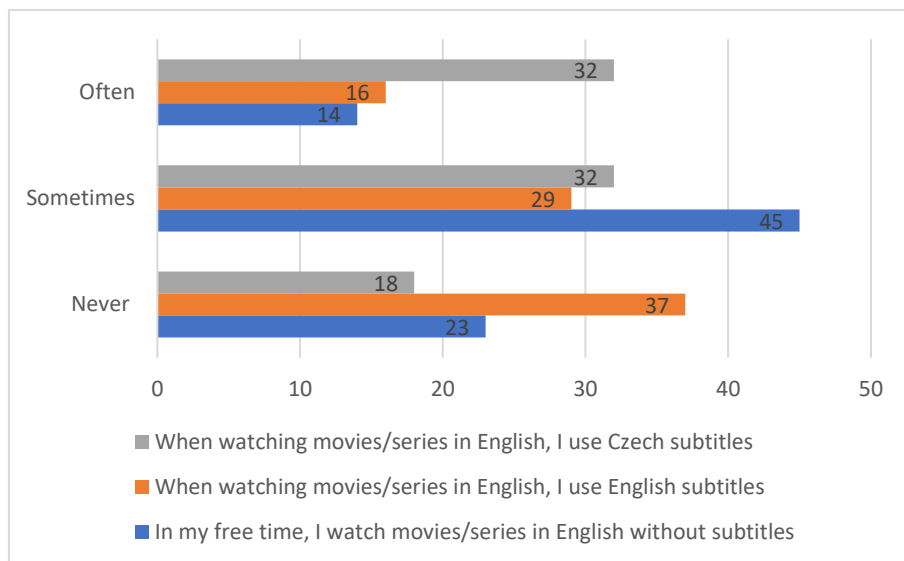
Graph 1 Use of subtitles while watching movies/series in English

According to the research, more than half of the respondents sometimes watch movies or series in English without needing any subtitles; however, when they do need subtitles, most of the participants would use Czech subtitles, as 78% stated that they watch movies/series often or sometimes with Czech subtitles but only 54,9% of students said that they use (sometimes or often) English subtitles.

As it was mentioned in the theoretical part, Dörney (2003) says that the English language is not only a "learnable "school subject but that the language is also socially and culturally bound. Therefore students need to be in contact with the language elsewhere than in school. Computer games are nowadays an excellent tool for communication with people all over the world. Movies and series can help introduce students to different varieties of English and other accents. Some can also showcase the culture in English-speaking countries, which can help students build a positive attitude.

Commentaries

This part aimed to determine whether the students are in contact with English outside of school. Based on my observation during teaching, I expected that more than half of the respondents would say that they play computer games in English, which was confirmed by the results. I also expected they would communicate in English while playing computer games if the game required

27

communication. This expectation was also confirmed. However, I did not expect so many students sometimes watch movies/series in English without subtitles. I suspected that higher numbers would be with Czech subtitles, so I was pleasantly surprised.

Attitudes towards English

This part of the research focuses on the respondents' attitudes towards the English language. It aims to discover whether the students recognise the English language as the global language and if they realise its importance in the world. This part also aspires to find out why the students are learning the English language and what advantages they see in it. Another focus of this part of the research is to find out if cultural background has any influence on students' attitudes towards the language.

The first question asked students if they think English is important worldwide. Students expressed their level of agreement on a scale from 1 to 4, where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, and 4 = strongly agree. 98,8% of students agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. Only one student said that they disagreed with the statement. The exact numbers can be seen in Table 4. These results are in agreement with Zormanová (2015), who said that Czech students are aware of the importance of the English language. The English language is essential in the world.

Question 12: The English language is important in the world
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	2	1	1,2	1,3
	3	29	35,4	36,3
	4	50	61,0	62,5
	Total	80	97,6	100,0
Missing		2	2,4	
Total		82	100,0	

Table 4 The importance of English in the world

The next question, similar to the first one, asked students to express their level of agreement. The statement was as follows: Learning English is important because it is useful in the world. In this question, 100% of students agreed or strongly agreed with that statement. These results agree with Foukalová (2009), who said that students know that English is a global language and, therefore, it is crucial to learn it. The exact numbers are shown in Table 5.

Question 13: Learning English is important because it is useful in the world.
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	3	25	30,5	30,5
	4	57	69,5	69,5
	Total	82	100,0	100,0

Table 5 The usefulness of English in the world

The third question from this section asked students whether they agreed or disagreed that knowing English is an advantage in today's world. The results show that 96,3% of respondents agree or strongly agree with the statement. Only three students expressed that they disagree with English being an advantage in today's world. Detailed results are shown in Table 6.

Question 15: Knowing English is an advantage in today's world
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly Agree

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	2	3	3,7	3,7
	3	28	34,1	34,1
	4	51	62,2	62,2
	Total	82	100,0	100,0

Table 6 The advantageousness of English

As mentioned in the theoretical part, Foukalová (2009) said that students know that learning English can help them with job searching in the future. Pavelková and Škaloudová (2004) also

state that students view English as significant. The results from this research are in agreement with those conclusions.

Overall the results show that students see the English language as important and appraise its learning as useful. Not a single student chose the strongly disagree option in this segment, and only four students opted for the disagree option. Because 98,4% of the respondents expressed that they agree or strongly agree with all of the statements above, there is no significant difference in attitude within different ages, which agrees with Delić's study (2020), which states that age or grade does not significantly affect learners' attitudes.
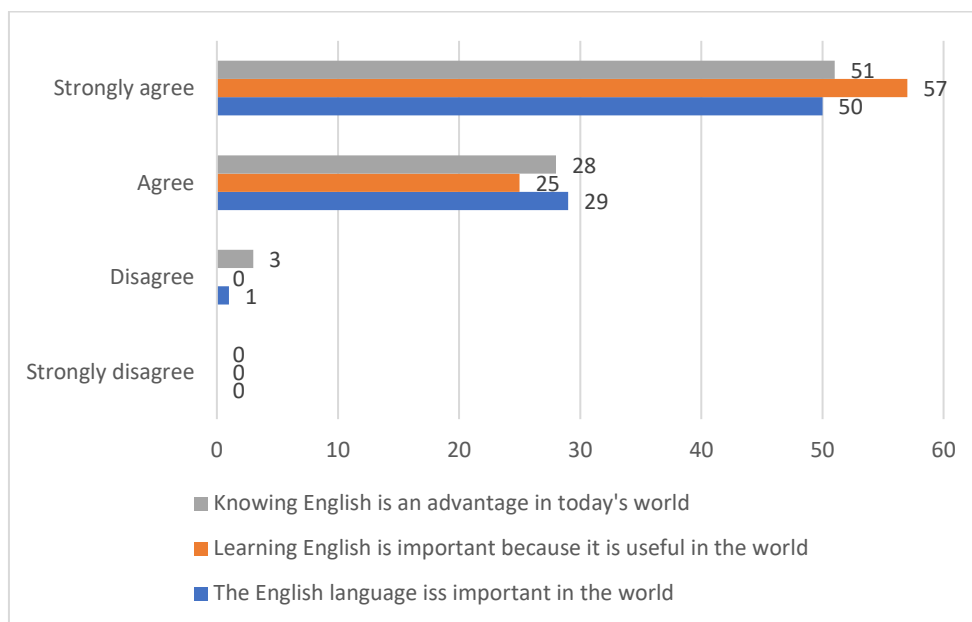
Graph 2 Attitudes towards the English language

Another question from this section focused on the importance of English in the Czech Republic. Students again disclosed their level of agreement on a scale from 1 to 4. 61% of respondents stated that they agree with the statement that English is important in the Czech Republic; however, only 6,1% chose the strongly agree option. 32,9% of students said they disagree or strongly disagree with that statement. The exact numbers can be found in Table 7. Those results show that although the respondents believe that knowledge of the English language is necessary, they feel that the importance is more apparent in the world than in the Czech Republic.

Question 14: Learning English is important because the language is useful in the Czech Republic.

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	1	4	4,9	4,9
	2	23	28,0	28,0
	3	50	61,0	61,0
	4	5	6,1	6,1
	Total	82	100,0	100,0

Table 7 The importance of English in the Czech Republic

The following question asked students why they are learning English. They had six options to choose from, or they could write their own idea. The numbers for the fixed answers can be seen in Graph 3.
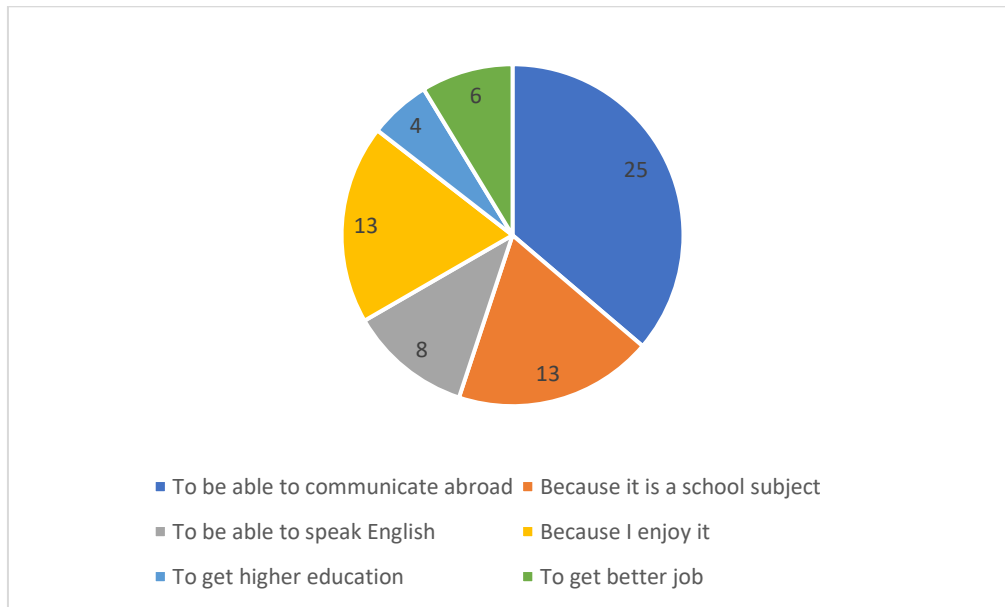
Graph 3 The reasons for learning English

30,5% of the respondents picked the option to be able to communicate abroad, but five other students added to it in their individual responses. Students said that they are studying English to communicate overseas but also to be able to speak on the internet and in computer games and

also so that they can understand English movies/series, which shows that these things have an influence on learners' attitudes and that they are affecting why the students are learning English.

Thirteen students said they are studying English because they enjoy it, and three more students wrote down this reason in their individual responses. Only four students think that learning English can help them get higher education, and only six feel it can help them get better jobs. 15,9% chose that they are learning English because it is a school subject, and one student added to it in the individual responses that they are learning English "because they have to". Three students stated that they are learning English because of all of the reasons stated in the answers.

The results both agree and disagree with similar studies conducted in the Czech Republic that had been mentioned in the theoretical part. For example, Foukalová (2009) states that in her research, the most common answer to the same question, why are they learning English, was that it is helpful in job searching. However, according to this research, only nine students (including those who chose all of the answers) out of 82 opted for this option, so it does not even come close. The percentage was higher even for the "because it is a school subject" option. On the other hand, in Foukalová's research (2009), another frequent answer was "to be able to communicate abroad, " which agrees with this study. This answer was actually placed first in this research.

Another research that the results correspond with is Koldová's research (2002). Koldová says that students learn English because it is a compulsory subject fixed in the school curriculum. This option was chosen by 17,1% of students (including the one student who answered "because I had to").

Altogether, it is evident from the results that students view the English language as an important tool for communication, whether in the real world or on the internet. However, they do not feel that learning English can help them get higher education or a better job, and they do not perceive it as necessary in the Czech Republic as it is in the world.

The influence of cultural knowledge

The next part of the research focused on the knowledge of the cultural background and whether it influences learners' attitudes. The first question asked the respondents whether they were learning English because they were interested in the culture of English-speaking countries. The results are shown in Table 8. The results show 43,9% of students strongly disagree or disagree,

and 56,1% agree or strongly agree with the statement. The percentage shows that the opinion on that matter is mixed.

Question 16: I am learning English because I am interested in the culture of English-speaking countries.
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly Agree

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	1	9	11,0	11,0
	2	27	32,9	32,9
	3	39	47,6	47,6
	4	7	8,5	8,5
	Total	82	100,0	100,0

Table 8 The interest in the culture of the English-speaking countries

The second question was again a 4-point Likert scale question, where students expressed the level of their agreement on the following statement: I can learn English better If I know something about their culture. The results for this question are shown in Table 9

Question 17: I can learn English better If I know something about their culture.
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly Agree

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	1	9	11,0	11,0
	2	36	43,9	43,9
	3	31	37,8	37,8
	4	6	7,3	7,3
	Total	82	100,0	100,0

Table 9 The importance of learning about English-speaking countries' culture

54,9% of the respondents strongly disagree or disagree that knowledge about the culture can help them learn English better. On the other hand, 45,1% strongly agree or agree with that statement. The outcomes of these questions are again almost balanced in agreement and disagreement.

However, more students believe that knowledge about the culture cannot influence their learning process.

Commentaries

This part of the research mainly focused on discovering students' attitudes towards the English language and whether the respondents find it useful. The results indicate that almost all students believe English is essential and useful. Those results surprised me because I expected that more responses would incline towards English not being important. I also expected some differences in those opinions with grade or age; however, there were little to no differences. What I expected, and the results confirmed it, was that the students would consider English more useful in the world than in the Czech Republic. I did not expect how little students are learning English to get a better job or higher education. It appears that their main reason for studying English is to be able to communicate abroad.

Regarding the results on the importance of cultural background, I expected that students would not think it is essential to know something about the culture in English-speaking countries to speak better English. The results confirmed my expectation. However, I expected that only a few students would state that they are learning English because they are interested in the culture of English-speaking countries. The results have proven me wrong, as almost half of the respondents said they are learning English for that reason.

Attitudes towards English as a school subject

This research segment deals with learners' attitudes towards learning English and English as a school subject. The questions focus on the subject's likability, difficulty, usefulness, and how the respondents perceive it. The first two questions were focused on the difficulty of English.

At first, students were asked if they view the English language as easy, rather easy, rather difficult and difficult. 75,6% of students answered that English is easy or rather easy for them, and 24,4% stated that English is difficult or rather difficult. There was no significant difference with age. The exact numbers are shown in Table 10.

Question 19. I think that the school subject English is
1. Easy
2. Rather easy
3. Rather difficult
4. Difficult

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	1	33	40,2	40,2
	2	29	35,4	35,4
	3	17	20,7	20,7
	4	3	3,7	3,7
	Total	82	100,0	100,0

Table 10 The difficulty of English as a school subject

For this question, students had the option to explain their reasoning, meaning they could express why learning English is easy or difficult for them. From their individual repones, the outstanding answer was that English is easy for them because they use it on the internet while playing computer games or they watch videos, movies or series in English. They explained that thanks to that, they already know a lot of vocabulary and do not have to learn it at school. 16 students out of 82 wrote down something in that matter.

The second most common answer, when 15 students out of 82 wrote down this answer, was that they have a good teacher who can explain the subject well. They also pointed out that the teacher makes them revise a lot which helps them to remember easily. On the other hand, the most frequent answer to why the subject is difficult is that there are a lot of tenses, and the students do not know which one to use. This answer was written by 6 out of 82 students.

The second question about the difficulty focused on how students see the learning process. It aimed to discover whether they were learning English easily. The results are almost the same as in the previous question. 75,6% of the respondents stated that they agree or strongly agree that they can learn English easily, and 24,4% chose the disagree or strongly disagree option. The exact percentage can be seen in Table 11.

Question 22: I can learn English easily

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly Agree

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	1	2	2,4	2,4
	2	18	22,0	22,0
	3	33	40,2	40,2
	4	29	35,4	35,4
	Total	82	100,0	100,0

Table 11 The difficulty of the learning process

The following section of the research focuses on the likeability of English as a school subject. The first question focused on the enjoyability of the subject. Students expressed whether they view English as boring, rather boring, rather enjoyable, or enjoyable. 79,2% of students chose the enjoyable or rather enjoyable option, and 20,8% opted for boring or rather boring. The exact numbers are shown in Table 12.

Question 20: The English subject is

1. Boring
2. Rather boring
3. Rather enjoyable
4. Enjoyable

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	1	4	4,9	4,9
	2	13	15,9	15,9
	3	33	40,2	40,2
	4	32	39,0	39,0
	Total	82	100,0	100,0

Table 12 The enjoyment of English as a school subject

For this question, students also had the option to express their opinion on why they think that English is boring or enjoyable. The most frequent answer was that the students enjoyed the lessons because they had a great teacher. 21 students out of 82 have written down that their teacher can prepare fun lessons and uses exciting materials. They also mentioned that the teacher is helpful and often willing to explain the matter more than once, which helps them later when

writing tests. Those answers show that the teacher's personality tremendously impacts the learners' attitude.

The most written reason for English being boring is that there needs to be more communication in English and that the students feel that they are not learning things that are useful for them outside of school. One student stated: "We have to learn something that the school wants us to learn, but if we're going to know how to communicate with people online or in Croatia, we must learn it ourselves. "Another student said: "We do not talk enough during lessons. I like to communicate in English, and we should do it more." Those answers are in agreement with the concept of language education 2017 – 2022 (Koncepce jazykového vzdělávání 2017–2022), where it is mentioned that students feel a communication level deficit when they leave school and that the results of education do not fulfil their practical needs.

Another question in this segment asks students whether they are looking forward to their English lessons. 81,7% of the respondents said they agree or strongly agree with the statement, which shows that students like English lessons.

Question 24: I am looking forward to English lessons
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly Agree

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	1	5	6,1	6,1
	2	10	12,2	12,2
	3	47	57,3	57,3
	4	20	24,4	24,4
	Total	82	100,0	100,0

Table 13 The excitement for English lessons

The next question focuses on whether the respondents like English as a school subject. 51,2% of students chose the option agree, and 40,2% chose strongly agree. That makes 91,4% of students that like English as a school subject. Only seven students chose the disagree or strongly disagree option. The exact numbers can be seen in Table 14. Those results correspond with Pavelková and Škaloudová (2004), who said that English is seen as favourable among pupils.

Question 21: I like English as a school subject

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	1	2	2,4	2,4
	2	5	6,1	6,1
	3	42	51,2	51,2
	4	33	40,2	40,2
	Total	82	100,0	100,0

Table 14 The popularity of English as a school subject

91,4% of students said they like English, so the results show little to no difference between age or grade. However, 5 out of 7 students who answered that they do not like English are from 8th grade. There is also a slight difference between the agree and strongly agree options, where more 6th graders chose the strongly agree option. The exact result can be seen in Table 15. Those results agree with Delić's study (2020), where it was stated that grade or age does not significantly affect learners' attitudes.

Question 21: I like English as a school subject 1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Agree 4. Strongly agree						
		1	2	3	4	Total
4. Grade	6th grade	1	1	13	22	37
	8th grade	1	4	29	11	45
Total		2	5	42	33	82

Table 15 The influence of age on the popularity of English as a school subject

For this question, students again had the option to explain why they do or do not like English. As seen in the previous question, the reason that appears the most for why they like English is that they have a great teacher. 17 out of 82 respondents stated that they like English as a subject because they like their teacher, which again shows that the role of the teacher is significant in

influencing learners' attitudes. Another frequent response was that they find the subject easy and, therefore, they can study less.

The last question focuses on whether students perceive English at school as useful. No one chose the strongly disagree option, and only one student chose the disagree option. That means that 81 students out of 82 think that English is either useful or rather useful. The exact number can be seen in Table 16.

Question 23: I think that English as a school subject is
1. Useless
2. Rather useless
3. Rather useful
4. Useful

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	2	1	1,2	1,2
	3	22	26,8	26,8
	4	59	72,0	72,0
	Total	82	100,0	100,0

Table 16 The usefulness of English as a school subject

For this question, students also had the option to explain their choice. Almost all students have written down that learning English is useful because they can speak in English all over the world and on the internet, which shows that the students are aware that English is a global language.

Commentaries

This part aimed to determine learners' attitudes towards English as a school subject. The results of this part of the questionnaire indicated that the attitude towards learning English is overall very positive. I expected that there would be differences between grades and age and that younger learners would have a more positive attitude, as the results of most of the studies that are included in the theoretical part said so. However, according to this research, there is almost no difference in attitude between age or grade, and almost all respondents have a positive attitude towards English as a school subject.

One section focused specifically on how easy or difficult English is at school for students. I assumed that the results' numbers would be equal for easy and difficult, as I observed while

teaching that some students struggled with learning English. Nonetheless, the results surprised me as the respondents opted more for the easy or rather easy option. The main reason they stated was the help of their teacher, showing that teachers are influencing the learners' attitude.

The next part focused on the enjoyability of the English language. I expected that the results between English being boring and enjoyable would be levelled, meaning that half of the students would think that English is boring and half would think it is enjoyable. However, the results surprised me, as almost 80% of students stated that the English lessons are fun and they look forward to English lessons.

As for the result on the usefulness of English as a school subject, I expected that most students would describe English as useful, as the results were already determined in the previous section. The results of this section affirmed my expectation, as 98.8% of students think that English is useful or rather useful.

<div align="center">

Factors affecting learners' attitude

</div>

The next section of the research focuses on different factors influencing learners' attitudes like parents, teachers and materials. Each factor is described individually.

Parents

The first factor that can influence learners' attitudes is parents. The first question asked students whether their parents could speak English. 59% of students stated that one or both parents could speak English. 32% of students stated that their parents cannot speak English, and 9% do not know the answer. The exact numbers are shown in Graph 4.
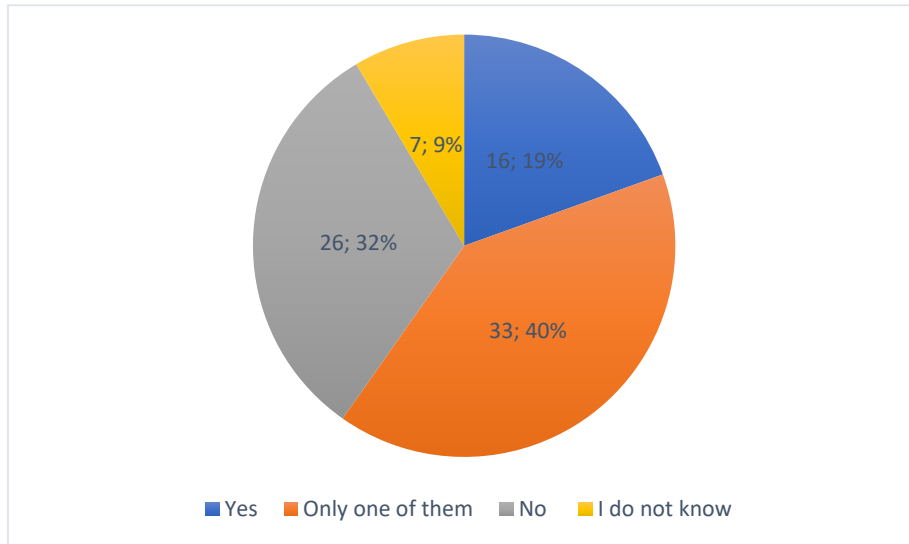
Graph 4 The parents' knowledge of English

The next question asked students whether their parents support them in learning English. 72,8% of students said they agree or strongly agree that their parents support them. 27,2% of students then stated that they do not feel like their parents are giving them support.

The last question aims to discover whether parents tell students that learning English is important. 80,5% of respondents answered that they agree or strongly agree, and 19,5% chose either disagree or strongly disagree. The exact number for those two questions can be seen in Graph 5.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
My parents are supporting me in learning English	10	12	33	26
My parents are telling me that learning English is important	2	14	35	31
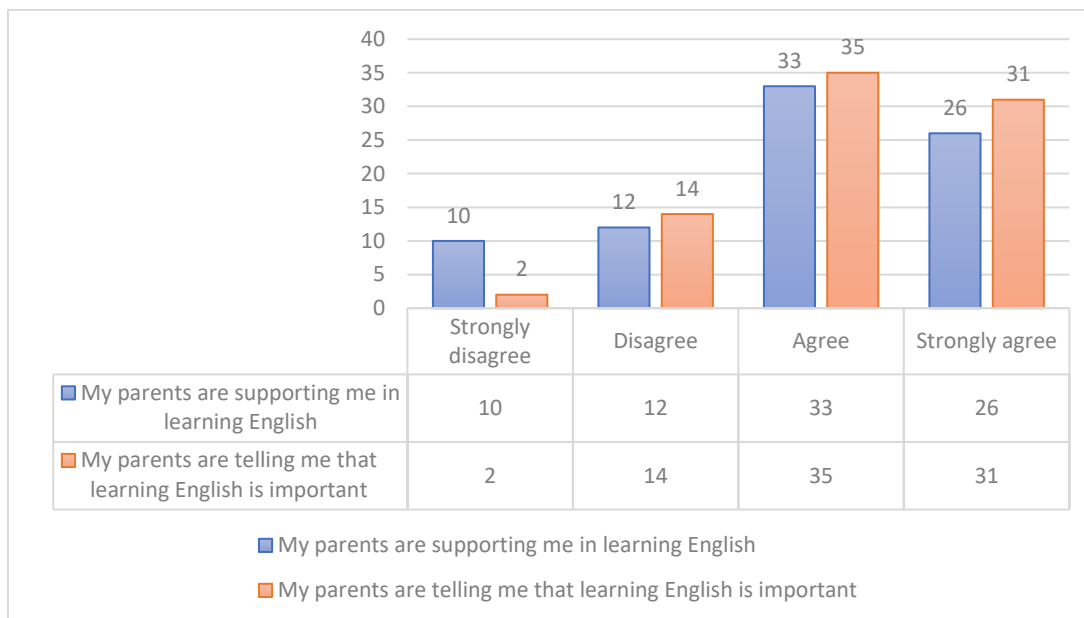
Graph 5 The parents' attitude towards learning English

The results of this section agree with Asmali's study (2017), which is mentioned in the theoretical part. Asmali (2017) stated that the role of parental attitude is significant. According to Asmali's findings, learners' parents support them in learning English. They express themselves that learning English is essential, which corresponds with the research results as 59 out of 82 students said that their parents support them in learning English and 66 out of 82 stated that their parents are telling them that learning English is important. Four students also stated in their individual answers that they like learning English because their parents are supporting them.

Teachers

It has already been mentioned that teachers play a significant role in influencing learners' attitudes. This part of the research focuses on what teachers can do to influence students' attitudes. The first question asked students to express their level of agreement with the statement: My teacher can interest me. 75,6% of students said that they agree or strongly agree with that statement, and 24,4% said that they disagree or strongly disagree. The exact numbers are shown in Table 17. Those results correspond with students' answers to the previous question, where they stated that they have a great teacher and, therefore, the lessons are enjoyable.

Question 30: My English teacher can interest me
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	1	8	9,8	9,8
	2	12	14,6	14,6
	3	36	43,9	43,9
	4	26	31,7	31,7
	Total	82	100,0	100,0

Table 17 The interestingness of English language teacher

For this question, students could express their reasoning for their answers. Ten students responded that their teacher could interest them thanks to the materials they bring to the classroom, which confirms the statement from the theoretical part that materials influence learners' attitudes. Another frequent answer was that their teacher has a good sense of humour and can make the lessons fun.

Another two questions focus on the content of the lesson. The first question asked students whether they think their teacher focuses only on grammar and vocabulary. 17,1% of students said that they strongly agree, and 45,1% said that they agree with that statement. The exact numbers can be found in Table 18.

Question 28: My teacher focuses only on grammar and vocabulary
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	1	4	4,9	4,9
	2	27	32,9	32,9
	3	37	45,1	45,1
	4	14	17,1	17,1
	Total	82	100,0	100,0

Table 18 The main focus of English lessons

The results show that 62,2% of students believe the lessons' primary focus is grammar and vocabulary. Those results agree with Dvořáková's (2006) statement that the grammar–translation method is still the most used. She also mentioned that the targeted language is not used enough in the classroom, which is explored in the next question.

This question asked students whether their teachers mainly use English during lessons. The answers were balanced between the strongly agree/agree and strongly disagree/disagree options. 53,7% of students stated that they agree or strongly agree with the statement that their teacher uses mainly English. 46,3% of students then chose the disagree or strongly disagree option. The exact numbers are shown in Table 19. The results agree with Dvořáková's (2006) results which state that English is not even used as the primary language in the classroom.

Question 31: My teacher uses mainly English during lessons
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	1	3	3,7	3,7
	2	35	42,7	42,7
	3	39	47,6	47,6
	4	5	6,1	6,1
	Total	82	100,0	100,0

Table 19 The use of English during lessons

The next question is connected to the previous one and asks students whether their teacher encourages them to speak in English in their classroom. 88,3% of students chose the strongly agree or agree option, and only nine students chose the disagree or strongly disagree option. The exact results are described in Table 20. The results show that even though the teachers are not using mainly English, they are still encouraging students to speak in it.

Question 29:My teacher encourages me to speak in English during lessons
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	1	2	2,4	2,5
	2	7	8,5	8,6
	3	39	47,6	48,1
	4	33	40,2	40,7
	Total	81	98,8	100,0
Missing		1	1,2	
Total		82	100,0	

Table 20 The encouragement from a teacher to speak English

The last question concluded in this research asked students whether the teachers are willing to help them when they do not understand something. No respondent chose the strongly disagree option, and only one student chose the disagree option. That means 98,8% of students agree or

strongly agree that their teacher helps them when needed. This answer was also mentioned in the individual responses. Students have written that they think English is easy because their teacher can explain everything well and help them when they do not understand. The exact numbers for this question are shown in Table 21.

Question 32: My teacher always helps me when I do not understand something
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	2	1	1,2	1,2
	3	31	37,8	37,8
	4	50	61,0	61,0
	Total	82	100,0	100,0

Table 21 The assistance of the teacher during English lessons

Materials

The last section of this research focuses on materials and how the students view them. The first question focused on whether the teacher uses interesting materials in lessons. Eighteen students strongly disagreed or disagreed with the teacher using exciting materials. That means that 68 students out of 81 think that their teacher is using exciting materials in their lessons. The complete results are shown in Table 22.

This result was also confirmed in the previous question – why do you think that English lessons are enjoyable/boring – where students said that they enjoyed English lessons because of the material that the teachers are using.

Question 33: My teacher uses interesting material

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	1	2	2,4	2,5
	2	16	19,5	19,8
	3	38	46,3	46,9
	4	25	30,5	30,9
	Total	81	98,8	100,0
Missing	System	1	1,2	
Total		82	100,0	

Table 22 The interestingness of English materials

The next question focused on students' workbooks and whether they find it interesting. Students should express their level of agreement on the 4-point Likert scale. The results show 41,5% of students strongly disagree or disagree with their English workbook being interesting. On the other hand, 57,3% of students stated that their English workbook is interesting. The exact number can be found in Table 23.

Question 34: My English workbook is interesting

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	1	8	9,8	9,9
	2	26	31,7	32,1
	3	35	42,7	43,2
	4	12	14,6	14,8
	Total	81	98,8	100,0
Missing	System	1	1,2	
Total		82	100,0	

Table 23 The interestingness of the English workbook

To add to this question, students could explain why they think the workbook is or is not interesting. The answer that the students wrote the most was that the workbook is exciting because it is very colourful and has many pictures. They also mentioned that the workbook is easy, so they can understand everything, making them feel good. On the other hand, the students who did not find the workbook interesting explained that it looked childish and that there should be more exercises.

The last two questions focused on the use of digital technologies in lessons. The first asked whether the teacher uses digital technologies, and the second asked whether the students use them. The results show that both students and teachers use digital technologies, although teachers use them more often than students. 75,6% of students said their teacher often uses digital technologies in lessons. 23,2% of students stated that their teacher sometimes uses digital technology, and only one student, which is 1,2%, answered that their teacher never uses digital technologies. As for the second question, 13,4% of students said they often use digital technologies, 74,4% stated that they often use digital technologies, and 12,2% said they never use them. The exact numbers are shown in Graph 5.

	Never	Sometimes	Often
My teacher uses digital technologies in lessons	1	19	62
I am using digital technologies in lessons	10	61	11

■ My teacher uses digital technologies in lessons   ■ I am using digital technologies in lessons
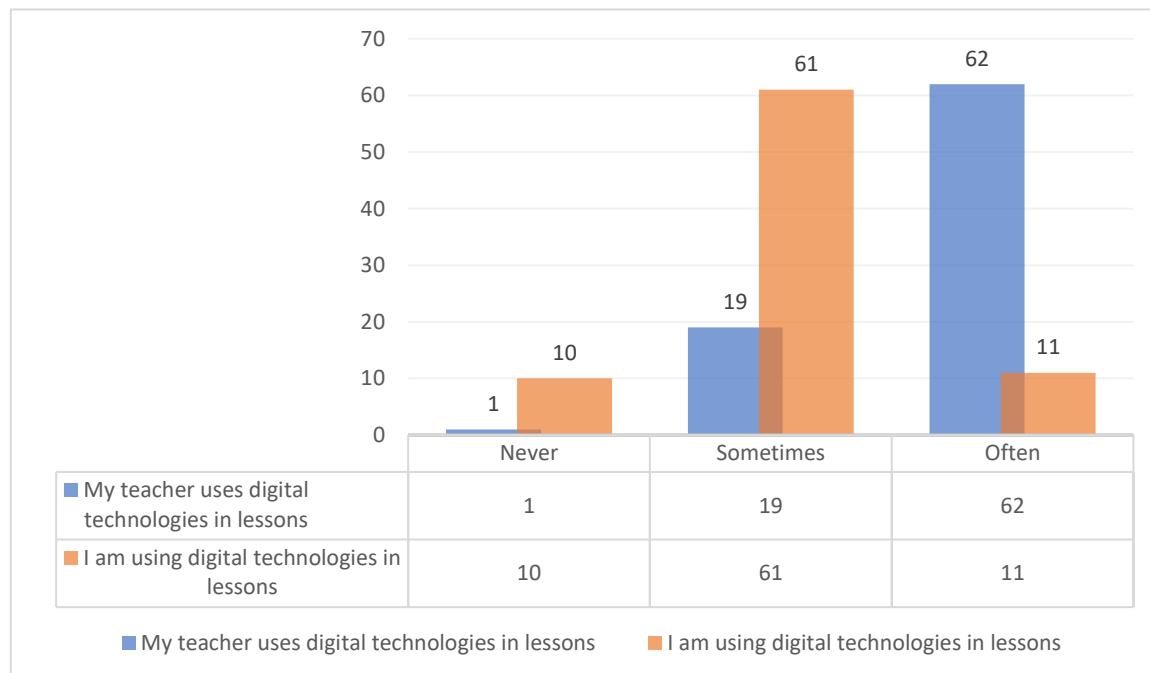
Graph 6 The use of digital technologies in English lessons

The theoretical part mentions that, according to Wilkins (1974), materials are necessary and can influence students' attitudes. This statement is confirmed by the results of this research, as 84% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that their teacher uses exciting materials. The importance of materials was also brought up in students' individual answers, where they said that the English lessons are more fun and likeable thanks to interesting materials.

Commentaries

This research segment focused on different factors that can influence learners' attitudes. Those factors were also mentioned in the theoretical part. The first factor that was examined was the influence of parents. I expected that the parents would support the students in learning English. The results confirmed this expectation. What surprised me was that the parents told the students that English is important. I assumed that the parents would prefer the German language, as Germany is close to our town. Nonetheless, the results show that parents perceive English as important and encourage their children to learn it.

The next factor examined in this section was the teacher's influence. It was already said both in the theoretical part and in this part that teachers significantly affect learners' attitudes. However, I did not expect so many students to mention the role of teachers in their individual responses. A great teacher was the most written reason why the students liked English at school and found the subject easy and enjoyable. Those answers confirm that teachers can greatly influence learners' attitudes. What I did expect and therefore was not surprised by the results was that the teachers focus primarily on grammar and vocabulary. Our school curriculum focuses heavily on grammar, so the grammar-translation method is still the most used. The students also stated in their individual answers that they want to learn more practical things that they can use, for example, when travelling. However, this is something that we as teachers can change only a little as we have to follow the school curriculum. Even though, according to the results, teachers are focusing mainly on grammar and vocabulary; they are still encouraging students to speak in English, which indicates that the teachers are trying to incorporate more speaking into their lessons.

As for the teachers using mainly English in their classrooms, I was surprised that the results were similar on both sides. I expected that the English language would be the most used in English lessons; however, the results show that it is not the case in ZŠ Nýřany.

The last factor examined in this research is materials. Students stated in their answers that they like the materials that the teachers are using and find them attractive. I expect these results as nowadays, thanks to the internet, teachers can access many different materials online and get inspired. However, I did not expect that more than half of the respondents would like the English textbook they are using. I was surprised by the results as I would prefer something else to those textbooks. I agree with students' responses that the textbook is childish, mainly since ZŠ Nýřany uses one book for two years. However, I expected more students to feel that way about their textbooks, so I was surprised that more than 50% of students liked it.

The last part of this research focused on digital technologies. I expected the students to say that teachers use digital technologies often as many of our materials are online, and every classroom has a computer and data projector. I was surprised that one student said that their teacher never uses digital technologies because, as far as I am concerned, teachers should use digital technologies. However, as it is only one response, it is possible that it was clicked on by mistake. I also expected that the students would mostly say that they sometimes use digital technologies as it was recently added to the school curriculum that the students must work with them. I did not expect they would say they work with them often, as it is impossible thanks to the school's limited capacity of computers and tablets.

The question to be answered by the research were these: Do students consider the English language important, and do they realise its role as a global language ?; What are the learners' attitudes towards learning English?; Do the demographical factors affect learners' attitudes towards English and learning English ?; What factors affect learners' attitudes towards English and learning English?

The overall results indicate that the students consider the English language important. They realise its importance in the world and see the language as beneficial for themselves. The results also indicate that the students realise the role of English as a global language and know that speaking English is a needed skill in today's world.

Considering the learners' attitude towards learning English, the results show that the students have an overall positive attitude. The results also indicate that the learners perceive the subject as favourable, relatively easy and significant.

According to the results, there is no difference in attitude between different grades, ages or genders. Most students have a positive attitude towards learning English, and the number of those who do not is insufficient to make a difference. There was also no difference in attitude towards English as a language as, again, the attitude was overall positive.

According to the research results, an English language teacher is the most significant factor affecting learners' attitudes. Students mentioned multiple times that they like English lessons because of their teacher and find them more enjoyable for the same reason. Materials are another factor influencing learners' attitudes towards English, which arose from the results. The results indicate that materials can make English lessons more excitable and influence students' attitudes towards learning English. The results also show that parental support affects learners' attitudes; however, it is not as big of an influence as the teachers.

This chapter presented the outcomes of the research conducted for this thesis, accompanied by commentaries on the results. Ultimately, the study's key findings were summarised in relation to the research questions. The next chapter aims to explore potential pedagogical implications that emerge from the topics addressed in the theoretical section of the thesis and from the research findings.

V. IMPLICATIONS

This chapter builds upon the previous one, focusing on the pedagogical implications that arose from the research findings in its initial part. It also explores the potential limitations of the research and provides suggestions for future research.

Implication for teaching

The results of the questionary brought a lot of interesting findings. The main goal of this research was to discover students' attitudes towards English and learning English and what factors can influence these attitudes. One of the significant findings is that the students find the English language important in the sense that they need this language for communication abroad or on the Internet. However, the students feel this practical factor has little place in the lessons. They feel that there is a lack of communication in the lessons and that they will not prepare them for everyday life. Teachers should consider including more conversational topics in their lessons, such as shopping, booking hotel rooms etc., as this is how the students would use the language the most.

Another critical result connected to the previous one was that the students think grammar and vocabulary are still the most practised in classrooms. This result again suggests that conversation and communication need more space in lessons. Students should be able to create conversation on the spot and not be afraid to speak. Teachers should encourage students to speak more freely and create a positive atmosphere in the classroom so the students would not be afraid to speak in front of each other.

The following important finding is that the materials teachers present in the classroom can influence the enjoyment of the lessons and, therefore, the learners' attitudes. Teachers should use exciting materials such as worksheets with pictures and alter between different activities and materials so the students would be more energised.

Another finding concerning materials was that some students find their textbooks too easy and childish. Teachers and the management of the schools should consider replacing the textbooks

with ones that are more age-appropriate or at least limiting the use to one textbook per year to make the textbooks more exciting and challenging for the students.

Nonetheless, the most critical finding is that the students have an overall positive attitude towards learning English and appreciate their teachers. Teachers should keep in mind that they significantly influence students' attitudes and keep working on that so that the attitude does not change.

Limitations of the Research

First of all, it needs to be mentioned that this research cannot be generalised; however, it is possible to get interesting information out of it. The first problem is that the research was done in only one elementary school. Although the students had four different English language teachers, the school curriculum and the yearly teaching plan remained the same. The results would probably be different if there were more schools involved.

Another issue was that even though the students were told beforehand that the answers they submitted would only be used for this research and would not affect their marks, they might still feel under pressure thanks to the presence of a teacher in the classroom. For that reason, the learners could fill the questionary in a way they think would please their teacher.

On the other hand, some students did not take the research seriously enough. Their answers to the open-ended answers were complete nonsense (for example, one student wrote to all of the questions I am Batman), so those answers were unusable. Those answers could result from the student's overall attitude towards school, or maybe they wanted to look "cool" in front of their classmates. That leads to another issue: the students completed the questionary in their classroom, and therefore the classmates could see what the other was writing, which might lead to irrelevant answers.

The next problem was that the questionary was too long, and the students lost attention quickly. However, even with this length, the questionary was insufficient to examine the attitude properly because, as stated in the theoretical part, attitude is a very complex issue.

It would be suitable to ask students complementary questions to understand their attitudes better. Also, as the results for the attitude were overall positive, it was almost impossible to determine which factors were affecting the attitude.

Suggestions for Further Research

I believe the questionary was the best tool to conduct the research for the number of respondents. However, the questionary needed to examine the matter more deeply, and therefore, it would be great to accompany the questionary with complementary interviews with individual students.

The research would also benefit if the students had the option to fill the questionary alone without the presence of their teacher or their classmates, as it might influence their answers. However, asking the students to complete the questionary at home could mean that not all students would, whether because they do not want to or do not have internet access.

Another suggestion would be to shorten the questionary so the students could genuinely focus on what they were writing and not lose attention halfway. It could be interesting to do shorter questionnaires and then do interviews with chosen students. This way, the researchers could examine the learners' personalities, making determining what factors affect their attitudes easier. It could also be interesting to ask the teachers how they view the learners' attitudes and compare them with the research results.

It could be interesting to realise the research within different elementary schools as it could explore the overall attitude in the Czech Republic more. It could also show more differences between the age and gender of the learners. It could also be interesting to conduct the research in different levels of education, meaning elementary and high school, as the different attitudes with age would probably be more apparent.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

Thanks to globalisation, English has become the global language, and it is studied by students worldwide. In the present day, knowing English is beneficial not only for communicating worldwide but it is also advantageous for education and job searching. As discussed in the theoretical part of this thesis, attitudes play a crucial role in student's education as they can significantly impact their performance and overall achievements. Students' attitudes can be either positive or negative and can be influenced by various factors, including their personality traits, the teacher's influence, and the available educational materials.

For the purpose of this thesis, I have examined the attitude of 82 students from ZŠ Nýřany. The sample consisted of 6th graders and 8th graders so that the different ages could be compared. The results showed that the learners' attitude towards English and learning English is overall positive. However, the results did not show any significant difference in learners' attitudes with age, grade, or gender.

The results also revealed that the learners realise the role of English as a global language and know it is a useful tool for worldwide communication. It follows that the learners realise the importance of English. Unfortunately, a majority of students tend to perceive the importance of English primarily in relation to their individual needs, while fewer students recognise its significance on a global scale.

It was also found that the English language teacher is the primary factor influencing learners' attitudes. The teachers can create a positive atmosphere in the classroom and use interesting materials, and therefore they have the ability to affect learners' attitudes in a positive way.

Teachers could use this information and try to influence learners' attitudes to be positive. Teachers play a crucial role in shaping and influencing students' attitudes. Since attitudes can be modified and acquired, it is essential for teachers to investigate and understand their students' attitudes actively. By gaining insight into their students' attitudes, teachers can apply appropriate strategies to support positive attitudes and create a helpful learning environment.

REFERENCES

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

Algeo, J. (2009). *The Origins and Development of the English Language* (6th ed.). Cengage Learning

Aponte, Z. (2018). *Both sides of the coin: the effects of the spread of English as a global language*. Revista Ingenios, 5(1), 1-4. https://doi.org/10.22463/issn.2011-642X

Arda, S. (2017). *Analysis of Young Learners' and Teenagers' Attitudes to English* Language Le*arning.* https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1207256

Asghar, A., Jamil, I., Iqbal, A., & Yasmin, M. (2018). Learner Attitude towards EFL Learning: A Response from Art and Design. *Open Journal of Social Scien*ces, 06(05), 81–88. https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2018.65007

Asmali, M. (2017). Young Learners' Attitudes and Motivation to Learn English. *Novitas-ROYAL (Research on Youth and Langu*age), 11(1), 53–68. http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1167207.pdf

Baker, C. C. (1992). *Attitudes and language*. Multilingual Matters.

Baugh, A. C., & Cable, T. (2002). *A History of the English Language* (5th ed.). Psychology Press.

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

Crystal, D. (2012). *English as a Global Language* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.

Czesaná, V., & Kofroňová, O. (2004). *Attitudes to education and educational pathway preferences in the Czech Republic*. European Journal of Vocational Training, 33, 30-39. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ734151.pdf

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. (2001). *Motivational Strategies in the Language Classroom* (Cambridge Language Teaching Library). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/CBO9780511667343

Dvořáková, K. (2020). Early Foreign Language Teaching in the Czech Republic: Existing Problems and Future Challenges. *Jcu*. https://www.academia.edu/43415646/Early_Foreign_Language_Teaching_in_the_Czech_Republic_Existing_Problems_and_Future_Challenges.

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

Foukalová, T. (2009). *Postoje učitelů a žáků ve výuce angličtiny* [MA thesis]. Ji očeská univerzita v Českých Budějovicích.

Gardner, R. (1985*). Social psychology and second language learning : the role of attitudes and motivation* (4th ed.). Edward Arnold.

Getie, A. (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

Hrubá, J. (2011). *Jak zj stíte postoj žáků k vašemu předmětu?* https://clanky.rvp.cz/clanek/13809/JAK-ZJISTITE-POSTOJ-ZAKU-K-VASEMU-PREDMETU.html%3E.%20ISSN%201802-4785.

Kaderka, P., & Prošek, M. (2014). English in the Czech Republic: Linguists' Perspectives. *Sociolinguistica*, 173-198. https://doi.org/10.1515/soci-2014-0014

Kachru, B. B. (1990). World Englishes and applied linguistics. *World Englishes*, 9(1), 3–20. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-971x.1990.tb00683.x

Koldová, K. (2002). *Motivation for learning english of the contemporary Czech learner* [MA thesis]. Univerzita Pardubice.

Koncepce jazykového vzdělávání 2017–2022 (MSMT-9210/2017-2). (2017). https://www.nidv.cz/images/ntopics/manual-nahrane/Koncepce_jazykoveho_vzdelavani_PV_compressed.pdf

Larsen-Freeman, D., & Long, M. H. (1991). *An Introduction to Second Language Acquisition Research*. Routledge.

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/BISA/article/view/128/110

Mašić, A., & Bećirović, S. (2021). Attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language. *Journal of Linguistic Intercultural Education*, 14(2), 85–106. https://doi.org/10.29302/jolie.2021.14.2.5

McKay, S. L. (2002). *Teaching English as an international language: Rethinking goals*

and perspectives. New York: Oxford University Press.

Medina, E. G. L., & Hurtado, C. F. (2018). Impact of Hollywood movies in the expansion of English as global language. *Ciencia Digital*, 2(2), 512–531. https://doi.org/10.33262/cienciadigital.v2i2.117

Mijwil, M. M. (2018). *Brief History of the English language*. www.linkedin.com. https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/brief-history-english-language-maad-m-mijwel

Moon, J. (2004). *Children learning English: A guidebook for English language teachers*. London: Macmillan.

Naiman, N. (1978). *The Good language learner*. Toronto : Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Noursi, O. A. (2013). Attitude towards Learning English: The case of the UAE Technological High School. *Educational Research*, 4, 21-30.

Northrup, D. (2013). *How English Became the Global Language*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Odložilová, K. (2017). *Comparison of motivation at first school and Lower Secondary School in English Language* [Bachelor thesis]. Masarykova univerzita Brno.

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/wpcontent/uploads/2020/05/Pavelkova-Skaloudova.pdf

Prokop, D., Kunc, M., & Korbel, V. (2020). *Postoje rodičů ke vzdělávání v ČR a k učitelské profesi*. Nadace České Spořitelny. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PQGYTwlgGMc0LtCrP786mVuXCUrmhyRU/view?usp=sharing

Smith, A. N. (1971). The Importance of Attitude in Foreign Language Learning. *The Modern Language Journal*, 55(2), 21-30. https://doi.org/10.2307/321854

The Most Spoken Languages in the World | Berlitz. (2023a, February 6). Berlitz. https://www.berlitz.com/blog/most-spoken-languages-world

Tomlinson, B. (1998). *Materials Development in Language Teaching*. Cambridge University Press.

Verba, L. (2004). *History of the English language.* NOVAKNYHA. https://library.udpu.edu.ua/library_files/400177.pdf

Vít, M. (2008, May 13). *Britská a americká angličtina: Úvod.* Help for English - Angličtina Na Internetu Zdarma. https://www.helpforenglish.cz/article/2008051302-britska-a-americka-anglictina-uvod

Wilkins, D. A. (1974). *Second-language Learning and Teaching*. Hodder Education.

Yadav, A. (2023, January 10). English Language Statistics | Lemon Grad. *Lemon Grad*. https://lemongrad.com/english-language-statistics/

Zatloukal, T. (2022). *Kvalita a efektivita vzdělávání a vzdělávací soustavy ve školním roce 2021/2022*. Česká Školní Inspekce. https://www.csicr.cz/CSICR/media/Prilohy/2022_p%c5%99%c3%adlohy/Dokumenty/Vyrocni-zprava_2021_2022_everze.pdf

Zormanová, L. (2015). *Výuka cizích jazyků v České republice a v EU.* https://clanky.rvp.cz/clanek/k/z/19693/VYUKA-CIZICH-JAZYKU-V-CESKE-REPUBLICE-A-V-EU.html

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Dotazník

1. Zadejte svůj kód (poslední trojčíslí tvého telefonního čísla)

2. Pohlaví:
 - muž
- žena

3. Kolik je ti let ?
 - 11
- 12
- 13
- 14

4. V jaké jsi třídě ?
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9

5. Kdy jsi se začal učit angličtinu
- Ve školce
- 1. – 2. třída
- 3. třída
- 7. třída
- Nevím

6. Chodíš na hodiny AJ mimo výuku na ZŠ (doučování, kroužek...)
- Ano
- Ne

7. Ve volném čase hraji počítačové hry v angličtině. (Pokud ne, přeskoč na otázku č. 9)
1. Nikdy
2. Někdy
3. Často

8. Při hraní počítačových her komunikuji s ostatními v angličtině...¨
1. Nikdy
2. Někdy
3. Často

9. Ve volném čase koukám na filmy/seriály převážně v angličtině (bez titulků v aj i čj)
1. Nikdy
2. Někdy
3. Často

10. Pří sledování filmu/seriálu v angličtině používám anglické titulky
1. Nikdy
2. Někdy
3. Často

11. Při sledování filmu/seriálu v angličtině používám české titulky
1. Nikdy
2. Někdy
3. Často

12. Anglický jazyk je ve světě důležitý
1. Velmi nesouhlasím
2. Nesouhlasím
3. Souhlasím
4. Velmi souhlasím

13. Učit se angličtinu je důležité, protože je tento jazyk užitečný ve světě
1. Velmi nesouhlasím
2. Nesouhlasím
3. Souhlasím
4. Velmi souhlasím

14. Učit se angličtinu je důležité, protože je tento jazyk užitečný v České republice
1. Velmi nesouhlasím
2. Nesouhlasím
3. Souhlasím
4. Velmi souhlasím

15. Umět anglický jazyk je v dnešním světě velkou výhodou
1. Velmi nesouhlasím
2. Nesouhlasím
3. Souhlasím
4. Velmi souhlasím

16. Učím se anglicky protože mě zajímá kultura anglicky mluvících zemí
1. Velmi nesouhlasím
2. Nesouhlasím
3. Souhlasím
4. Velmi souhlasím

17. Angličtinu se naučím lépe, pokud budu vědět něco o jejich kultuře
1. Velmi nesouhlasím
2. Nesouhlasím
3. Souhlasím
4. Velmi souhlasím

18. Proč se učíš anglicky ?
- Abych se dorozuměl v zahraničí
- Protože je to povinný předmět
- Abych dokázal mluvit anglicky
- Protože mě to baví
- Abych dosáhl vyššího vzdělání
- Abych získal lepší práci
- Jiné, uveď:

19. Vyučovací předmět angličtina je pro mě
1. Lehký
2. Spíše lehký
3. Spíše těžký
4. Těžký

Vysvětli svou odpověď u otázky č. 19. Proč je to pro tebe lehké/těžké...

20. Vyučovací předmět angličtina je pro mě
1. Nudný
2. Spíše nudný
3. Spíše zábavný
4. Zábavný

Vysvětli svou odpověď u otázky č. 20. Proč ti angličtina přijde nudná/zábavná...

21. Mám rád vyučovací předmět AJ
1. Velmi nesouhlasím
2. Nesouhlasím
3. Souhlasím
4. Velmi souhlasím

Vysvětli svou odpověď u otázky č. 21. Proč máš/nemáš angličtinu rád/a...

22. Učení angličtiny mi jde velmi snadno
1. Velmi nesouhlasím
2. Nesouhlasím
3. Souhlasím
4. Velmi souhlasím

23. Vyučovací předmět angličtina považuji za...
1. Neužitečný
2. Spíše neužitečný
3. Spíše užitečný
4. Užitečný

Vysvětli svou odpověď u otázky č. 23. Proč angličtinu považuješ za užitečnou/neužitečnou...

24. Na hodiny angličtiny se těším...
1. Velmi nesouhlasím
2. Nesouhlasím
3. Souhlasím
4. Velmi souhlasím

Vysvětli svou odpověď u otázky č. 24. Proč se na hodiny angličtiny těšíš/netěšíš...

25. Rodiče mi říkají, že je důležité se učit anglicky...
1. Velmi nesouhlasím
2. Nesouhlasím
3. Souhlasím
4. Velmi souhlasím

26. Moji rodiče umí anglicky
- Ano
- Pouze jeden z nich
- Ne

27. Rodiče mě podporují v učení se anglickému jazyku
1. Velmi nesouhlasím
2. Nesouhlasím
3. Souhlasím
4. Velmi souhlasím

28. Můj učitel angličtiny se soustředí pouze na gramatiku jazyka a slovní zásobu
1. Velmi nesouhlasím
2. Nesouhlasím
3. Souhlasím
4. Velmi souhlasím

29. Můj učitel angličtiny mě podporuje v mluvení
1. Velmi nesouhlasím
2. Nesouhlasím
3. Souhlasím
4. Velmi souhlasím

30. Můj učitel angličtiny mě dokáže zaujmout
1. Velmi nesouhlasím
2. Nesouhlasím
3. Souhlasím
4. Velmi souhlasím

Vysvětli svou odpověď u otázky č. 30. Proč tě tvůj učitel/učitelka dokáže zaujmout, proč ne...

31. Můj učitel angličtiny mluví při hodinách převážně anglicky
1. Velmi nesouhlasím
2. Nesouhlasím
3. Souhlasím
4. Velmi souhlasím

32. Můj učitel mi vždy pomůže pokud něčemu nerozumím
1. Velmi nesouhlasím
2. Nesouhlasím
3. Souhlasím
4. Velmi souhlasím

33. Náš učitel angličtiny používá zajímavé materiály
1. Velmi nesouhlasím
2. Nesouhlasím
3. Souhlasím
4. Velmi souhlasím

34. Moje učebnice angličtiny je zajímavá
1. Velmi nesouhlasím
2. Nesouhlasím
3. Souhlasím
4. Velmi souhlasím

Vysvětli svoji odpověď u otázky č. 34. Proč je podle tebe učebnice zajímavá/nezajímavá

35. Můj učitel angličtiny používá při výuce technologie (počítač, interaktivní tabule, reproduktory...)
1. Nikdy
2. Někdy
3. Často

36. Při výuce angličtiny používám technologie (tablety, notebooky...)
1. Nikdy
2. Někdy
3. Často

1. Enter your code here (the last three numbers of your telephone number)

2. Gender:
 - male
- female

3. How old are you?
 - 11
- 12
- 13
- 14

4. What grade are you in?
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9

5. When did you start learning English?
- In preschool
- 1st– 2nd grade
- 3rd grade
- 7th grade
- I do not know

6. Do you attend any English lessons outside of school? (tutoring etc.)
- Yes
- No

7. In my free time, I play computer games in English
1. Never
2. Sometimes
3. Often

8. While playing computer games, I communicate with others in English.
1. Never
2. Sometimes
3. Often

9. In my free time, I watch movies/series in English without subtitles
1. Never
2. Sometimes
3. Often

10. When watching movies/series in English, I use English subtitles
1. Never
2. Sometimes
3. Often

11. When watching movies/series in English, I use Czech subtitles
1. Never
2. Sometimes
3. Often

12. The English language is important in the world
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

13. Learning English is important because it is useful in the world.
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

14. Learning English is important because the language is useful in the Czech Republic.
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

15. Knowing English is an advantage in today's world
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

16. I am learning English because I am interested in the culture of the English-speaking countries.
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

17. I can learn English better If I know something about their culture.
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

18. Why are you learning English?
- To be able to communicate abroad
- Because it is a school subject
- To be able to speak English
- Because I enjoy it
- To get higher education
- To get a better job
- Other

19. I think that the school subject English is
1. Easy
2. Rather easy
3. Rather difficult
4. Difficult

Explain your answer to question 19. Why is English easy/difficult for you

20. I think that the school subject English is

1. Boring
2. Rather boring
3. Rather enjoyable
4. Enjoyablw

Explain your answer to question 20. Why do you think English is enjoyable/boring

21. I like English as a school subject
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

Explain your answer to question 21. Why do/do not you like English lessons

22. I can learn English easily
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

23. I think that English as a school subject is

1. Useless
2. Rather useless
3. Rather useful
4. Useful

Explain your answer to question 23. Why do you think that English is useless/useful

24. I am looking forward to English lessons.
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

Explain your answer to question 24. Why are/are not you looking forward to English lessons

25. My parents are telling me that learning English is important
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

26. My parents can speak English
- Yes
- Only one of them
- No
- I do not know

27. My parents are supporting me in learning English
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

28. My teacher focuses only on grammar and vocabulary
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

29. My teacher encourages me to speak in English during lessons
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

30. My English teacher can interest me
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

Explain your answer to question 30. Why can/cannot your teacher interest you

31. My teacher uses mainly English during lessons
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

32. My teacher always helps me when I do not understand something
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

33. My teacher uses interesting material
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

34. My English workbook is interesting
1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

Explain your answer to question 34. Why do/do not you think that your textbook is interesting

35. My teacher uses digital technologies in lessons (computer, projector etc.)
1. Never
2. Sometimes
3. Often

36. I am using digital technologies in lessons (tablets, laptops etc.)
1. Never
2. Sometimes
3. Often

SHRNUTÍ

Diplomová práce se zabývá tématem postojů českých studentů k angličtině a jejímu studiu. Práce nejprve stručně shrnuje historii a vývoj anglického jazyka a poté se zabývá rolí angličtiny ve světě. Poté se práce zaměřuje na postoje k učení se angličtině a na faktory, které by tyto postoje mohly ovlivnit. Hlavním cílem této práce je prozkoumat postoje českých studentů k učení se angličtině a faktory, které je ovlivňují. Výzkum byl realizován s žáky 6. a 8. tříd základní školy. Výsledky výzkumu ukázaly, že žáci mají celkově pozitivní postoj k angličtině a jejímu studiu. Chápou současný stav angličtiny a uvědomují si její význam ve světě. Žáci se však domnívají, že v hodinách angličtiny je třeba více komunikovat a učit se více věcí, které mohou využít i mimo školu. Práce dále navrhuje možné způsoby, jak mohou učitelé využít informace z výzkumu a ovlivnit tak postoje žáků.