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**ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA: THEORY AND
PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

Plzeň, duben 2016

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podpis autora

Hereby, I would like to thank my family who has supported me during the preparation of my Bachelor thesis.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The objective of this Bachelor thesis is to study English as a lingua franca, namely its historical background as an international tool of communication, its linguistic features, and its impact on particular areas of society. The final practical part of this study analyses the degree of awareness and preferences of university students connected to this phenomenon based on an empirical research.

English as a lingua franca is prevalent in today's globalised world and affects large parts of society. The author has personally encountered English as a lingua franca in her everyday life as well as in work environment. This triggered the author's interest and drove her to explore the phenomenon further.

During the research the author came across following questions: What meaning lies under the term "lingua franca"? What are some of the key points in the development of this phenomenon? How does it contribute to the world, society? How is it perceived by university students? To which sectors does this phenomenon currently apply? What languages either in the past or present held a status of a lingua franca? This study strives for answering these questions based on informative sources as well as practical social research.

The thesis is divided into two main parts. The first part is theoretical whereas the second part of the thesis is practical.

In the first part the author describes the process of English spreading around the globe as a foundation for a global lingua franca. This part allows the reader to get acquainted with the developing process of ELF phenomenon. Moreover, the author introduces and defines ELF along with its linguistic features and provides description of ELF practical implication in particular areas of society.

The second part of the thesis is a practical part that contains author's empirical research. The goal of this survey research is to determine at what extent university students are aware of the English as a lingua franca phenomenon.

Personal experience of the author of this thesis during studies abroad motivated her interest in studying this phenomenon among university students.

The closure and evaluation of the research can be found in the conclusion. A brief summary is provided in the abstract, the Czech version in the resumé, found at the end of this thesis.

1.1. Abbreviations

The following abbreviations used in the text of this thesis stand for:

- CNN = The Cable News Network
- EFL = English as a foreign language
- ELF = English as a lingua franca
- ENL = English as a native language
- ERASMUS = European Region Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students
- ESL = English as a second language
- GA = General American (an accent of American English)
- IT = information technology
- L1 speakers = speakers who acquired a language as their first language
- L2 speakers = speakers for whom a language is not a first language but who acquired it as their second language, as it is commonly used in their country
- NATO = The North Atlantic Treaty Organization
- UN = The United Nations
- UNESCO = The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
- UNICEF = The United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
- RP = Received Pronunciation (an accent of Standard English in the United Kingdom)
- WHO = The World Health Organization

THEORETICAL PART

2. POSITION OF ENGLISH IN THE WORLD

In today's world, the English language holds an unique and important position. It may not be the language with the highest number of native speakers but it is a language that holds a dominant position and has far reaching influence around the globe. English is nowadays mastered by more than 750 million non-native speakers (Graddol, p. 10). No other existing language can boast of such high volume of people learning it as a foreign language.

2.1. Historical background of English spreading

The Age of Exploration saw the beginning of the proliferation of the English language outside the borders of the British Isles. In the 15th to 18th centuries European empires set out to explore the world in order to claim new land for their country and to discover hidden treasures in future colonies such as gold or spices. Among the colonising countries were Spain, Portugal, France, Britain and the Netherlands. While proclaiming their colonies and bringing new settlers to the colonies, the colonisers implemented not only their culture, laws, institutions, politics but also their language (Stevenson, p. 196-197).

Spain possessed the biggest number of colonies until the 16th century. As a result Spanish became the most frequently spoken language in the world. However, Spanish soon lost its momentum as the Spanish empire began to decline. Among potential reasons for the unsuccess of not only Spanish but also French, Portuguese and Dutch to become a language that would be used all around the globe, belongs the loss of their military power in the newly claimed areas (Němec, Čížek, *Koloniální expanze v 17. – 18. století*).

Portugal was another great European colonising empire. Portugal was among the first European countries to set sail into the "unknown", gaining lots of new territories and power. However, in 17th century the Portuguese lost significance of their trade monopoly in the Indian Ocean to the Netherlands and its most valuable colony becomes Brasil. The Spanish empire ended in the 16th

century with the defeat of the Spanish Armada by Britain. Netherlands lost against Britain in the 17th century, ceding their colonies in the Americas. France lost its main power in the middle of the 18th century, where conflicts between France and Britain began and resulted in destruction of the French colonial empire and near expulsion of France from the Americas (Němec, Čížek, *Koloniální expanze v 17. – 18. století*).

Out of all these events and victories Britain benefited and was on its way to becoming the great British Empire. Although still after the defeat some of these empires possessed quite large colonies: e.g., Spain – Latin America, Mexico, Portugal – Brasil. So why did not any of these languages reach the status that English now holds? How did a language originally from a small island become so successful? The number of people who speak the language is not the main factor that secures its position in the world. As David Crystal states in his book “English as a global language”: “It may take a militarily powerful nation to establish a language, but it takes an economically powerful one to maintain and expand it” (Crystal, 2003, p. 10). Economically and militarily powerful nations in the case of English were the British Empire and the United States of America.

The British Empire at its greatest spread out to every continent in the world and ruled over one quarter of the world’s population (Hlavačka, p. 124). Through its military power, the British Empire introduced English to all of its colonies and therefore played a major role in the spread of the language. Although the British Empire started to decline after the World War I, the emergence of the power of the U.S. and its rise in the population enabled English to remain relevant and to reach the position it is nowadays holding (Roy, *How English Became a Global Language*).

2.2. English gaining influence around the world

The need for a common language functioning on a global level appeared in the 1950s with the establishment of international organisations such as the United Nations, the World Bank, UNESCO, UNICEF or the World Health Organization.

Within these organisations, an official language or various official languages were established in order to minimise the translation costs (Crystal, 2003, p. 12).

Subsequently, the invention of new communication technologies such as computers, telegraphs and later the take off of the Internet in the 1990s opened a free pathway for the language of the economic superpower, the United States of America, to become worldwide (see subchapter 5.5.) (Crystal, 2003, p. 10).

There were two crucial actions that enabled English to elevate to a global position. Firstly, spreading the language by its native speakers, i.e. by colonisation. And secondly, people from all over the world decide to learn English as their foreign language. Crystal states: “A language achieves a genuinely global status when it develops a special role that is recognized in every country” (Crystal, 2003, p. 3). Such role can be achieved for example by giving the language an official status within a country with no native speakers. This could be done by either establishing it as an official language to be used as a tool for communication or by establishing it as the main foreign language to be taught within the educational system. By that a language spreads around the world and secures its position in countries where this language is not the speakers’ mother tongue (Crystal, 2003, p. 3).

Therefore, while describing the spread of English into different parts of the globe, it is important to note not only the number of the language native and second language speakers but also its geographical arrangement. This geographical criterion proves to be crucial for a language aspiring to become globally used. For example, although Mandarin Chinese has the most native speakers in the world, it is mainly found in Asia and not as much in the Western Hemisphere. English on the other hand, holds an official or semi official status in over 60 countries around the world and 20 countries gave English a primary status (Crystal, 1997, p. 360). These countries include for instance the U.S., the United Kingdom, Ghana, India, South Africa and many more (see Figure 1).

The spread of English as a world language This map shows the growing use of English, both in those countries where it is a mother tongue, and in those where it has official or semi-official status. The main countries of the world have been shown larger or smaller than their actual size, to reflect their relative share of the world's population. The role of the Indian sub-continent in the population estimates for English is obvious. There are over 1,000 million people in that area, but estimates of those who are fluent in the language have been as low as 3%. (From R. W. Bailey & M. Görlach, 1982.) (The country names in this map reflect 1982 usage.)

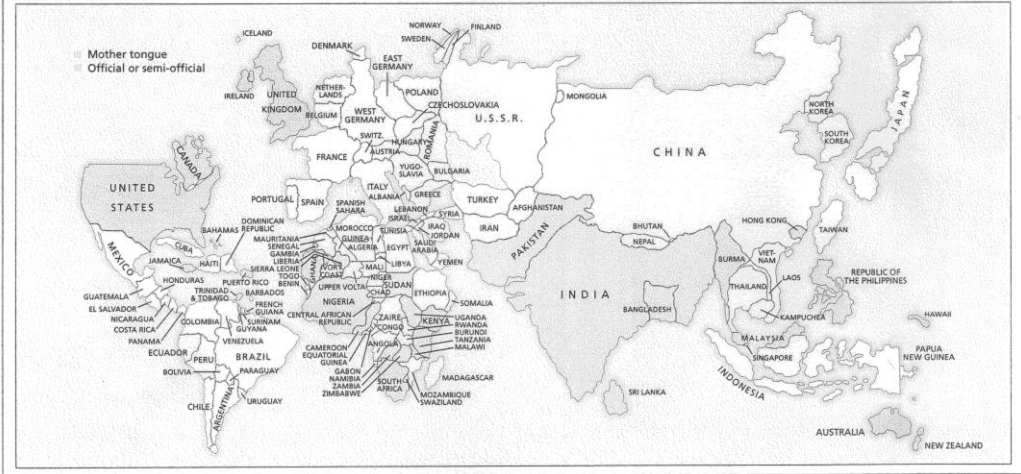


Fig. 1 The spread of English as a world language, taken from Crystal (1977), p. 361

The author finds that English becoming a globally widespread is strongly connected with English as a lingua franca. English achieving a dominant position in the world set the foundation for later development of a new world's lingua franca and enabled English not to be used as a lingua franca only in certain areas (local ELF), but to elevate ELF to a global level.

A key point for English to become the world's lingua franca is that an enormous number of people around the world speak or understand English. How was it achieved that such amount of people speak English or decided to learn this language? The spread of English by colonisation caused implementation of English as an official language in various countries such as in Africa, America, India, Australia or New Zealand. Other important events such as English becoming an official language of world's organisations, the establishment of free trade, the economic rise of the United States of America and many industrial inventions contributed to English becoming *the* global language. As soon as people around the world mastered English after English became globally widespread, they could begin using it for communication among each other, resulting in English as a lingua franca being used on a global level.

3. ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA – DEFINITION

3.1. Lingua franca

A “lingua franca” stands for a common language used for communication between people who do not share their first language (Seidelhofer, 2005, p. 339). Successful communication between speakers who do not share a first language demands a language that is mastered by both interlocutors. The language used in such situations could be either a native language of one of the interlocutors or a language acquired as a foreign language by both parties. A language used in such settings is known under the term “lingua franca”. Jennifer Jenkins, a linguist studying the ELF phenomenon, describes lingua franca as follows:

“[...] a lingua franca is a contact language used among people who do not share a first language, and is commonly understood to mean a second (or subsequent) language of its speakers” (Jenkins, 2007, p. 1).

3.2. Former lingua francas of the history

The term lingua franca or “Frankish language” originates from the Middle Ages between the 15th and 19th century, where in the Mediterranean this term signified a pidgin based on Italian and French, which was developed by the traders and used for illegible communication (*The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, p. 377).

However, a language holding a status of a lingua franca already appeared in the ancient times. When the reaches of the Roman Empire spread from the Mediterranean, Europe and touched Africa and Asia, Latin held the status of a dominant language. Latin was also used by the Roman Catholic Church, extensively in European culture, law, science, philosophy and religion. It remained a lingua franca among European scholars until the 18th century (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, *Lingua franca*). Even to this day, supported by the fledgling of science as a study and the simultaneous spread of Latin, many terms used in medicine or philosophy originate from Latin.

Another language acting as a lingua franca both in the past and the present

day is Portuguese. During the Age of Exploration occurring in the 15th – 18th centuries, where Portugal belonged to one of the major European colonisers, Portuguese served as a lingua franca in distinct parts of Africa and Asia, where it was used for trade and diplomatic purposes (Encyclopaedia Britannica, *Lingua franca*).

Languages such as Egyptian, Chinese, French, Greek, Latin, Hebrew, or Arabic all held a status of lingua franca in the past, acting as a contact language amongst people who did not share their first language (Ostler, p. 37). A language achieved such status either by military expansion, economic power (which is believed to be a major factor in English becoming the world's lingua franca) or by religious power (such as Hebrew with Judaism) (Ostler, p. 39).

3.3. Position of English as a lingua franca

All of the languages mentioned above developed a significant position as lingua francas in distinct parts of the world. However, English is a language that spread around the globe and surpassed all languages that had the potential to achieve a dominant role in the past. Currently English is a mother tongue to more than 375 million speakers, a second language to around 375 million speakers and a foreign language to additional 750 million foreign users (Graddol, p. 10). English has not only spread amongst its speakers but has also entered most spheres of society. It is an official language of many world organisations, air transport; it is dominant in technology, science, publishing, education, media, international trade as well as politics (*The Hutchinson Encyclopedia*, p. 363). Due to such great impact of English in the present world, English can nowadays be marked as “the world's lingua franca” (Björkman, p. 3).

3.4. Defining English as a lingua franca

English as a lingua franca functions on two different levels: on a local level and on a global level. In her book “Understanding English as a Lingua Franca”, Barbara Seidelhofer determines these levels as “localised” and “global” (Seidelhofer, 2011, p. 4).

English as a lingua franca functions on the local level as a language uniting people of one country in which various languages are spoken by its population. This local role of ELF is seen in Nigerian English for example, where English being an official language unites people of some other major languages of this country, such as Hausa, Igbo or Yoruba (Seidelhofer, 2011, p. 4).

The global level on which ELF functions as a communication tool among people from different countries of the world is truly impressive. English as a lingua franca functions on the global level as a language uniting people from different countries/of different first languages. This global role of ELF affects almost every domain of the world's society (see chapter 5).

While defining English as a lingua franca, linguists have encountered difficulties connected with appraisal if to include or not include native speakers of English as participants in ELF. Seidelhofer points out that such definitions of a lingua franca similar to the above-mentioned definition by Jenkins (see subchapter 3.2.) refer to a local lingua franca that occurs in particular regions where it unites people of various first languages within a country or a community.

Such definitions of a lingua franca cannot, however, be fully applied to English because English functions as a lingua franca primarily on a global level, uniting people from all over the world no matter if they are native speakers of English or if they acquired English as their second or foreign language (Seidelhofer, 2011, p. 7). Instead of applying such defining proposals to ELF on a global level, Seidelhofer suggests that such definitions rather show a distinct feature of ELF, which is that a majority of ELF communication occurs among non-native interlocutors. Nevertheless, native speakers of English are indeed participants of ELF. They are, however, in the minority and are not numerously represented in a sample that serves as an object of a linguistic reference concerning this phenomenon, as their native-forms, which do not correspond with the ELF-forms, might contribute to distorted results (Seidelhofer, 2011, p. 7, Jenkins, 2007, p. 2).

Both Seidelhofer as well as Jenkins, who belong among linguists, who have studied the fairly newly established phenomenon of ELF, define English as a lingua franca as follows:

“[...] any use of English among speakers of different first languages for whom English is the communicative medium of choice, and often the only option” (Seidelhofer, 2011, p. 7).

“[...] ELF emphasizes the role of English in communication between speakers from different L1s, [...]” (Jenkins, 2000, p. 11).

Such definitions confirm the unique role English holds within ELF. English is the language that speakers with different mother tongues use as a means for intelligible communication among each other. Presently this type of communication very frequently occurs at various events such as conferences, business meetings or during political negotiations (Jenkins, 2007, p. 3).

An example situation of ELF in action includes a French businesswoman concluding a contract with a Japanese sales representative of a Japanese company, an Egyptian archeologist travelling to Europe in order to discuss newly discovered areas with his Italian colleagues, or even an ERASMUS student of a Czech nationality talking to his German friend at their host university.

3.5. ELF versus English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as a second language (ESL)

While examining English as a lingua franca it is important to note in what ways ELF differs from other linguistic phenomena connected with the English language as this differentiation might be somewhat confusing.

English as a second language (ESL) includes speakers of the “Outer circle” (see subchapter 4.1.) where the speakers acquired English as their second language, i.e. as a complement to their first language. These speakers use ESL as a contact language that is used within groups of different nationalities. For example in India, English is very commonly spoken, although various major languages

figure in this country. ELF in contrast to ESL enables communication between groups of different nationalities rather than within them (Jenkins, 2007, p. 4).

English as a foreign language (EFL) includes speakers of the “Expanding circle” (see subchapter 4.1.) and refers to a language used and acquired by speakers as a foreign language in countries where English is not commonly used and therefore it is a foreign language (Jenkins, 2007, p. 4). The ideal of this use of English are the Standard English norms, i.e. the native forms which are often introduced to EFL learners through the means of British institutions such as British Council, Cambridge Institute, etc. (Seidelhofer, 2011, p. 17). In comparison with ELF, the ideal of EFL is ENL (English as a native language), that means acquiring a level of English similar to the one of a native speaker and using it both with English native and non-native speakers. In contrast to EFL, during ELF non-native speakers interactions prevail.

There have been various languages temporarily holding the post of a lingua franca in the past in particular areas of the world. However, none of them achieved such status of a lingua franca functioning on a global level. As seen in the previous subchapters, English as a lingua franca asks for a special approach while defining this phenomenon due to its present occurrence on a global level. No other language has ever accomplished such position.

4. ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA – LINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE

This chapter deals with ELF speakers and description of linguistic features connected with this phenomenon. It is possible to determine characteristic linguistic patterns that occur in ELF and that this phenomenon contains. These features serve as unifying aid among ELF speakers. The fields of linguistics on which the author focused are lexicogrammar, phonology and pragmatics.

4.1. ELF-speakers

In order to examine ELF from a linguistic perspective it is necessary to determine ELF speakers. Since English has become globally widespread and has been spreading at a rapid speed, the number of English non-native speakers has risen. Kachru's three circles model of World Englishes provides a classification of English speakers and English varieties around the globe.

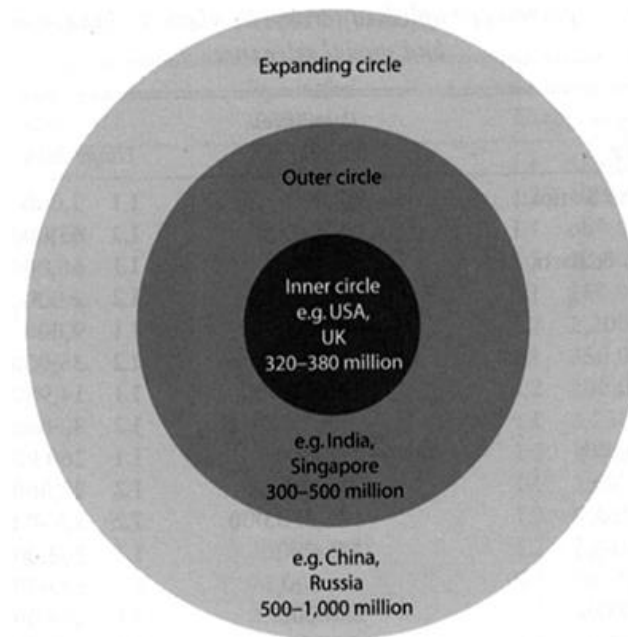


Fig. 2 Kachru's three circles of English (1985), taken from Crystal (2003), p. 61

- The “Inner Circle” contains mother tongue speakers of English. Here belong countries where English is used as a primary language such as the USA, the UK or Australia.

- The “Outer Circle” contains speakers who learned English as a second language as a complement to their mother tongue. Here belong countries that were affected by colonisation and gave English a primary or official status such as India or Singapore.
- Finally, the “Expanding Circle” contains speakers who learned English as a second language and come from countries that have not given English any primary status but use English to a great extent for international communication. Such countries are for example China, Russia as well as the Czech Republic and many others (Crystal, 2003, p. 60).

Linguists often refer to terms “L1 speakers” and “L2 speakers”. The term L1 speakers describes speakers for whom English is the first/native language. L2 speakers are speakers who have acquired English as their second language, as a complement to their mother tongue. To these linguists belong for example Seidelhofer, Graddol or Crystal.

English is used as a lingua franca to enable communication among people who do not share their first language but share their foreign language – English. Therefore the majority of ELF speakers is formed by speakers from the Expanding Circle, i.e. by non-native speakers of English. As the author has already mentioned, native speakers of English as well as speakers for whom English is their second language are also participants of ELF. They are, however, in a minority in a sample used for any ELF linguistic reference (see subchapter 3.4.) (Jenkins, 2007, p.3).

4.2. Linguistic features

In this subchapter the author occupies herself with characteristic linguistic features of ELF. Firstly, lexicogrammatical features are briefly introduced where the author describes the feature of “3rd person singular –s” in more detail. Secondly, linguistic features from the field of phonology are introduced. Lastly, the author describes a role that pragmatics holds within ELF.

Perhaps a disturbing fact to the native speakers of English is that these days no one owns the English language anymore. It is possible to declare that every speaker creates his/her own variety of English. Based on this fact, determining linguistic features of ELF proves to be challenging, as each and every person transfers elements from their native language into English. There are, however, some frequently used forms that differ from the forms of the Inner Circle and that hold a high probability of appearing repeatedly among the ELF-speakers.

4.2.1. Lexicogrammar

ELF linguistic features of grammatical kind can be a cause of grammatical rules of the speaker's native language, being transferred onto English or of a distinct grammatical rule of English being misused or omitted due to putting emphasis on the content and not as much on the form (Breitender, p. 13). If such features can be marked as mistakes, it is arguable. Nowadays these features would be rather interpreted as specific features of an independent variety of English occurring among the non-native speakers of English. In her "VOICE research" (Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English) Seidelhofer focused on the lexicogrammatical features of ELF and discovered typical following features:

- Omitting the 3rd person singular –s in the present tense
- Confusing and incorrectly using the pronouns *who* and *which* in the relative clause
- Misuse of definite and indefinite articles (using a definite article where there should not be one in Standard English and not using one where there should)
- Overusing prepositions where they are not needed (such as in *We have to study about...* instead of *We have to study...*)
- Using incorrect forms in tag questions (such as in *isn't it?* instead of *shouldn't you?*)
- Overusing certain verbs with a very general meaning (such as *do, have, make, put, take*)
- Using that-clauses rather than infinitive constructions (as in *I want that*)

- Putting too much stress on exactness (as in *black colour* instead of *black*) (Seidelhofer, 2004, as cited in Jenkins, Cogo, Dewey. *Review of developments in research into English as a lingua franca*, p. 289)

Seidelhofer's research shows typical linguistic features among solely non-native speakers of English, settling a corpus of characteristic features of ELF. As the author previously stated, such features of ELF might be seen from the English as a native language point of view as errors or learning difficulties. Therefore, it is important for English speakers to get acquainted with these features in order to prevent from an unintelligible communication.

As an explanation for occurrence of these features serves the process of learning a new foreign language and reflecting the language pattern and methods from the speaker's native language into the foreign language – English and thus creating a new variety of English.

Perhaps the most common linguistic feature of ELF is the omission or excess use of the 3rd person singular –s. In her article „The naturalness of English as a European lingua franca: the case of the ‘third person -s’“, Angelika Breitender studied the problem that speakers might encounter with the example of 3rd person singular –s in the present tense. She suggests the problem lies in the irregularity of the conjugation.

Breitender discovered that in 80% cases the speakers adhered to the grammatical rules of Standard English and used the 3rd person singular –s correctly, which Breitender assigned to the speaker's knowledge gained during the learning process of English and its norms (Breitender, p. 11). Breitender mentions that the 3rd person singular s- has been considered as a grammatical category with no special function and sees the reason for omission of the 3rd person singular s- in simplicity and focus on the content among the ELF speakers (Breitender, p. 13).

The omission or the excessive use of the 3rd person singular s- for example *We lives...* might be confusing during communication, it does not, however, modify the content to such extent in order for the content not to be understandable at all. The agent is expressed both by the conjugated verb as well as the personal pronoun standing before it. Despite such excess use of this grammatical feature, the person is still recognisable on the personal pronoun. Therefore, despite the form *lives* belongs to the 3rd person singular, it is obvious that the speaker meant 1st person plural, due to the personal pronoun *we*.

Misunderstandings and incomprehension of such forms cannot be excluded from occurring in some cases. Especially when the non-native speaker of English, acquiring English as his foreign language, has not reached such level of English yet to distinguish these forms that he could easily get confused by this feature of ELF. The author of this thesis tested university students' opinions on the amount of complications grammatical mistakes cause during a communication (see subchapter 6.4.2., Graph 13).

4.2.2. Phonology

Every non-native speaker carries a distinctive pronunciation that most probably differs from Standard English. To ensure an intelligible communication between non-native speakers, the speakers sometimes need to adjust their pronunciation in order to achieve mutual understanding. In what ways and to what extent the speakers adjust their pronunciation is known under the term "accomodation".

In the last years many linguists have been actively conducting research in order to identify phonological features of ELF. Every non-native speaker of English figuring in ELF has its own unique accent that might in some way portrait his/her mother tongue pronunciation. If this unique accent of the speaker often complicates the communication asked the author of this thesis in her research (see subchapter 6.4.2., Graph 12). As there is a huge number of these speakers having

their own unique accent of English, it is impossible to establish a characteristic accent of ELF and for that reason no such accent has yet been codified.

Jenkins studied the phonological features in her book “The Phonology of English as an International Language” where she also introduced the “Lingua Franca Core”. The Lingua Franca Core represents phonological linguistic features of ELF. It comprises of set of recommendations for maintaining intelligible communication. This set of recommendations contributes to unifying non-native speakers in using the English language as a lingua franca. The Lingua Franca Core contains following features, which Jenkins recommends the speakers adhere to, in order for a communication to remain intelligible.

1. A preferable omission of /θ/ and /ð/ in case of problems with pronunciation

Non-native speakers of English do not run into any problems with most consonant sounds. However, Jenkins mentions the problem of difficult production of the dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/ that the non-native speakers of English encounter. Jenkins suggests that when experiencing difficulties while pronouncing these sounds which might lead to non-understanding, they should be omitted and replaced by sounds such as /f/ and /v/.

2. Addition rather than elision of sounds during consonant cluster simplification

In this point Jenkins mentions the importance of consonant clusters in English and points out that their slightest modification might lead to a decrease of intelligibility. While opting for cluster modification, Jenkins prioritises addition of a sound to the cluster rather than its elision which might be a bigger source of unintelligibility. For example, the word *product* was completely intelligible while being affected by addition as in [pə'rɒdʌkt] rather than when its speakers omitted sounds such as in ['rɒdʌk].

3. Distinguishing vowel length

During ELF communication distinguishing vowel length is important, e.g., *seat* [si:t] versus *sit* [sɪt]. The use of vowels must be consistent always using only one form either RP or GA.

4. Using and correctly placing nuclear stress within a sentence

Nuclear stress is a meaningful unit of a sentence or a tone group that is stressed and emphasised. It proves to be essential for an intelligible communication and non-native speakers should obtain nuclear stress and be able to use it correctly. Jenkins proposes that speakers should distinguish the various applications of nuclear stress to achieve contrast or emphasis (e.g., “Did you buy the BLUE car?” versus “Did you buy the blue CAR?”) As a solution in instances where the speaker is not able to place nuclear stress correctly or not at all, offers itself an additional question referring to the details (e.g., “What colour of the car did you buy?” or “What blue vehicle did you buy?”) (Jenkins, 2000, p.131-154).

4.2.3. Pragmatics

Another important field of linguistics closely connected with ELF is the field of pragmatics, which is highly discussed and studied among linguists who have been focusing on research related to the role of pragmatics within ELF.

During communication among non-native speakers of English, who most probably do not know the English language perfectly, difficulties of understanding may occur. Therefore, the interlocutors' approach during ELF communication often gives preference to securing understanding rather than to speak perfect English. That means that ELF communication puts emphasis on the content rather than on the form. In order for the message of the communication to be understood, the speakers adjust their use of language according to the given situation. The strategies that the speakers use to prevent from misunderstanding are for example that they repeat particular sentence or phrase or that they paraphrase and somehow reformulate the sentence (see below).

In her paper “Review of Developments” Jenkins mentions the results of her research which have shown that non-understanding/misunderstanding is not as common in communication with non-native speakers as it is with native speakers. Moreover, the speakers show a great competence in being able to point out to a potential misunderstanding, yet not to interfere the communication (Jenkins, *Review of Developments*, p. 293).

Furthermore, Jenkins provides additional strategies that ELF interlocutors use to avoid or solve misunderstandings during communication:

1. Repetition

Repetition is one of the most frequent strategies that ELF speakers employ in order to avoid misunderstanding or not being understood. Moreover, in order to explain the message that has not been understood, the speakers also use clarification and self-repair.

2. Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing a sentence and reformulating it in their own words use speakers in order to avoid prolonged silence, minimal response from the other party or overlapping talk.

3. Creating and using own idiomatic expressions

Although idiomatic expressions prove to be challenging while learning English, research has shown that ELF speakers do incorporate such expressions in their communication. Moreover, ELF speakers create their own idiomatic expressions that later show that the speakers are members of a group.

4. Using discourse markers for introduction of next topic in communication

Discourse markers such as “you know” prove to not to be as prominent in ELF as in communication of native speakers. Native speakers use them to express politeness, involvement or cooperation, whereas non-native speakers use them to introduce the topic they are going to talk about next or to make a topic important (Jenkins, *Review of Developments*, p. 293-294).

The above introduced linguistic features of ELF regarding the field of lexicogrammar, phonology and pragmatics prove that ELF is indeed own variety of English and has not been overlooked by some linguists who continue their research in order to study this phenomenon further. Both Breitender as well as Jenkins have concluded great results collected from their research and have significantly contributed to the research of English acting as a lingua franca. Breitender establishing some of the typical grammatical features of ELF in her VOICE research and Jenkins proposing the Lingua Franca Core that suggests the phonological linguistic features of ELF and establishes a possible set of rules by which both native as well as non-native speakers could avoid situations of mutual unintelligibility.

Such features serve for better orientation of English speakers in the common rules that they can follow in order for communication to remain intelligible. As the number of English non-native speakers increases, such set of rules calls for incorporation in the educational system of English. Teachers of English might in the future introduce these features to the students of English as a foreign language as well as to its native speakers. Therefore, the students would become acquainted with these features during their English studies, to adopt a tolerance approach towards such unusual forms. The question whether distinct grammatical errors or phonological errors are a major cause of unintelligibility, remains a field that is opened to a wider examination.

5. ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA – PRACTICAL IMPLICATION

This chapter focuses on practical implication of English as a lingua franca, in which areas ELF intensively occurs and holds a dominant position. The author illustrates the position of ELF in areas such as international business, IT, aviation, sea transportation or education.

5.1. ELF in international business

International trade is another area where English as a lingua franca performs at its best. Thanks to today's globalised world and free trade the opportunities of making deals are endless. To be able to negotiate, order and sell goods or to establish a new partnership with companies from a foreign country, a language holding a role of a lingua franca in international trade is highly required.

In the case of Europe the focus is on three languages: English, German and French. English out of all the languages is the most frequently used lingua franca in the international trade of Europe. German seems to be used extensively as well, especially in informal contexts. However, as Graddol points out, German along with French appears to be used to such extent only for international trade that takes place within Europe. For business outside the borders of a European country the companies tend to use solely English (Graddol, p. 29).

5.2. ELF in information technology

The invention of computer followed by the Internet represents one of the supporting elements of English spreading around the whole globe. In 1970 the increase in inventing new communication technologies enabled people from different parts of the world to communicate in a faster and cheaper way (Goodman, Graddol, p. 108). The USA played a key role in the production of hardware and software where companies such as Microsoft or Apple contributed to the field of information technology.

Crystal quotes statistics which claim that around 80 % of information that is nowadays stored electronically is in English (Crystal, 2003, p. 115). Therefore,

knowing the English language gives the speaker a great advantage to access this heaps of information and to make use out of the Internet to its fullest. The Internet is probably the fastest way of spreading the English language. Every day millions of people search information on Google, watch major broadcasting networks such as CNN or send an e-mail to their business partner.

Due to the information technology English has opened door to function as a lingua franca of the Internet. According to Crystal, such position of English began to be portrayed in the media in 1996 with an article in the popular newspaper “The New York Times” (Crystal, 2003, p. 117).

5.3. ELF in air and sea transportation

English has become a worldwide lingua franca used during management of transportation occurring either in the air or on the sea. Due to an increase in international travel a need for a uniting language emerged in order to protect lives and to ensure a smooth operation of international airplanes and ships.

Since 1951, after the establishment of the “International Civil Aviation Organization”, English has become the official language of air transportation. From that point forward English plays an important role as it enables pilots of different language backgrounds to communicate (Crystal, 2003, p. 108).

As for the sea transportation, a first proposal for an official language occurred in 1980 with the plan of “Essential English for International Maritime Use”. This form of English was also known under the term “Seaspeak” and comprised of simplified vocabulary and structures such as “Say again” (Crystal, 2003, p. 106-107).

5.4. ELF in education

As the author previously noted, English nowadays has more non-native speakers than speakers for whom English is their mother tongue. Therefore, it is obvious that English is a widely spoken foreign language and a majority of people from all around the world have decided to learn it to be able to communicate not

only in their mother tongue. Moreover, one of the reasons why people choose to pick English as their foreign language is the impact of English in media, cinematography, technology, science and many other domains. As Crystal states:

“[...] English is the medium of a great deal of the world’s knowledge, especially in such areas as science and technology” (Crystal, 2003, p. 110).

Graddol cites a study which proves that English is the most frequently chosen foreign language which is learned by non-native speakers. The study included 25 countries and studied which language dominates in the world in the field of foreign language learning. As an example he mentions Russia where at a secondary school 60% of students studied English, 25% German and 15% French. Graddol also explains the fact why French is not coming anywhere near to be the leading foreign language. He argues that a majority of people that study French as their foreign language come from English speaking countries and that these people might rarely use French as an international language and use their mother tongue instead (Graddol, 1997, p. 44).

As Jenkins explains, ELF is not at a state yet to be taught as an independent variety of English. She points out an important step which has to be made before considering teaching ELF. That step is to achieve closer cognition of how ELF speakers communicate among each other (Jenkins, 2007, p. 238). This however does not mean that it is not helpful for a speaker of English to get acquainted and not be aware of this phenomenon – indeed, quite the opposite.

Currently the students are presented with many opportunities to gain an abroad experience already during their studies. An increase of collaborations between schools/universities enables students to participate in various programmes taking place abroad such as study exchange programmes, conferences, internships or language courses. As we shall see later on in the author’s research, students make use out of such opportunities, which might increase the extent of their ELF knowledge.

PRACTICAL PART

6. QUESTIONNAIRE

The author's practical part comprises of a research, which chief goal is to examine to what extent university students are aware and acquainted with the English as a lingua franca phenomenon and their personal preferences in using the English language. This research connects to the theoretical part of this thesis, as it brings new insights and further examines the importance and position of the introduced phenomenon, English as a lingua franca, in today's society, more exactly in the university students' community.

6.1. Hypotheses

One of the hypotheses connected to this research is a hypothesis that international environment raises university students' awareness of ELF. The author assumes that students find themselves in an international environment when they take part in an internship or any other event taking place abroad.

Moreover, the author expected that university students are in contact with ELF, do not however recognise it under the term "English as a lingua franca".

Finally, the author predicted that university students still plan to use English more with native rather than with non-native speakers.

6.2. Overall results of research

During the research some of the above mentioned hypotheses were confirmed by the results. The research for example showed that students who took part in an internship or any other related event occurring abroad were able to recognise ELF under the term "English as a lingua franca" in contrast to the students that have not participated in any of such programmes. Such results confirm that students who have an abroad experience are more aware of this phenomenon (for complete results see subchapter 6.3.).

6.3. Methodology of research

For the purpose of acquiring information for this research on the amount of awareness of English as a lingua franca among university students, a questionnaire was created in an online form on the *Google Forms* platform and was subsequently sent to the respondents for completion. The author chose an online option of distributing the questionnaire due to the fact that for students such way of answering the questionnaire is convenient, as they spend a lot of time on their computer and have access to the Internet. Therefore, the attractiveness, return and honest completion of the questionnaire were secured, as the completion of the questionnaire was quick and available online. The questionnaire consists of 15 questions in total, including 13 closed and 2 half-closed questions where the respondent must choose one option or write an additional information. For basic identification of the respondents, general questions such as gender, age, home country and field of studies, were asked. The respondents completed the questionnaire anonymously.

The whole questionnaire formed one document of total 4 pages. This document contains the title of this research along with an accompanying document, an introductory part and the questionnaire form. This document was provided to the respondents in order to present the objective of the author's research and to give a brief overview and definition of the English as a lingua franca phenomenon (see Appendix 1).

The target group for this questionnaire was formed by university students between the age of 18-30, most of whom found themselves in an international environment. The author took advantage of her ERASMUS international study internship supported by the European Union thanks to which she had the opportunity to spend one academic year of her studies in a university city of Tübingen. Therefore, a big part of the respondents form students of the Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen, which was the author's host institution during her internship. Students from Germany as well as foreign Erasmus students are included among the respondents of this questionnaire. Furthermore, while

selecting the respondents, the author also collaborated with her brother, Jiří Ryan Zikmund, who is in the course of the academic year 2015/2016 also taking part in an Erasmus study internship in Istanbul, Turkey. With his kind help the author turned to local Erasmus students studying at the moment in Istanbul, via email or via the social platform Facebook.

During the selection of the respondents for this research the author mainly focused on choosing a sample with a few native speakers of English, in order to characterise the ELF phenomenon. This criterion was chosen by the author according to the suggestions of Seidelhofer connected with the reference norm for ELF (see subchapter 3.2.). Moreover, a great number of students of linguistics and humanities were approached, as this phenomenon is highly connected with their field of studies.

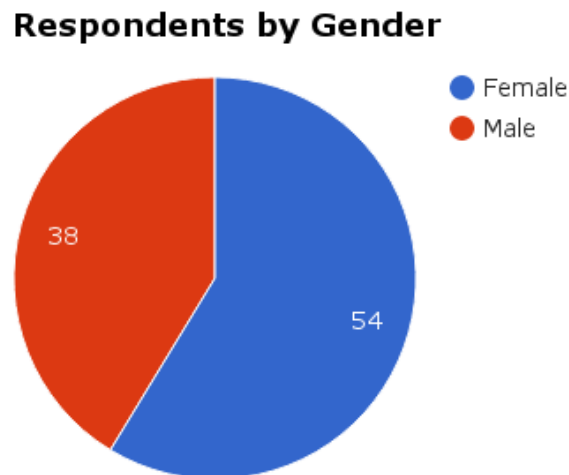
The questionnaire consists of four major parts. In the first part the author decided to ask the respondents questions relating their personal information, in order to identify the respondents more closely. The second part focuses on the amount of knowledge of ELF, testing to what extent are students acquainted with this phenomenon. The third part of the questionnaire is dedicated to difficulties that students might encounter within ELF. The author included questions relating to situations that might arise during an ELF communication. The purpose of these questions was to discover if students are in contact with ELF although they might not be aware of it. Lastly, the fourth part of this questionnaire aims to find out the students' future use of English and their preferences whether their goal is to use English with native speakers (EFL) or with non-native speakers (ELF).

In the following text the author first identifies the respondents based on their gender, age, country of origin, field of studies and their international experience. Subsequently, the answers collected from the filled-out questionnaires of particular parts are discussed. In these parts the author shows what answer the students decided for and assesses each question separately. As the next step, the author discusses and presents the final results of the whole questionnaire. Finally, the author discusses the relation of the results to the hypothesis of this questionnaire

and suggests possible additional questions and ideas for a future extension of this research.

6.3.1. Respondents identification

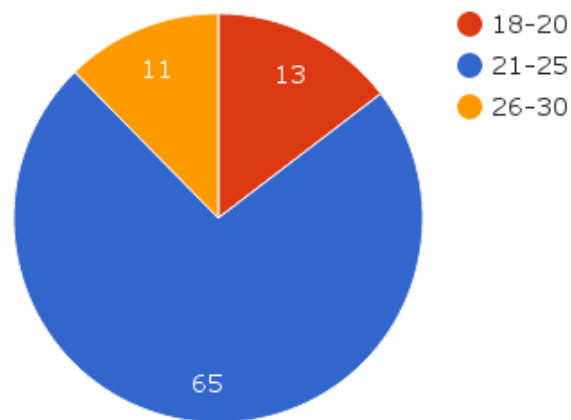
A total number of 92 respondents have contributed to the research. They were asked questions that enabled the author later identification of the respondents. They were identified based on questions on their gender, age, country of origin and abroad experience. Out of 92 respondents, 54 were female and 38 male (see Graph 1).



Graph 1: Respondents by Gender

As the author previously mentioned, the target group of respondents for this research was formed by university students. The author set the age group between 18-30 years. Out of 92 respondents, 13 students were between the age of 18-20, 65 students were between the age of 21-25 and lastly, 11 students were 26-30 years old (see Graph 2).

Respondents by Age



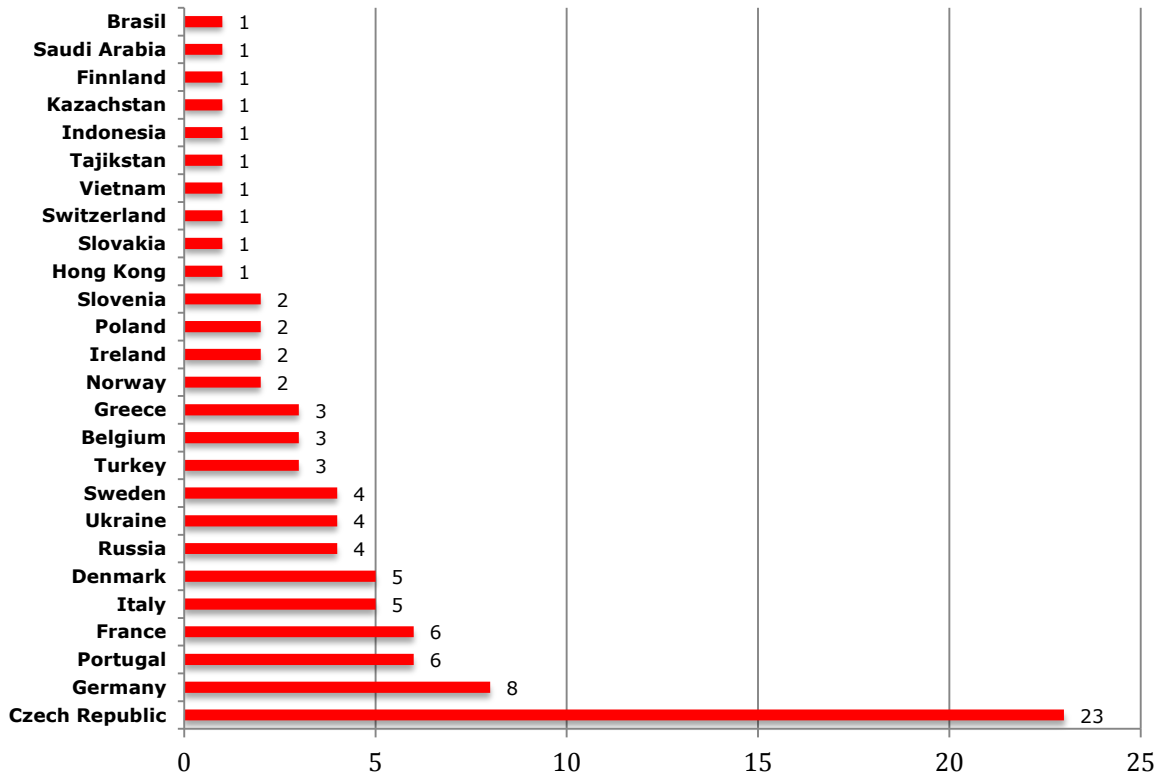
Graph 2: Respondents by Age

The next question designed for identification of the respondents referred to the country of origin. Respondents that contributed to this research include Czech students of the same major as author's "Cizí jazyky pro komerční praxi" at the University of West Bohemia, students from different corners of the world participating in the Erasmus study internship, as well as foreign students studying at the Charles University in Pilsen.

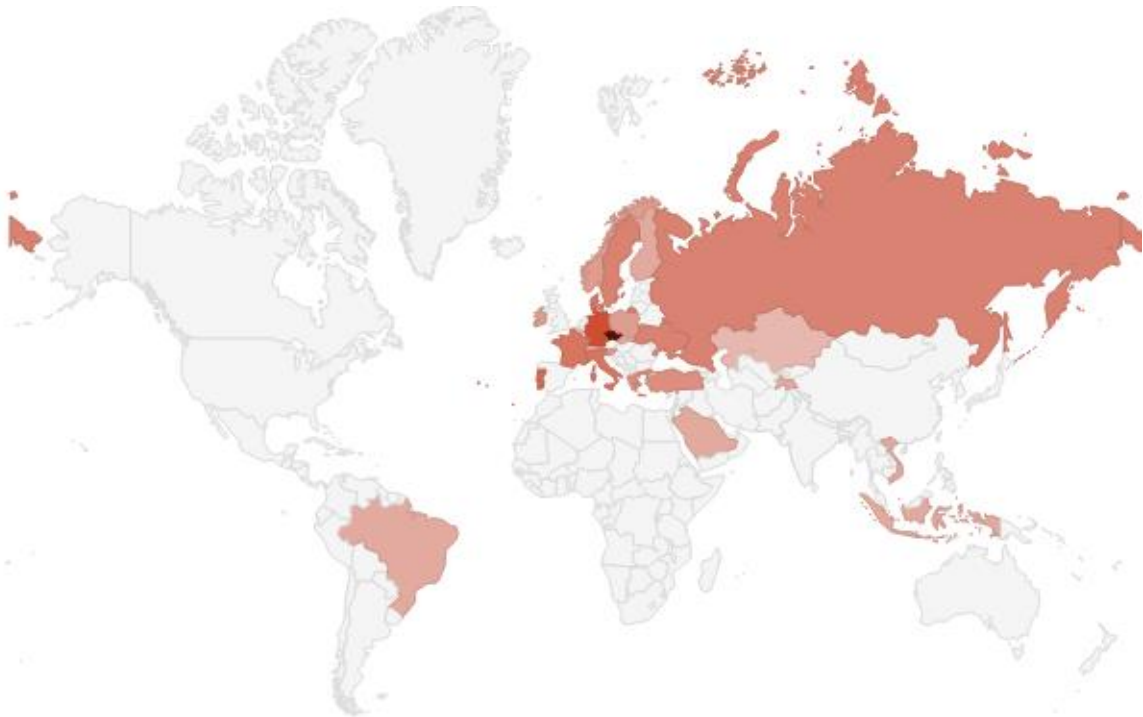
The research focused mainly on students from Europe but also included a small number of students from other continents. The largest number of the total 92 respondents was formed by 23 students from Czech Republic, followed by 8 students from Germany. The questionnaire was also completed by 6 students from Portugal, 6 students from France, 5 students from Denmark and 5 students from Italy. Furthermore, students from e.g. Russia, Ukraine, Sweden, Turkey, Poland, Belgium, Greece, Norway, Ireland, Slovenia, etc. contributed to this research (see Graph 3).

The author focused her research mainly on non-native speakers of English. English was the mother tongue of only 2 respondents of this questionnaire. (see Graph 5).

Respondents by Country of Origin

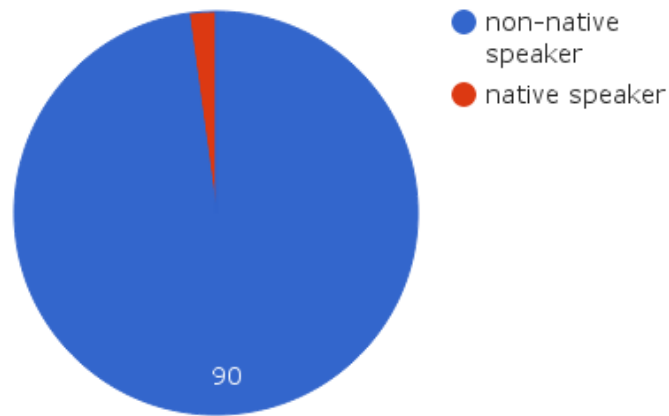


Graph 3: Respondents by Country of Origin



Graph 4: Respondents by Country of Origin

Respondents by English application

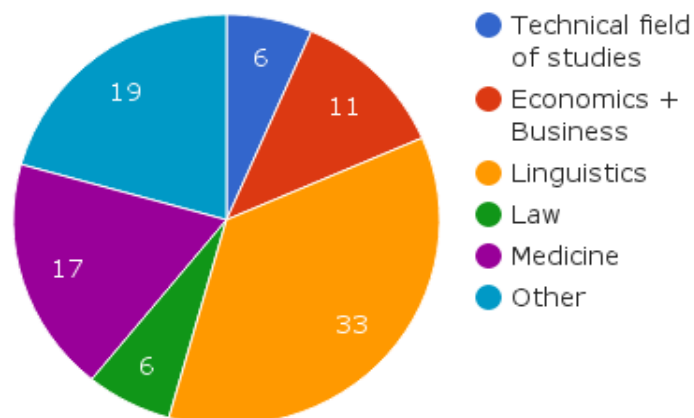


Graph 5: Respondents by English application

Moreover, the students were also distinguished by their field of studies. Out of 92 respondents, 33 studied linguistics, 17 studied medicine, 11 studied economics or business, 6 studied law, 6 studied technical field of studies and 19 students studied other fields of studies (see Graph 6).

Into the group "Other" belong humanities such as political science, sociology, psychology, philosophy, film production, history and pedagogy.

Respondents by field of studies

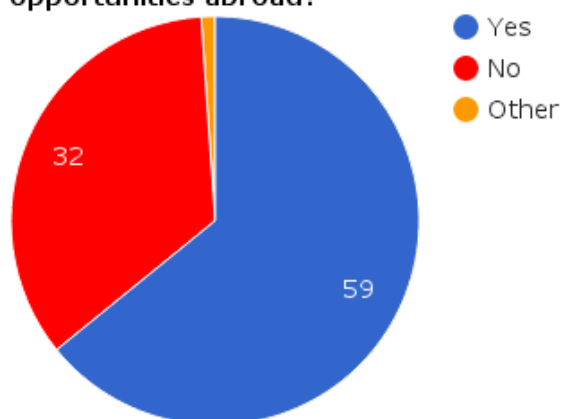


Graph 6: Respondents by field of studies

Lastly, the respondents were asked if they ever participated in any event that took place abroad. The author included this question in order to learn to what extent the respondents found themselves in an international environment and community. However, this argument could be called into a question, as an international environment or community does not necessarily occur only abroad but could easily be found in the speaker's home country. This research however works on the assumption that the speaker finds an international environment and community most likely abroad which might increase the chances of getting in contact with English as a lingua franca.

The students were asked the following question: "Have you ever taken part in an internship, study exchange programme, language school, conference, research trip or other opportunities abroad?" and were additionally asked to further specify their answer if the following options did not match any of their abroad experience. Out of total 92 students, 59 students took part in some of the above-stated events, 32 students didn't take part in any activities abroad and only 1 student further specified his answer by naming his abroad experience being voluntarily work (see Graph 7).

Have you ever taken part in an internship, study exchange programme, language school, conference, research trip or other opportunities abroad?



Graph 7: Student's participation in an internship or event taking place abroad

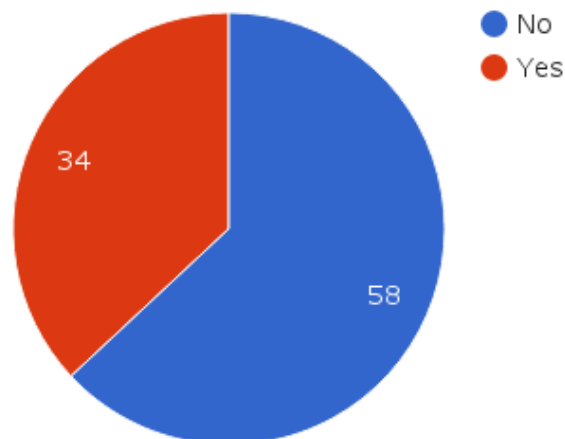
6.4. Assessment of answers

6.4.1. Knowledge of ELF

This second part of the questionnaire contains questions studying the amount of knowledge university students have about ELF. The hypothesis for this part of the research is that university students are most likely aware of ELF, due to possible encounter of this phenomenon during their studies or international experience.

The first question of this part, “Do you know the phenomenon English as a lingua franca?”, discovers if the students have any ELF knowledge or have heard about ELF in the past. Out of 92 respondents, 58 respondents chose as their answer “No” and 34 respondents answered “Yes” (see Graph 8). Although most respondents did not know the phenomenon English as a lingua franca, the respondents that did chose their answer "Yes" were mostly women.

Do you know the phenomenon English as a lingua franca?



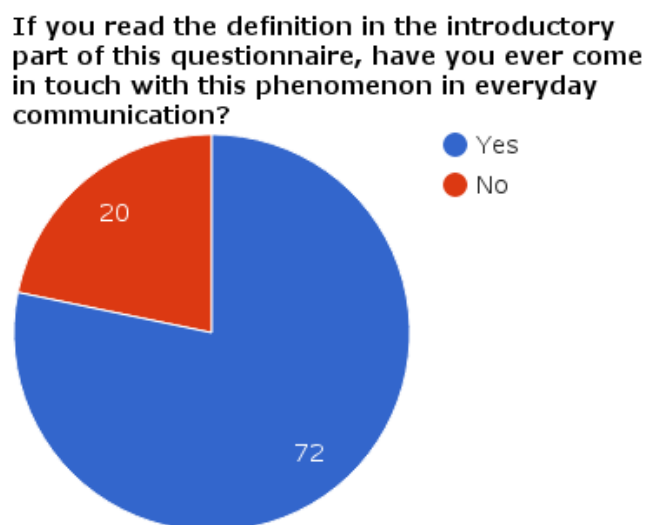
Graph 8: Knowledge of ELF

The second question the author asked the respondents is strongly connected with the previous question. As the results of the previous question showed, majority of the students did not have any knowledge of this phenomenon (see Graph 8). This second question strives to discover that although the students

don't recognise the term "English as a lingua franca", they indeed have encountered this phenomenon. The students are not, however, able to recognise the phenomenon under its name. This question invited the respondents to read a definition of ELF explained by an example which the author provided in the introductory part of the questionnaire.

Based on reading this definition, 72 students answered "Yes", they have come in touch with ELF in everyday communication and only 20 students answered "No". Such results show not only that the majority of students have ever encountered ELF in an everyday communication but also that the students know ELF based on a situation example (Czech and French use English to communicate) rather than under the term "English as a lingua franca".

As the author expected, a great number of the students (more exactly 48 students) that chose the answer "Yes" have participated in an internship or other event taking place abroad.



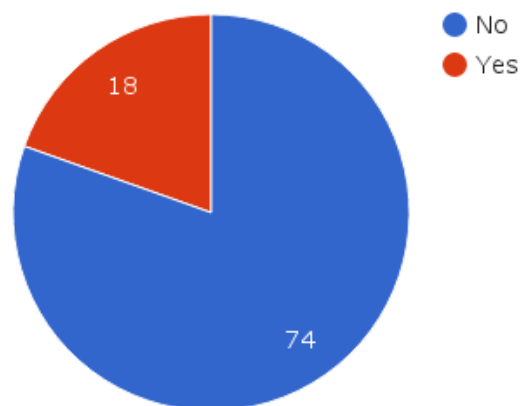
Graph 9: The students' amount of contact with this phenomenon in everyday communication

The third question aims to discover if or to what extent students are being introduced to ELF during their English studies. In connection with their English studies the author refers to any kind of English lessons for example at primary

school, high school, university or during English language courses or even self-education. Out of 92 respondents, 74 students answered “No” and 18 students answered “Yes”. There is a definite superiority in numbers of the respondents to whom ELF has never been introduced (see Graph 10).

Such results might be surprising given the fact that majority of the respondents of this questionnaire form students of linguistic fields of studies (see Graph 6). This might lead to speculation that the educational system features lack of ELF explanation. As ELF nowadays affects practically every domain of society in the world, the authors finds it helpful for the students to get acquainted with this phenomenon and its typical features.

Have you ever been introduced to this phenomenon during your English studies?



Graph 10: The introduction ELF during the students' English studies

The fourth and also the last question of this part runs: “Have you been using English lately more in contact with native speakers or foreigners?”. This question has been chosen by the author in order to discover, if the students have lately used English more in contact with native speakers or foreigners.

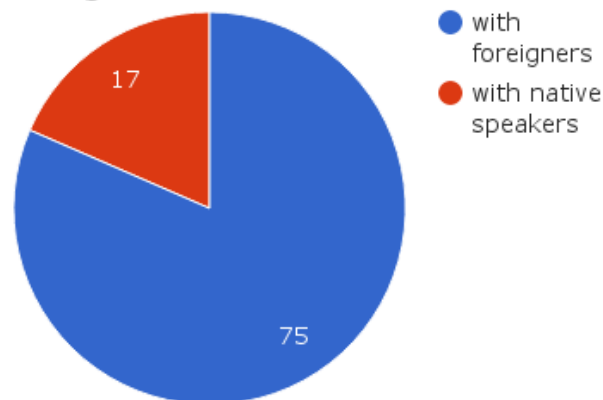
As stated in the theoretical part, the author previously agreed with Jennifer Jenkins theory that ELF does not necessarily exclude native speakers of English, however prevails among non-native speakers of English. The results show 75 respondents have been using English more with foreigners, whereas only

17 respondents claimed to use it more in contact with native speakers (see Graph 11).

Such results might indicate a higher probability of a frequent encounter with ELF. Moreover, in the previous question a majority of students claimed to have encountered ELF in everyday communication, which according to the author might hold a close connection with the amount of contact the students have with foreign speakers of English.

Regardless of their country of origin, most students have been using English with foreigners. An interesting point following from the results is that even the 2 students who were native speakers of English have also been using their mother tongue more in contact with foreigners.

Have you been using English lately more in contact with native speakers or foreigners?



Graph 11: English usage with foreign or native speakers

6.4.2. Difficulties connected with ELF

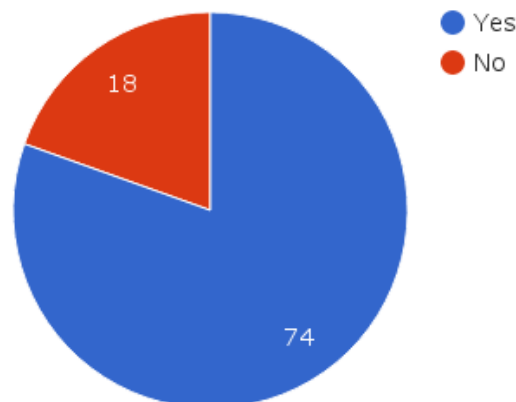
This part of the questionnaire aims to examine if the students have experienced any possible difficulties in communication that may occur in connection with ELF. The author assumes that an encounter with such difficulties helps to a closer cognition of ELF. Moreover, the author tries to compare which

complications connected with either pronunciation or grammar make a conversation more difficult.

In the first question of this part the author asked the students if they have ever found themselves in a situation during their English conversation where a person had a strong accent, which led to complications or misunderstandings. It is more than natural that a speaker transfers pronunciation patterns from his native language into a foreign language he is learning or has learnt. Such complications occur both in English as a foreign language (EFL) as well as in ELF.

Out of 92 respondents, 74 answered “Yes”, which indicates they have found themselves in such situation where pronunciation errors complicated the communication. The rest of the respondents, to be more accurate 18 respondents, marked the answer “No” (see Graph 12). These results were to assume based on the answers from previous questions which showed a significant contact with foreign speakers of English and with ELF in everyday communication.

Have you ever got in touch with someone in English conversation, who had strong accent which complicated your communication?

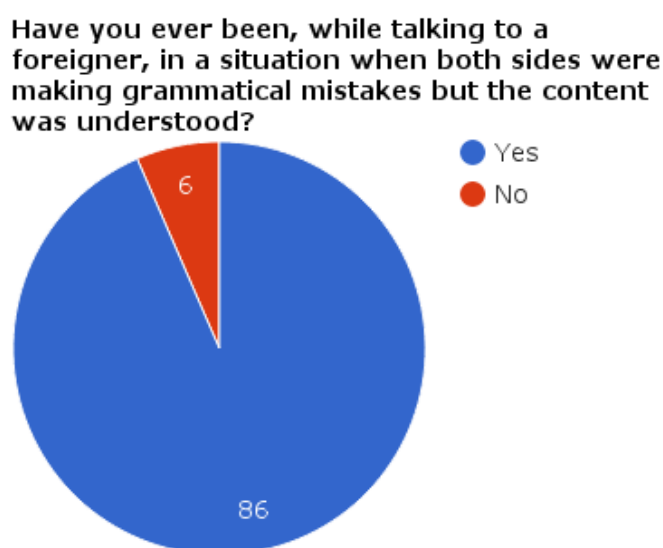


Graph 12: Complication of communication by a strong accent

The second question of this part focuses on difficulties that might arise from an interference of grammatical mistakes in the communication. It strives to find out if despite the grammatical mistakes, the communication was successful and the content was understood by all sides. Out of 92 respondents, 86 marked the answer

“Yes” and only 6 respondents answered “No” (see Graph 13). Such results reveal interesting discovery and indicate that grammatical errors might not cause such problems in intelligibility during a communication as opposed to errors relating to pronunciation.

The results of this question showed that 4 out of 6 students who chose the answer “No” were the students of linguistics. Such results are surprising assuming that these students have better knowledge of languages and their use as well as misuse during communication.



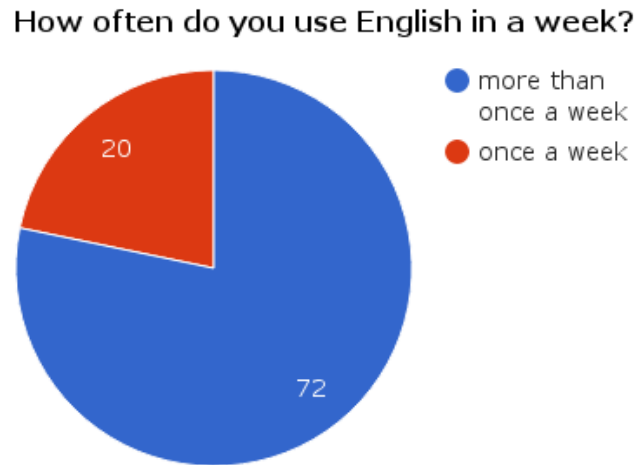
Graph 13: Achieving mutual understanding despite of grammatical mistakes

6.4.3. Preferences and English application

This last part of the questionnaire focuses on the speakers/respondents preferences while using the English language and on their application of English.

In the first question, the students were asked how often they use English in a week. They were offered three possible answers including “not once”, “once a week” or “more than once a week”. Regardless of their country of origin, gender or age, all of the students claimed to be in contact with English on a regular basis and to use English at least once a week. Out of 92 students, 72 use English more than once a week and 20 students claimed to use English at least once a week (see

Graph 14). Such results only confirm the amount of current English use in the world.



Graph 14: Frequency of English use

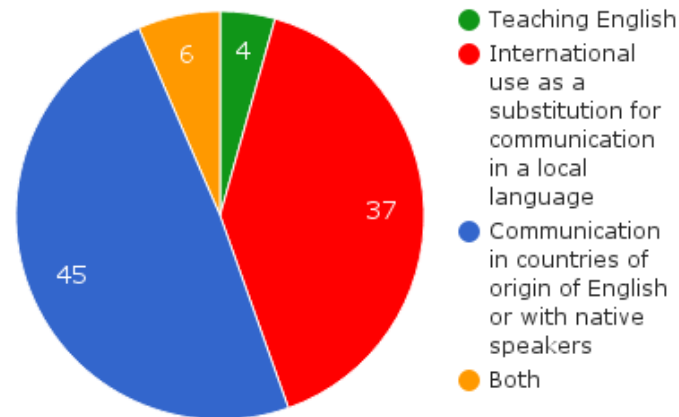
The next question focused on students' interests or plans of using English in their future career. The author's goal was to investigate if the students plan to use English mainly with native speakers (from countries such as the USA, Great Britain, Australia and so on) or with non-native speakers (for example working for a Czech company and concluding contract with a company from China). The students were also able to state their own answer in the line "Other idea", if any of the previous two answers didn't match their idea.

Out of 92 students, 45 students stated that they plan to use English for communication in countries of origin of English or with native speakers. Other 37 students chose the option of using English internationally as a substitute language for communication in a local language. The last 10 students chose other answer. A total of 6 students explained that they would like to use English in both above stated situations and 4 students answered that they plan to teach English, which could be included in the category of using English in a non-native speakers environment.

A great number of students who answered they plan to use English for communication in countries of origin of English or with native speakers studied

medicine or linguistics. Reason for such findings could be that students of medicine often plan to move for work to the UK.

What is your idea of use of English in your future career?



Graph 15: English in future career

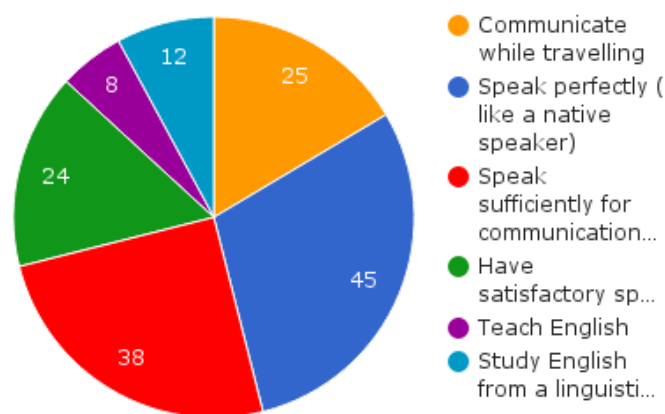
To gain more information about the students' main goal of their English studies, the author included this following question in the questionnaire: "What is the goal during your English studies?". In this question, the students had the opportunity to mark multiple answers.

Most students claimed their goal was to speak English perfectly (like a native speaker), namely total of 45 times. The second most frequently chosen answer was to speak sufficiently for communication in a work environment, which was chosen by the students 37 times. Among other important goals of the students proved to be communicating while travelling, which was chosen 25 times, and having satisfactory speaking skills, chosen 24 times. The students chose the least to study English from a linguistic point of view, total answers of 12 times, and to teach English, chosen only 8 times.

Speak perfectly like a native speaker is a goal for more men than women. Out of 45 students who chose this goal 18 were women and 27 were men. On the other hand, women more than men prefer to focus on a goal of speaking sufficiently for communication in a work environment.

These results are according to the author connected to the results of the previous question, where most students stated that they plan to use English for communication with native speakers. Based on the results from this question, where the most frequently chosen goal was to speak perfectly like a native speaker, it is possible to assume that because most students plan to use English mostly with native speakers, their goal is to reach their level of English, i.e. speak like a native speaker.

What is your goal during your English studies? Be able to:



Graph 16: Goal during the students' English studies

The final question of this part and of the whole questionnaire refers back to the previous question and asked the students what tools or means they would use in order to achieve their goal of their English studies, that they chose above. In this question, similarly to the previous question, the students had the possibility of marking multiple answers.

The most frequently chosen tool that the students decided for proved to be conversation with native speakers, which was chosen 52 times. Such fact again corresponds with the answers of the previous two questions, where the students were inclining to communication with native speakers and moreover saw achieving their language level as their goal. The second most frequently chosen tool was listening to English speaking media, which was chosen exactly 43 times. Such

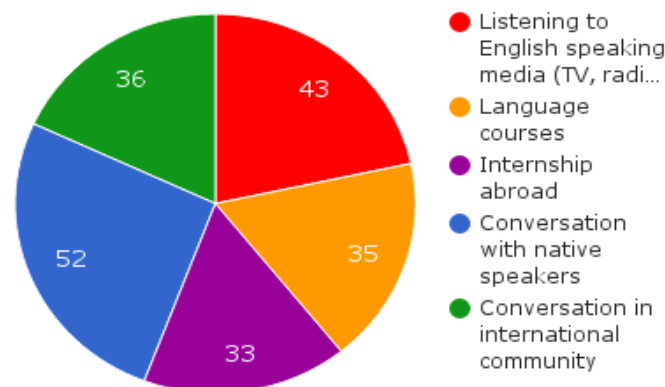
amount of choice of this answer were to assume given the spread of English media in today's society.

The remaining three tools chose the students in roughly identical number. Conversation in an international community was chosen 36 times. Students chose language courses 35 times and a taking part in an internship 33 times (see Graph 17).

Majority of students who chose to listen to English speaking media was formed by students between the age of 18-20. On the other hand, language courses chose the most students from the last age group 26-30 years.

The fact that students give their attention to conversation in an international community and are also interested in participating in internships abroad supports higher probability of them getting in contact with ELF. However, the importance of native speakers of English and English environment to the students, is undeniable.

What tools will you choose to achieve this goal?



Graph 17: Tools to achieve students' goal of English studies

6.5. Results of the research

Based on the results of the first part of the questionnaire that served for a detailed identification of the respondents most of the respondents were female, between the age of 18-21 and came from Europe (namely Czech Republic, Germany, Portugal or France). Almost all of the students were non-native speakers

of English and a majority of them studied linguistics, followed by humanities. The research showed that a majority of the students have taken part in an event connected with their studies or in an internship abroad.

From the author's research follows that a majority of students did not have the knowledge or recognise English as a lingua franca when being asked what this term meant (see Graph 8). The author intentionally asked this question first, in order to prove the amount of recognition of this phenomenon based solely on its designation.

The research has shown that a majority of the students recognised ELF after reading a short definition and example of ELF in the introductory part of the questionnaire. Based on reading this definition a great number of students confirmed that they have encountered ELF in an everyday communication. To such great number of encounters contributed the fact that most of the students have been using English more in touch with foreigners, i.e. non-native speakers of English.

The results of this research also revealed that a majority of the students have not been introduced to ELF during their English studies. That indicates the lack of explanation of this phenomenon in the educational system. The author finds it would bring advantage to the students if they were at least briefly introduced to ELF during their English studies in order to prevent zero recognition of the ELF term as seen in Graph 10.

Moreover, the research confirmed that students have indeed been in touch with ELF, as they stated in Graph 9, by agreeing in questions relating to possible difficulties arising from an ELF encounter. The students confirmed that they have experienced grammatical or pronunciation difficulties during communication. The research has shown that mistakes in pronunciation lead to more significant complications in communication rather than grammatical ones.

Lastly, the research also focused on the students English application and goals during their English studies. According to the results, all of the students use English at least once a week, majority of them even more than once a week. Most of the students plan to use English in the future with native speakers and in countries of origin of English (see Graph 15). Moreover, their goal is to speak English perfectly (like a native speaker) which they want to achieve by having conversation with native speakers of English (see Graph 16).

Such results revealed that even though non-native communication of English is nowadays probably more common than communication where at least on one side an English native speaker occurs, and even though it affects the students more due to the fact that they use English mostly with foreigners rather than with native speakers, students are still very much influenced by native speakers of English (see Graph 11). As seen from the results of the questionnaire, the respondents' primary aim is to use English in communication with native speakers and in countries of origin of English as well as to speak perfect English like a native speaker. In order to reach such level of English, the students chose as a tool conversation with native speakers.

As the author previously mentioned, the research showed that native speakers of English and their environment nowadays still play a significant role among university students. However, the role of ELF proved to hold an important status among university students as well. The students showed interest in international use of English as a substitution for communication in a local language which proved to be the second most chosen idea of English use in their future career. Moreover, the third most chosen tool by the students was conversation in an international community as a tool to achieve the goal of their English studies.

Therefore, overall the research revealed that university students definitely have encountered and are in contact with ELF in an everyday communication as all of the students use English at least once a week mostly during communication with non-native speakers of English. The probability of an encounter with this phenomenon could have been increased by the students experience from events,

internships or other activities abroad that most students are interested in and participate during their studies. As the research has shown, the students also plan to continue surrounding themselves by this phenomenon through the means of conversation with non-native speakers and international use of English in their future career. However, the influence of Standard English, its native speakers and English-speaking countries among the students is evident/apparent as well.

Even though according to the results the students evidently are more in contact with non-native speakers of English, a majority of them aims to use English in English-speaking countries. This majority of students sees their goal in achieving a native-speaker level of English by engaging in conversation with native speakers of English.

6.6. Possible questions/adjustments

The author's primary hypothesis for this research occupied itself with a possibility that students who find themselves in an international environment become more aware of English as a lingua franca than students that are in touch mostly or solely with native speakers of English. The results of this research showed that not only most of the students have taken part in an event or internship abroad but also the amount of contact the students have with non-native speakers of English. This confirmed the hypothesis that majority of the students do find themselves in an international environment.

The research also confirmed the hypothesis that students are aware of ELF and have encountered this phenomenon. The research revealed however that the students don't recognise this phenomenon under its term "English as a lingua franca", which might have been a result of shortage of ELF introduction in the educational system. Instead, the students recognised ELF based on definition and example situation provided by the author of this thesis.

Finally, the students goal of their English studies proved to be to speak perfect English (like a native speaker), use English in English-speaking countries and with native speakers and to practice their English through conversation with

native speakers. The international value proved to be important to the students as well, as they often chose using English internationally as a substitution for communication in a local language or decided for a conversation in an international community.

Based on the results that the author's empirical research has revealed, the hypothesis for this research could alternate as the research results focus more on usage of ELF among university students, their knowledge concerning this phenomenon and prediction of usage in their future studies. Therefore, the original hypothesis of this research could have read *"University students are regularly in contact with English as a lingua franca and aim to use their English in an international environment mostly with non-native speakers of English"*.

Possible questions that could be additionally incorporated into the author's questionnaire are *"Do you find / Have you ever found yourself in an international environment?"*. According to how the students responded in the research, the author supposes the answer to be "Yes" due to the amount of contact with foreigners as well as a high number of students taking part in events abroad. Similar assessment considers the author in connection with another possible additional question. To a question *"Does your university support such consideration and approach to a language, e.g. studying English as a lingua franca?"* the students would presumably answer "No" due to the results indicating the lack of introduction of ELF during the students' studies.

As seen from the answers, the alternation of pronunciation caused the respondents more problems rather than errors of a grammatical sort. However, this issue was not the main purpose of this research. Whether we can confirm such assumptions or not, demands a closer study of this question. The author leaves such expansion of this research as a possible topic for her Master thesis, where she would like to study this issue among university students more closely and discover a conclusion.

7. CONCLUSION

The objective of this Bachelor thesis was to analyse to what extent university students are aware of English as a lingua franca and their preferences in future application of English. Firstly, in the theoretical part the author introduced the position of English, defined English as a lingua franca as well as showed in which spheres ELF significantly occurs, including education.

In the practical part, the author conducted research that strived to find out if university students are aware of ELF if they are in contact with this phenomenon and what are they preferences for their future use of English. The information provided in the theoretical part shows that although ELF is fairly newly recognised variety of English, a great amount of research has already been conducted on this linguistic field, which enabled to identify some characteristic features of this phenomenon.

The results of the research showed that students are aware of ELF, however, do not recognise this phenomenon under the term “English as a lingua franca”. Additionally, university students encounter ELF on a daily basis as they are more in contact with non-native speakers of English and use English mostly with foreigners. This discovery confirmed the fact stated in subchapter 3.2. where it is evident that English is nowadays mastered by a higher number of non-native speakers rather than its native speakers. However, even though the students currently use English more in contact with non-native speakers, the majority of students still aim to use English in situations where native speakers are present. That means that they will not purposely focus on using English strictly among non-native interlocutors but that they wish to use English in contexts including means of English „nativeness“ (e.g. countries of origin of English, English native speakers).

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9. ABSTRACT

This Bachelor thesis studies the linguistic phenomenon of English as a lingua franca (ELF) and investigates the degree of awareness that university students have of this phenomenon.

The thesis includes a brief outline of the history of English spreading and securing its dominant position around the world as a global language. Subsequently, the author introduces English as a lingua franca, considering insights and definitions of linguists, as well as some of the linguistic features from the field of lexicogrammar, phonology and pragmatics occurring within this phenomenon. A role of ELF in particular areas such as international business, information technology, aviation and education is shown.

The last part of the thesis contains research conducted by the means of a questionnaire, where the knowledge and preferences of university students in connection with ELF are tested.

10. RESUMÉ

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá lingvistickým fenoménem „Angličtina jako lingua franca“ a jejím cílem je pomocí výzkumu zjistit, do jaké míry znají vysokoškolští studenti tento pojem, a jak moc jsou s ním v kontaktu.

Úvodem je v práci zmíněn historický vývoj a proces rozšíření angličtiny do takové míry, že se stala světovým jazykem a zajistila si tak dominantní pozici po celém světě. Následně autor představuje a definuje pojem „Angličtina jako lingua franca“ s pomocí názorů a definicí různých lingvistů, zabývajících se touto tematikou společně s určitými charakteristickými lingvistickými prvky tohoto jevu. Dále se autor věnuje roli angličtiny jako lingvi francy v určitých sférách společnosti, například v mezinárodním obchodě, informativních technologiích či systému vzdělání.

Poslední část práce obsahuje výzkum, provedený za pomoci dotazníku, který zkoumá vědomosti a preference vysokoškolských studentů ve spojení s angličtinou jako lingvou francou.

11. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Questionnaire

English as a Lingua Franca: awareness, usage and assessment among university students

Question

To what extent are university students aware of English as a Lingua Franca?

Hypothesis

- Students who find themselves in an international environment are more aware of the phenomenon of English as a Lingua Franca than students who get in touch mostly or solely with people whose native language is English.
- University students are in contact with ELF, do not however recognise it under the term „English as a lingua franca“.
- University students plan to use English in the future more with native rather than with non-native speakers.

Attachment 1: Accompanying document

Subject: Research of usage of English as a lingua franca among university students, of their knowledge about this concept and prediction of usage in their future studies.

Dear colleagues,

Under a kind supervision of Mrs PhDr. Eva Skopečková, Ph.D. during preparation of my Bachelor's final thesis, I would like to ask you a kind favour of answering a few questions in my questionnaire which you will find on the following page.

The aim of the questionnaire is to find out, if an international environment helps you to a wider cognition of the English as a lingua franca phenomenon. The questionnaire is designed for university students in the age of 18-30, is anonymous and its electronic form allows an easy answer process which does not take more than 10 minutes.

I am kindly asking you, the students I turned to, to take the time and answer this questionnaire because the number of answers is crucial for the efficient outcome of this research. The results of this research will be used in my specialised studies.

Please fill this questionnaire out and send it to me until 31 January 2015.

Thank you for your help and cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

Eva Zikmundova

Attachment 2: Introductory part

The aim of this questionnaire is to discover whether an international environment and contact with people of different countries, cultures forces them to use more English as a lingua franca, as a modern tool for international communication, alias superstructure to national languages.

The aim of this questionnaire is also to assess if students for their future study, professional and personal life prefer English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) or one of classical foreign languages (EFL).

It is often observed that English has become globally widespread, and that the majority of its non-native speakers use it as a lingua franca among themselves as a communication tool in case of not knowing their native language rather than as a foreign language to communicate with its native speakers. For example, French and Czech use English to communicate with each other if not one of them knows how to speak a native language of the other.

This communication shows characteristic features in pronunciation, grammar, lexicology, etc. It does not have any established norm yet, which the users could follow. It is however recommended by linguists for students to become familiar with the characteristic features of this phenomenon in order to ensure intelligible communication in such contexts.

The questionnaire consists of closed and half-closed questions where respondent must choose one option or write an additional information.

Please mark the chosen option visibly.

The value of answers is highly important because it will contribute to further research. I therefore thank you for careful and accurate completion.

Attachment 3: Questionnaire

Note: Following information will be used for statistical purpose only.

Part 1 Additional and identification information

1. Gender

- Male
- Female

2. Age

- 18-20
- 21-25
- 26-30

3. Country of origin:.....

4. Field of studies:

.....

5. Have you ever taken part in an internship, study exchange programme, language school, conference, research trip or other opportunities abroad?

If the stated items don't match the programme you took part in or the experience you have, please specify.

- Yes
- No
- Yes,.....

Part 2 Knowledge of ELF

6. Do you know the phenomenon "English as a lingua franca"?

- Yes
- No

7. If you read the definition in the introductory part of this questionnaire, have you ever come in touch with this phenomenon in everyday communication?

- Yes
- No

8. Have you ever been introduced to this phenomenon during your English studies?

- Yes
- No

9. Have you been using English lately more in contact with native speakers or foreigners?

- With native speakers
- With foreigners

Part 3 **Difficulties connected with ELF**

10. Have you ever got in touch with someone in English conversation who had a strong accent which disturbed your communication?

- Yes
- No

11. Have you ever been, while talking to a foreigner, in a situation when both sides were making grammatical mistakes but the content was understood?

- Yes
- No

Part 4 **Preferences and English application**

12. How often do you use English in a week?

- Not once
- 1x a week
- more than 1x a week

13. What is your idea of use of English in your future career?

- International use as a substitution for communication in a local language (for example business with Asian countries such as India, China)
- Communication in countries of origin of English or with native speakers (for example work in Great Britain, work for American company in Czech Republic)
- Other idea:.....

14. What is your goal of your English studies? Be able to:

- Speak perfectly (like a native speaker)
- Speak sufficiently for communication in work environment
- Have satisfactory speaking and writing skills
- Teach English
- Study English from a linguistic point of view
- Communicate while travelling

15. What tools will you choose to achieve this goal?

(selection of more choices allowed)

- Conversation with native speakers
- Conversation in an international community
- Language courses
- Internship abroad
- Listening to English speaking media (TV, radio)

Thank you for your time that you have invested in filling out this questionnaire.

Eva Zikmundova