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**Teaching Pronunciation to Young Learners**

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## **Declaration**

I hereby declare that this bachelor thesis, titled *Teaching Pronunciation to Young Learners*, is a result of my own work and that I listed all sources used on the works cited page.

Prague, April 13, 2012

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## **Abstract**

The thesis aims at exploring pronunciation teaching to young learners. The theoretical part focuses on the key characteristics of young learners and it further scrutinizes the basic principles of teaching English to this target group with special emphasis on teaching pronunciation. The practical part offers a set of five lesson plans which aspire to get young learners actively involved in the presentation of new pronunciation topics and provide them with a wide variety of activities. Apart from the traditional listen and repeat technique the pronunciation exercises tend to be playful so that young learners can enjoy taking part in them. The piloting took place in a language school and each lesson plan is accompanied by a detailed commentary and evaluation of the effectiveness of the selected methods and procedures.

**Key words:** Young learners, teaching pronunciation, learners' involvement

## **Shrnutí**

Cílem této bakalářské práce je zkoumání výuky výslovnosti na prvním stupni ZŠ. Praktická část se zaměřuje na klíčové charakteristiky žáků a dále zkoumá základní principy výuky angličtiny s ohledem na danou věkovou skupinu a se zvláštním důrazem na učení výslovnosti. Praktická část předkládá pět ukázkových plánů hodin, které usilují o aktivní zapojení žáků do samotné prezentace nové látky a poskytují rozmanité aktivity k jejímu následnému procvičení. Kromě tradičních metod učení výslovnosti, jako poslech a opakování, jsou zahrnuty do plánů hodin i různá hravá cvičení, která v žácích probudí zájem aktivně se účastnit. Pilotáž hodin proběhla na jazykové škole, každý plán hodiny je tedy opatřen i komentářem a vyhodnocením efektivnosti použitých metod a postupů.

**Klíčová slova:** žáci 1.stupně ZŠ, učení výslovnosti, aktivní zapojení žáků

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The question whether to include teaching pronunciation in English lessons has always been an open one. There are still many teachers who neglect it but the number of teachers in favour is gradually increasing as they realize the significant role it plays in effective communication. After all, what would any language be without correct pronunciation?

When I first entered a classroom as a teacher, I already knew that pronunciation would be part of my curriculum. However, I found out there were many textbooks which treat this aspect of language as something peripheral. At the beginning, I employed the exercises given in textbooks but then I noticed that children tended to perceive pronunciation similarly as those authors of the textbooks and I decided to try to change their point of view.

The result of my work is presented in this bachelor thesis which relates pronunciation teaching to a specific group of learners - children. My first aim is to demonstrate that teaching pronunciation does not necessarily mean only imitating and drilling. Even though these are by all means effective teaching methods, they should not be considered the only ones. Pronunciation can be taught also in a playful way, through various activities, games, chants and songs, so that all students and young learners in particular can enjoy the process of learning. Secondly, the focus was put on learners' active involvement in the lead-in stage of the lesson. Usually, when presenting a new topic to the class, the teacher tends to start by explaining a rule which is followed by examples and practice. However, young learners' cognitive development requires different approaches to introducing new themes including pronunciation features. Young learners should take active part in the learning process from the beginning. The teacher may start by giving pupils a few examples and invite them to discover the target structure by asking various questions and eliciting. Taking into consideration these factors a set of five lesson plans covering both segmental and supra-segmental features of pronunciation was devised and piloted by the author in an English course for children at a Prague language school.

The set of five lesson plans, accompanied by a detailed commentary and evaluation of how they work when put into practice, presents the content of the practical part of the thesis. However, these lesson plans would not be created without necessary theoretical background which is scrutinized in the first part of the thesis. The theoretical part stems from two theoretical sources: teaching English to young learners and pronunciation

teaching. It describes the characteristics of young learners, then the focus moves to the exploration of some basic principles of teaching English to this target group and finally several aspects of teaching pronunciation are illustrated.

This bachelor thesis aims at encouraging English language teachers to integrate pronunciation in their curriculum and to provide them with a set of playful pronunciation activities and tips that can be easily integrated in their lessons and that allow learners to take active part in the learning process.



## **2. THEORETICAL PART**

### **2.1 YOUNG LEARNERS**

There is no doubt that knowledge of a foreign language is nowadays necessary. The ability to speak foreign languages not only increases the chance to get a decent job but it is also convenient for personal use – to make oneself understood abroad. As today's international language for communication is considered to be English, the demand for English speaking people has rapidly increased. Due to its great importance, the English language has become an obligatory school subject at all primary schools in the Czech Republic. This means that the pupils are obliged to start learning this foreign language at a very early age. Some of them, however, might be exposed to English even earlier, though not mandatorily, since a lot of kindergartens offer English classes.

This boom of teaching English at primary level caused an urgent need for trained teachers. One might think that perfect knowledge of the language is enough to become a primary English teacher. However, we must bear in mind that children have different competences and abilities than adult learners do. Therefore it is very important that teachers familiarize themselves with characteristics and mental development of young learners so that they are able to choose adequate teaching methods and classroom activities.

#### ***2.1.1 Characteristics of young learners***

In most of the literature dealing with teaching at primary level the term young learners refers to the children between the age of four or five to children of ten or twelve. Sarah Phillips describes young learners as children from the first year of formal schooling (five or six years old) to the age of eleven or twelve (Phillips 5). Wendy A. Scott and Lisbeth H. Ytreberg in their book *Teaching English to Children* divide the learners into two groups, the first one of five to seven and the second one of eight to ten years old (Scott and Ytreberg 1-3). Similarly, young English learners are grouped by Mary Slattery and Jane Willis into children under seven years old, sometimes described as very young learners, and children between seven and twelve, sometimes described as young learners (Slattery and Willis 4-5). This tendency to division is reasonable if we consider how quickly children's minds develop. There is a sharp contrast between the thinking and speaking

skills of a five year old and a ten year old. Even though every individual develops at their own pace, some general characteristics can be distinguished.

#### **2.1.1.1 Children under seven years old**

Children under seven need to learn about the world they have recently entered. They gain new knowledge very quickly, often through direct experience and by asking curious questions. Experienced teachers would agree that young pupils like to draw attention to themselves. “They are very self-centred and cannot see things from someone else’s point of view” (Scott and Ytreberg 3).

As it was already indicated above, the physical world is for children at this stage crucial. They learn about the world through absorbing it with all five senses. Children are capable of using logical reasoning but they can also use their vivid imagination. This sometimes causes them difficulty in distinguishing between fact and fiction (Scott and Ytreberg 2). The significant role of imagination is also stressed by Susan Halliwell: “Language teaching should be concerned with real life. But it would be a pity if we were so concerned to promote reality in the classroom that we forgot that reality for children includes imagination and fantasy” (Halliwell 7). In addition, primary teachers need to know that even though young learners have a very short attention and concentration span they are enthusiastic and positive about learning if they are enjoying themselves and are encouraged by teacher’s praise and support (Scott and Ytreberg 2-3).

#### **2.1.1.2 Children of seven to twelve years old**

Regarding children, even a few years of age difference mean great progress in their physical and cognitive development. “As children mature they bring more intellectual, motor, and social skills to the classroom, as well as a wider knowledge of the world” (Phillips 7). In comparison to very young learners, children aged seven to twelve are relatively mature with an adult side and a childish side (Scott and Ytreberg 3).

Young learners have already created opinions about lot of things. Their basic concepts are formed and they have very decided views of the world. Children at this age do not see the teacher as an absolute authority anymore. They are able to make some decisions about their own learning and they begin to question the teacher’s decisions. Unlike younger children they can recognize the difference between fact and fiction. Furthermore, young

learners are no longer so self-centred so they are able to work with others and learn from others (Scott and Ytreberg 3-4).

Scott and Ytreberg focus on language development as well: “Eight to ten years old have a language with all the basic elements in place. They are competent users of their mother tongue and in this connection they are aware of the main rules of syntax in their own language” (Scott and Ytreberg 4). However, even when using mother tongue, teachers cannot rely on the spoken word only. Their speech should be supported by various visual aids, objects and realia.

### ***2.1.2 Cognitive development***

What children can or cannot do at different ages is connected not only to their physical, but also to their cognitive development. The greatest part of these changes take place during the primary school years. “The years at primary school are extremely important in children’s intellectual, physical, emotional, and social development. They go through a series of stages, progressively acquiring skills that are thought necessary by the society they live in” (Phillips 6). The widely known classification of these stages was offered by a Swiss psychologist and philosopher Jean Piaget. His theory of cognitive development has greatly influenced the views on teaching foreign language to children. Curtain and Pesola in their book *Languages and Children – Making the Match* refer to Wadsworth, who studied Piaget’s developmental stage theory: “The child develops cognitively through active involvement with environment, and each step in development builds on and becomes integrated with previous steps. Because two of the four developmental stages normally occur during the elementary school years, it is important for language teachers working with children to keep the characteristics of each cognitive stage in mind” (Curtain and Pesola 66).

The first stage is the stage of sensory-motor intelligence. It includes children from their birth to the age of two. Behaviour at this stage is primarily motor. Then follows the stage of preoperational thought, concerning children of two to seven years old. At this stage language development and rapid conceptual development take place. Reasoning during this stage is pre-logical or semi-logical. Pupils at this age learn best with concrete experience, by naming objects and through oral language. If they have a good model they are very likely to develop good oral skills – pronunciation and intonation. They are very egocentric

and usually do not respond well to group work. Due to their short attention spans a variety of activities is essential but regular routines are also important.

Children aged seven to eleven belong to the stage of concrete operations. During this stage children are able to gradually apply logical thinking to concrete problems. Learners can already work well with their classmates but they might be reluctant to co-operate with children of the opposite sex. They learn effectively through concrete experience and with help of context. The final stage is called the stage of formal operations and involves children of eleven to fifteen years old and older. During these years the child's cognitive structures are fully developed and children are capable of applying logical reasoning to all classes of problems. Positive self-image, positive relationships, independence and sense of belonging to a peer group are very important at this age (Curtain and Pesola 66-68).

Piaget's theory of cognitive development is fundamental not only for language teaching but for teaching in general. By defining the developmental stages Piaget brought us closer to children and helped us to understand their world better.

## **2.2 TEACHING ENGLISH TO YOUNG LEARNERS**

The first chapter deals with description of young learners and aspects of their cognitive development. In this chapter we will discuss how these factors are related to their learning process and consequently, how they influence teachers' work with young learners. To manage a satisfying and entertaining lesson costs a lot of time and planning. Teachers have to pay attention to many things such as variety of the lesson, balance of activities used, students' interest and involvement. Last but not least, we cannot forget to mention that most of the lesson should be conducted in English.

### ***2.2.1 Teaching English through English***

Using English in the English classroom might seem as something natural and obvious. Unfortunately, not all teachers conduct their lessons in the target language. Learners then get the impression that the foreign language is something they need just for filling in the exercises and they do not see it as means of communication (Halliwell 15). Children should not be underestimated regarding understanding English. Young learners can understand a lot more than they are able to produce. Besides, there are plenty of ways to put the message across. Teacher's facial expression and tone of voice, using puppets,

miming and acting, these are means that will help children to grasp the meaning (Scott and Ytreberg 18). Moreover, for most children English class is the only opportunity to hear English. Therefore the exposure to foreign language should not be limited but increased (Halliwell 15). On the other hand, Phillips suggests that sometimes the use of mother tongue is inevitable. She mentions situations such as giving instructions for complicated activities or feedback sessions. “What is important is that the children are given clear guidelines on when they are expected to use English and when their first language is permissible” (Phillips 8).

### ***2.2.2 Choosing the right activity***

Apart from use the of English language in the classroom, another important aspect of teaching is a variety of activity. During the class teachers should change not only the type of activity but also pace of the lesson. “Since concentration and attention spans are short, variety is a must – variety of activity, variety of pace, variety of organisation, variety of voice” (Scott and Ytreberg 6).

#### **2.2.2.1 Variety of activity**

In order to choose suitable activities for the lesson, several aspects have to be taken into consideration. Depending on the class mood teachers might use a stirring or calming activity, activity at the desk or moving activity. Accordingly they can decide whether to do listening, reading, writing or speaking activity. Stirring activities are those which stimulate learners such as games, songs or speaking tasks. Sometimes they might have a negative effect as well. Pupils get too restless and over-excited. Then the teacher should use a calming activity which, on the other hand, settles the class and prepares the pupils for some serious work. Calming activities are usually considered exercises such as listening, writing or colouring. There is no general rule which decides whether the activity is stirring or calming. Each exercise works differently with different class or in different time. Therefore even a game might sometimes work as a calming activity or similarly listening as a stirring activity (Halliwell 20).

Teachers should consider not only the stirring or calming factor but also the balance of listening, talking, reading and writing skills. Although it is not necessary to integrate all the skills in one lesson students are probably not willing to write or read for the whole lesson time. Neither are they willing to sit for the whole time. Teachers should balance not only

activities focused on different abilities but also the time for which students must remain seated and the time when they can actively move. There are a lot of moving activities that do not require much space and can be carried out even in smaller classrooms. These involve various games, song and chants accompanied by demonstrating the actions or tasks such as *Find...(colour/object/someone who.../etc)* or total physical response activities when children have to react to the teacher's commands (*e.g., Touch your.../Go to.../etc*). It is important to maintain a balance of quiet and noisy exercises, different skills and different classroom organization. If the teacher is aware of all aspects and effects of activities he or she is able to plan lessons which are neither boring nor out of control.

#### **2.2.2.2 Variety of organisation**

As Sarah Phillips points out, different activities require different groupings. The ones most commonly used by teachers are individual work, pair work and group work (Phillips 9-10). Individual work is preferred especially by very young learners. As it was said in chapter 1.1.1, young children are very self-centred and therefore reluctant to share. Individual work is often applied to activities as reading or making things (Phillips 9).

According to Curtain and Pesola, the use of small-group and pair activities creates a very powerful context for communication in the classroom. "Students can work together to solve a problem or develop a response to a situation the teacher designs" (Curtain and Pesola 124). Phillips adds that before moving to the pair work activity it is always a good idea to demonstrate what you want the children to do by using open pairs, when two pupils are selected to do part of the activity and the rest of the class is watching. Regarding group work, it is always better to limit members in the group to a maximum of five pupils, otherwise the grouping can be counter-productive (Phillips 9-10). Children should not be able to choose their groups because it usually causes somebody to be left out. On the other hand, we cannot expect a pupil to work well with someone he or she simply does not like (Scott and Ytreberg 16-17). Small group work and pair work are usually applied to speaking and guessing activities but also to reading or writing.

#### **2.2.2.3 Routines**

Even though variety is a must, routines are very important as well. They are repeated actions which gradually become familiar to the learners. "The introduction of classroom routines is instrumental in setting up working parameters which function effectively with

all ages” (Read 12). Routines can be considered such things as initial greeting with the class, taking the register, starting and ending the lesson and moving from one part of the classroom to another (Read 12). It can be also the whole of the lesson (particular activities) such as telling a story, singing a song or practising pronunciation. Scott and Ytreberg emphasize the importance of routines by claiming that they build up feeling of familiarity and security for both very young and young learners (Scott and Ytreberg 11).

### ***2.2.3 Students’ involvement***

Another important method which stimulates students’ learning and helps them to acquire language quickly and effectively is students’ involvement. This chapter Involving students in the lesson can be achieved not only during the actual practice of the target language (e.g., grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation) but even earlier. Pupils can be involved at the lead-in or so called presentation stage of the new language already. This approach is called inductive. In contrast to deductive approach that starts with the presentation of the rule and is followed by examples in which the rule is applied, the inductive approach starts with some examples from which a rule is inferred (Thornbury 29).

Although the expert literature focuses on the involvement of older students rather than very young and young learners, the inductive approach can be taken advantage of even when teaching children. Despite their inability to deduce a rule from set of examples children are endowed with a great capacity for indirect learning. “Children sometimes seem to notice something out of the corner of their eye and to remember it better than what they were actually supposed to be learning” (Halliwell 5). Pupils at primary school level have not yet developed the ability for conscious learning – they are not able to understand the language rules. However, they have a great instinct for subconscious indirect learning. Therefore young learners should be assigned such activities that make them concentrate on the task so much that they do not focus on the language they are using. They use the language unconsciously (Halliwell 5-6).

Such activities that require high concentration and therefore result in unconscious learning are sometimes referred to as problem solving activities or discovery techniques. According to Jeremy Harmer, these techniques get the students to do most of the work. “There are good pedagogical and methodological reasons for this since the students will be

more involved and since this kind of activity invites them to use their reasoning processes” (Harmer 71). Discovery techniques can be used for presenting any kind of new language, for example new grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation. Harmer presents an example of teaching new vocabulary - rather than teach the students new words we can show them examples of words in action. Students then have to use their previous knowledge to guess the meaning of the word. Similarly, the teacher may ask beginners, who do not have previous knowledge at their disposal, to work out what the word means instead of just handing them the meaning. Feedback in this case is necessary. The teacher should check if students have understood the word correctly (Harmer 160). Not only students but also younger learners can succeed in solving discovery activities. To do so they need help of the teacher who can lead them to the solution by asking casual but targeted questions.

Thornbury suggests that the inductive route is also the way one’s first language is acquired. We learn our mother tongue through exposure to massive amounts of input. “Induction, or learning through experience is seen as the ‘natural’ route to learning” (Thornbury 49). Furthermore, he presents some other advantages of the inductive approach. Firstly, students tend to remember the rules they have discovered for themselves better. Greater memorability is also achieved by the greater degree of cognitive depth which is caused by learners’ mental effort. Moreover, students are not just passive recipients but they are actively involved in the learning process which makes them more attentive and motivated (Thornbury 54).

On the other hand, there are also some disadvantages of the problem-solving approach. Harmer writes that discovering the rule by learners takes usually much more time than a simple presentation. Teachers are also very likely to come across difficulties when finding suitable materials for discovery activities (Harmer 72). Thornbury adds that the inductive approach might frustrate students who are not used to this learning style and who would prefer simply to be told the rule. Nevertheless, despite the apparent disadvantages, the inductive approach is a welcome alternative to other types of presentation (Harmer 72). Teachers should not hesitate to use it in their class if they see it works well with their students.

As we can see, there are lot a of aspects of the lesson which should be taken into account. However, not all the aspects presented above have to be strictly followed. It is up to the teacher and his consideration which activities and methods best suit his or her students. Generally it can be stated that “if an activity is enjoyable, it will be memorable;



the language involved will ‘stick’, and the children will have a sense of achievement which will develop motivation for further learning” (Phillips 8).

## **2.3 TEACHING PRONUNCIATION**

Teaching pronunciation tends to be avoided by teachers. One reason might be that it is not considered as important as teaching grammar and vocabulary. Another reason might be the lack of competent teachers with sufficient knowledge in this field. It is also commonly assumed that pronunciation is acquired unconsciously by imitating a model and teaching it therefore would be a waste of instructional time. The need for teaching pronunciation usually arises from particular problems that students face; it is not strategically planned (Kelly 13). However, the fact that the situation has changed recently can be demonstrated by the existence of a lot of teaching materials dealing with pronunciation or pronunciation teaching (Dalton and Seidlhofer IX). This chapter gives answers to questions that might arise once we decide to include pronunciation in our curriculum. It also presents factors affecting pronunciation learning and finally lists some ideas and recommendations concerning teaching techniques and pronunciation activities.

### ***2.3.1 When to start teaching pronunciation?***

There have been many discussions about the age at which students should start to learn pronunciation. Most of the experts dealing with this matter claim that the earlier the better. Caroline Nixon and Michael Tomlinson support this presumption in their book *Primary Pronunciation Box*: until the age of twelve children are far less self-conscious than those above thirteen years. Learners are thus much more receptive to learning sounds and pronunciation patterns in their formative years. “It is much easier to teach and correct pronunciation at an early stage in the learner’s development than it is to correct time-compounded pronunciation errors at a later one” (Nixon and Tomlinson 9). The same solution to the problem of ‘fossilized accent’ is also suggested by Ann Baker. She claims that pronunciation teaching should be allocated much more time at the beginner than at later levels (Baker 1).

### ***2.3.2 Why teach pronunciation?***

Many of us would agree that correct pronunciation enables us to hold intelligible conversation. Even if a student has a good command of grammar and lexis he might fail to communicate successfully because of his problems with pronunciation. This experience, if repeated, can be quite frustrating and demotivating (Hewings 10). Since we learn foreign languages usually for communicative purposes, achieving comfortable intelligibility should be one of our teaching goals. Joanne Kenworthy states a definition of intelligibility: “Intelligibility is being understood by a listener at a given time in a given situation” (Kenworthy 13). One might object that when learning a foreign language our goal should be native-like pronunciation. Since it is achieved quite rarely it is considered unreal and therefore inappropriate goal for learners. (Kenworthy 3).

### ***2.3.3 Factors affecting pronunciation learning***

As it was said before, a native-like pronunciation is unachievable for the majority of the foreign learners. This chapter lists some of the factors that influence the way we speak in a foreign language and that inhibit us from pronouncing like a native speaker.

#### **2.3.3.1 The age factor**

One of the most discussed factors is probably the age of learner. It has been already outlined in chapter 3.1 that younger learners tend to achieve better results than adults. This belief is supported by the experts who are in favour of the theory of critical period. The theory suggests that “between the age of two and puberty the human brain shows the plasticity which allows a child to acquire his first language” (Klein 9). After puberty the ideal conditions for second language acquisition are gone - loss of brain plasticity together with completion of assigning of certain functions to different hemispheres prevents individuals from achieving native-like pronunciation (Celce-Murcia et al. 15).

On the other hand, there are a lot of experts who deny the theory of critical period. They argue that other studies have brought different conclusions. Krashen writes that according to the available empirical research it can be concluded that children are superior to adults only in the long run (Krashen 43).

To summarize, due to insufficient evidence the link between age and ability of pronouncing foreign language still cannot be exactly established. Another point to mention

is that the learner is at the same time influenced by many factors and therefore we cannot look at them separately.

#### **2.3.3.2 Exposure**

The amount of the learner's exposure to the target language is another important factor. It is usually assumed that if a learner lives in an English-speaking country, his or her constant exposure to the target language should positively affect his or her pronunciation skills. However, as Kenworthy points out, this is not always true. Although the learner is living in an English-speaking country he or she might spend most of his or her time outside the English-speaking environment (Kenworthy 6). Similarly, without living abroad one can be surrounded by English more than the learner in an English-speaking country. Therefore we cannot generalize such situations.

In the Czech educational environment learners are exposed to the target language mainly at school. For this reason the teacher should maximize students' exposure to the target language and encourage them to use English also outside of the class.

#### **2.3.3.3 Mother tongue**

Most of us, when we start learning a foreign language, are already equipped with our mother tongue. When it comes to learning English (or any other foreign language), knowledge of our native language can be not only enriching but also limiting. We are used to certain grammar and syntax rules, vocabulary and also pronunciation. As a result, it might be difficult for us to notice the differences between the two languages and to follow the new rules. "This applies not only to the individual sounds but also to combinations of sounds and features such as rhythm and intonation. To put it very crudely, the more differences there are, the more difficulties the learner will have in pronouncing English" (Kenworthy 4).

Every nationality tends to have common problems with pronunciation of certain sounds. According to Baker, Czech speakers are likely to make mistakes in pronouncing long vowels (sheep vs. ship, book vs. boot), /æ/ (pronounced as /e/ or /a/), and also schwa. Regarding consonants they have difficulties with /w/ (pronounced as /v/), /θ/ (pronounced as /s/ or /f/) and /ð/ (pronounced as /tz/ or /dz/). Voiced consonants in final positions are often pronounced unvoiced by Czech speakers. Lastly, we often face problems with the

supra-segmental level of pronunciation, meaning stress, rhythm and intonation (Baker 140).

Yet, complicated sounds, stress and intonation patterns should not be seen as insuperable obstacles on the way to native-like pronunciation. With continuous practice, these obstacles can be overcome as they already have been by people from many different language backgrounds (Kenworthy 4).

Apart from the three factors affecting learning pronunciation that have been presented above, there are some others which also play a significant role and therefore should not remain forgotten. For instance, learner's phonetic ability together with motivation and interest can affect his pronunciation to a great extent. Some of these factors can be influenced and some not. The teacher cannot change the age of the student or his phonetic ability but he can highly influence his interest and motivation (Kenworthy 6-9).

#### ***2.3.4 Techniques and activities for teaching pronunciation***

Once a teacher decides he or she will include pronunciation in his teaching plan, he or she should prepare the teaching procedure and activities thoughtfully. The first step is to select which features of pronunciation to teach. These should not be decided only by assuming common pronunciation problems of Czech speakers, but should be determined by listening to the concrete group of learners and examining their problems (Nixon and Tomlinson 10).

Secondly, pronunciation activities tend to be used as fillers in the lesson which makes them isolated from other course work (Hewings 19). As a result, students can pronounce practised features well during the pronunciation activities but then they might fail to do so in general class work. To avoid this problem, pronunciation should be linked with general language learning as much as possible (Baker 3).

##### **2.3.4.1 Balance of productive and receptive skills**

When it comes to teaching pronunciation there are two key sides: teaching productive (speaking) skills and teaching receptive (listening) skills (Kelly 15). The time dedicated to these skills will depend on the age of students. The younger the students are, the greater will be emphasis on the receptive skills. Since the input of very young learners is usually quite limited, the focus should be on the development of their listening abilities. For this purpose 'make and do' activities or total physical response activities serve well because

they encourage children to enjoy learning and thereby make it more memorable (Nixon and Tomlinson 11).

Similarly, the older the learners are, the more balance there will be between reception and production. “In terms of reception, students need to learn to hear the difference between phonemes, for example, particularly when there’s no such difference in their L1. They then need to carry that knowledge through into their production” (Kelly 15). Let us now have a look at some activities for practising both receptive and productive skills.

#### **2.3.4.2 Listening activities**

As it was indicated above successful production of language comes only after acquiring receptive skills. For this reason, listening activities make up an important part of teaching pronunciation. The main source of language that students can listen to is undoubtedly the teacher. However, the more variations of pronunciation students hear the better (Harmer 22). It is therefore advisable to use as many other sources as possible – not only tapes that come along with textbooks but also authentic material which helps the students realize the existence of many varieties of English. There are lot of ways in which language can be practised through listening. Pupils can be assigned to listen for specific sounds (words), decide in which order they hear them, write down what they hear, etc.

#### **2.3.4.3 Drilling**

Drilling is a simple but very effective form of practising pronunciation. In its most basic form, it involves students in repeating words or structures containing the target feature after a model (Kelly 16). The model can be either a teacher or tape. Because students are at the same time made to listen as well as immediately repeat, both receptive and productive skills are trained.

Drilling can be carried out in two ways: individually or chorally. Choral work, that is of the whole group of learners, usually precedes individual drill as it builds students’ confidence and gives them a chance to practise anonymously before they are put on the spot. The disadvantage of choral drill is that the teacher cannot check students’ pronunciation. Nevertheless their pronunciation can be checked during individual drill, when students are asked to repeat one by one (Kelly 16). Although drills give students a good chance to develop accurate pronunciation they are repetitive and not very creative

(Harmer 92). For this reason the teacher should use drilling activities sparingly or combine them with other activities which are not so monotonous.

#### **2.3.4.4 Minimal pairs activities**

“Minimal pairs are words (or utterances) which differ only in one phoneme” (Kelly 16). Yet, this small difference changes the whole meaning and without sufficient context might also lead to misunderstanding. Minimal pair activities are useful when we need to focus on one or two specific sounds. For instance, the teacher discovers that his pupils have difficulties with producing /æ/, which they tend to pronounce rather as /ʌ/. To draw attention to the difference between these sounds he contrasts them using minimal pairs. From this exercise pupils should realize the importance of accurate sound production more easily than if they were only corrected. Minimal pair activities are also a good way to make students aware of English spelling rules (phoneme-grapheme correspondence). Furthermore, learners can be gradually introduced to the individual phonemic symbols relevant to English (Kelly 19).

#### **2.3.4.5 Chants, rhymes and songs**

Children are really fond of music and rhythm so if we integrate it in our teaching in the form of songs, chants and rhymes they will most probably not consider it learning but only fun. By singing or saying a poem we can not only introduce or revise new grammar or vocabulary, but, above all we can help to improve all aspects of learners’ pronunciation. Through repetition of songs, rhymes and chants children will develop their ability to imitate and produce problematic sounds. Moreover, they will acquire features of the supra-segmental level, such as connected speech, word stress, sentence stress, weak forms, rhythm and intonation (Read 182-183). Especially with very young learners, all this happens unconsciously, in a natural way, because children focus on the rhyme or song and not on the correct pronunciation. To make the singing more lively, teacher can get the pupils to stand up and move around the classroom, to mark the rhythm by clapping his hands or tapping his foot or accompany the lyrics with corresponding actions (Nixon and Tomlinson 10).

#### **2.3.4.6 Further suggestions for pronunciation teaching**

The above presented list of suggested activities is by no means a complete one. There is a vast amount of pronunciation exercises and it is only up to the teacher which he or she chooses as suitable for his or her class. Another important aspect of teaching pronunciation is providing aids to students' understanding of sound production. If the students are supposed to produce the sounds correctly they must know how to produce them. Sometimes it is enough when teachers demonstrate the pronunciation themselves and point to the parts of mouth that are used for articulation of the target sound. However, in some cases this demonstration might not be satisfactory and so the teacher should provide learners with an illustration (Baker 2). It is also helpful if students can see themselves articulating in the mirror so they can compare their articulation to that of the teacher.

The next point to note is that pronunciation teaching can be enriched by using various visual aids, movement (as it was already outlined in 3.4.5) and exaggeration. "Exaggerating the length of sounds, the fall of a falling tone, the emphasis on a stressed syllable, the brevity of weak forms, etc., is a means of counteracting opposing tendencies, as well as enlivening the practice" (Haycraft 117). Finally, learners' interest in pronunciation can be increased by praising their efforts. Both excellent and poorer performances should be praised in order to boost learners' self-confidence and desire to keep on aiming for better results.

### **3. PRACTICAL PART**

The theory presented in the first part of the thesis provided the necessary background for devising a group of pronunciation activities for young learners. The author aimed to create a pronunciation course that would best fit her group of learners. Her efforts resulted in a set of five-lessons that covered five different pronunciation features.

The pronunciation course that was piloted by the author herself was carried out in a small language school aimed at teaching young and very young learners. The group of learners consisted of four children at the age of eleven, one boy and three girls. All of them were present for all five lessons that were held every Wednesday for five weeks in a row. The first lesson was attended by five pupils but one of them quit at the end of the first term and therefore did not take part in the rest of the lessons. The pupils and the teacher already knew each other for a long time because the English classes started in September 2011 and took place once a week. Each lesson took ninety minutes but the pronunciation teaching was planned to take approximately forty minutes.

The five lessons were designed according to the following pattern. At the beginning, the subject matter of the previous lesson was revised, so the pupils strengthened their knowledge and prepared themselves for the next topic. The new topic was introduced in the lead-in stage. The teacher used various visual aids and laid emphasis on playfulness of the presentation and active involvement of the pupils. The lead-in was followed by a simple explanation of the phonetic feature and practice of correct articulation. Finally came the practice that comprised two or three activities involving the vocabulary that had appeared in lead-in. The activities were balanced regarding the practice of receptive and productive skills, organisation of class (e.g., individual work, pair work or group work) and organisation of space (e.g., working at the desks or moving activity). Most of them were taken or adapted from literature dealing with pronunciation activities and some of them were created by the author. Readers can find the activity sheets in the Appendix. The phonetic features covered in the five-lesson teaching plan were not chosen randomly. The author took into consideration common problems of Czech learners (according to Baker and Roach) but the main source were the pronunciation problems of this concrete group of learners that had been noticed during continuous observation. After weighing the encountered pronunciation difficulties the teacher decided to include five phenomena that



were related to the curriculum and that covered both segmental (vowels and consonants) and supra-segmental level (word stress, rhythm and weak forms) of pronunciation.

The practical part lists these five topics in five chapters. Each chapter consists of a lesson plan, that is divided into lead-in and practice, and the teacher's evaluation and comments concerning the lesson. The evaluation summarizes how the pupils responded to each activity – if it was too easy or difficult, whether they enjoyed doing it or not and how long it took them to solve these exercises. In addition, it examines how children reacted to being involved at the presentation stage – whether they were able to discover the rule or not. The evaluation of the lesson was conducted by the teacher herself. In order to avoid a purely subjective point of view, it was carried out after a few days on the basis of the teacher's notes and videotapes that were made during each lesson.

### 3.1 TOPIC 1: /æ/ vs. /ʌ/

#### 3.1.1 Lesson plan

##### Lead-in

In the lead-in learners are shown flashcards with words containing the target sound /æ/. The teacher (T) elicits the words by asking *What's this?* When children answer, the T repeats the word after them, focusing on the correct pronunciation of /æ/. The flashcards are put on the blackboard and the T writes the words next to them. Choral repetition follows. Then the T elicits which sound the presented words have in common. Once the target sound is discovered the T explains and demonstrates that the sound /æ/ is produced with an open and relaxed mouth and writes the phonetic symbol on the blackboard. Finally, pupils are shown other flashcards and decide whether they contain the target sound or not e.g., *What's this? Yes, it's a cow. Does it belong to our words? Has it got the sound /æ/?* The same follows with the sound /ʌ/.

##### Practice

###### 1) What can you hear? /æ/ or /ʌ/?

This exercise is aimed at reception. Pupils make their own cards with the two phonetic symbols. The T says various words, gradually increasing the level of difficulty (starting from monosyllabic words, adding polysyllabic words and collocations). Pupils raise the corresponding card when they hear the sound.

###### 2) Minimal pair activity. Red or blue? (see Appendix 1)

A pair work activity that practises both receptive and productive skills. Children are given a sheet with seven minimal pairs, half of them marked blue and half red. The first pupil says one word from the minimal pair and the second one has to recognize whether he hears 'red word' or 'blue word'.

###### 3) Maze. Trace the words with /ʌ/ to get to the finish (see Appendix 1)

Pupils have to focus only on one sound. They check the correct path by saying the words out loud.

### ***3.1.2 Comments and evaluation***

To summarize, children coped with the first phonetic lesson very well. At the beginning they were a little reluctant to cooperate. The reason for that might be that they were not used to playing active part in the presentation stage of the lesson. When the teacher asked the pupils to find the common sound they answered it was the letter A that was common for all the words. To be sure that pupils had understood the question the teacher asked again, this time in Czech and then tried to help the pupils by praising their first attempt and by pronouncing the words exaggeratedly. Yet the children did not give the expected answer and so it had to be revealed by the teacher. After the presentation of words containing /Λ/, children discovered the common sound for the words presented by themselves, although their first answer was about the spelling as well. When training the articulation, the pupils were very shy, which again might be connected to the fact that they were not used to carrying out such activities.

In the second part of the lesson, dedicated to practice, children were not so reluctant anymore and cooperated better. They responded well to the first exercise, even though as the level of difficulty was increased they started having problems with distinguishing between the sounds. Apart from the sound recognition, pupils also had to remember which symbol represents each sound, which for some of them was a little confusing. The overall experience with this activity was positive, though. Most difficulties occurred with the minimal pair activity. The pupils were rather shy to pronounce the words properly and therefore it was difficult for the other learners to recognize the word. Nevertheless, with the teacher's help these difficulties were quickly overcome. In the last activity, children should have worked in pairs but they preferred to work individually and instead of saying the words out loud for themselves they stayed silent. Only when the teacher approached the pupils individually and encouraged them they pronounced the words aloud. The exercise was rather lengthy but pupils seemed to enjoy it as they were challenged to get to the finish of the maze.

## 3.2 TOPIC 2: /v/ vs. /w/

### 3.2.1 Lesson plan

#### Lead-in

Presentation of the topic is performed with the help of two puppets named William and Vanessa and a set of pictures with words starting with /w/ and /v/ sound. The pupils' task is to find out which pictures belong to William (words starting with /w/) and which to Vanessa (words starting with /v/). Pupils guess by asking, e.g., *Has Vanessa got a window?* The T helps them by answering with exaggerated articulation, e.g., *No, Vanessa hasn't got any window.* After pupils discover the pattern the words are revised chorally with focus on accurate pronunciation, e.g., *Vanessa has got a volcano, a veil, etc..* The T elicits which sound these words have in common and explains that when pronouncing /v/ our upper teeth are touching the lower lips as if we wanted to bite ourselves and when pronouncing /w/ our lips are rounded as if we wanted to kiss someone. The explanation is followed by practicing the individual sounds. Then the T elicits what William and Vanessa have got so pupils practice the pronunciation also in context. Only correctly pronounced words are accepted and written on the blackboard. Attention is drawn to the spelling of the words. When the list is finished the T adds some extra words and elicits whether they belong to William or Vanessa, e.g., *Who has got vegetables? William or Vanessa?*

#### Practice

- 1) Listen and repeat (see Appendix 2).

Activity aimed at both reception and production. Pupils listen to the tape and repeat six minimal pairs. Then they work in pairs. First learner says one word from the minimal pair and the second one says whether he or she hears sound one or two. Then the roles are switched.

- 2) Listen and tick the sentence you hear (see Appendix 2).

The exercise focuses on receptive skills. This time pupils hear the target sounds in context of a sentence which requires higher concentration.

- 3) Read the dialogues of William and Vanessa. Underline all the /w/ sound green and /v/ sounds yellow (see Appendix 2).

Pupils read the dialogues aloud (can be done individually or in pairs) and find all the /v/ and /w/ sounds. The level of difficulty of this exercise is higher because there are other spelling patterns representing /w/ sound included.

### ***3.2.2 Comments and evaluation***

In contrast to the previous lesson the pupils cooperated very well right from the beginning. A reason for that might be the playful presentation of the topic with the puppets and the immediately given task to match the pictures to William and Vanessa. The pupils discovered the pattern quite easily this time and during the practice of articulation they were not so shy anymore. Since the majority of the pupils were confusing the two sounds even after the explanation the teacher decided to include a drilling activity. Despite the repetition the children seemed to be entertained and some of them were enjoying themselves by exaggerating the articulation.

The practice activities were carried out with very good results. In the first exercise the pupils pronounced the words accurately and so the recipient pupils were able to determine which sound they hear easily and without any mistakes. The second activity was a little bit more demanding because the target sounds were set in context of sentences but the pupils encountered no difficulties either. The only problem the pupils came across was the grapheme-phoneme correspondence in the third activity. They underlined most of the words with /w/ and /v/ that were spelled with letters W and V, even in the words that were not included in the presentation, e.g., *what, have, swimming, well, very*. But they overlooked sound /v/ in the word *twelve* and did not notice the sound /w/ when it was contained in the word with different spelling, e.g., *quarter, squash*. Nonetheless, when the teacher in feedback gave them a hint that there were some more examples of /w/ and read the sentence aloud for them, the pupils immediately realized where the target sound was hidden.

### 3.3 TOPIC 3: /θ/ vs. /ð/

#### 3.3.1 Lesson plan

##### Lead-in

The topic is presented through flashcards that are placed face down on the table (or on the floor). Pupils, one by one, turn them over and say what they can see and the T corrects their pronunciation, if necessary. The flashcards show both the picture and the written form of ten words (half with /θ/ sound and the other half with /ð/ sound) so pupils can notice the spelling of the words. After uncovering all the cards and reading all the words chorally, children are given a task to divide the words into two groups. When pupils reveal the rule the T elicits the common sounds for both group and introduces the phonetic symbols. Then the T demonstrates the articulation of the target sounds and supports the explanation by providing pupils with the pictures (see Appendix.3) and by playing a tape. Pupils are told that in order to pronounce these two sounds the tip of their tongue has to touch their upper teeth (or has to be put between upper and lower teeth). To produce /ð/ they need to use their voice which they can feel when touching their throat. On the other hand, to produce /θ/ pupils cannot use their voice. They can check it again by putting their fingers on their throat. Pupils train the correct articulation first by pronouncing the individual sounds and then by pronouncing Czech words (e.g., *koza*, *sysel*) as if they contained /ð/ and /θ/. By doing this children realize the difference between the target English sounds and Czech sounds /s/ and /z/.

##### Practice

- 1) Listen to the words. Put them in the correct column (see Appendix 3).

This activity trains pupils' receptive skills.

- 2) Find your 'home'!

The T localizes two places in the classroom (e.g., corners). One corner is 'home' for sound /ð/ and the other for /θ/. Pupils are given cards with words and their task is to find their 'home'. Once they arrive there they have to check if all children in the same 'home' really belong there. The activity can be repeated various times.

3) Shopping for sounds (see Appendix 3).

Pupils draw their shopping basket that indicates which sound they are shopping for. There are cards face down on the table that contain not only the words with the target sounds but also some extra words. Children one by one turn the cards over, read the words and look for their target sound. The first one to get five words is the winner.

### ***3.3.2 Comments and evaluation***

The third pronunciation lesson was up to that point the most successful one. In the lead-in when the pupils were to uncover the cards they made a great effort to pronounce the words correctly as if they already had known what was expected from them. Moreover, it took them only a while to find the correct pattern and divide the words into two groups. Also the common sounds were elicited without any problem. Since the pupils found it difficult to pronounce /ð/ and /θ/ accurately, the teacher decided to dedicate more time to practising it. At the beginning the children seemed to be a bit reserved but when they started practising the target sounds integrated in the Czech words their restraints quickly disappeared.

In the second half of the lesson, the pupils had some doubts during the listening activity but in the end they managed to divide the words correctly. Some of them were checking their choice by putting their fingers on their throats to see whether the sound is voiced or not. The Find your 'home' activity seemed to be very easy for the pupils, most probably because it worked with almost the same set of words that had appeared in the presentation. Nevertheless, the children appreciated the change of activity and the movement included. Last activity, Shopping for sounds, was the most enjoyable for them. The pupils seemed to be quite excited about getting all five cards to become winners and when the game was finished they wanted to keep on playing.

## 3.4 TOPIC 4: WORD STRESS

### 3.4.1 Lesson plan

#### Lead-in

There are four words on the blackboard, each of them representing one stress pattern – daDA (e.g., *balloon*), DAda (e.g., *pizza*), daDAda (e.g., *umbrella*) and dadaDA (e.g., *lemonade*). The T reads them and elicits how many syllables (parts) they contain and then which part of the word is stronger. The T marks the stressed syllables and reads the words with the class chorally focusing on the correct pronunciation. In the second part of lead-in pupils are given a ‘shopping basket’ with twenty items (a box containing twenty word cards, related to the topic Shopping, with four stress patterns) and they are asked to divide the words into four groups. Depending on pupils’ progress, the T can encourage them by asking questions, e.g., *Does this word belong here?* or make their task more difficult by classifying some words incorrectly and asking the same question. After the task is completed choral repetition follows.

#### Practice

##### 1) Odd one out (see Appendix 4).

Pupils are given a sheet with four sets of words. In each line there is one word that does not fit the set with its stress pattern. Pupils find and mark the odd word. Additionally, they can mark the stress patterns in all the words.

##### 2) Clapping the stress pattern

This activity is carried out with the same set of word cards that were used in lead-in. Each child draws one word that becomes his or her ‘name’ during this round. The T establishes a certain clapping pattern (the stressed syllables are indicated by clapping one’s hands, unstressed syllables by patting one’s knees). One pupil starts by clapping his ‘name’ and then he or she gives the turn to someone else by clapping his or her ‘name’. The game proceeds until somebody makes a mistake.



### ***3.4.2 Comments and evaluation***

In brief, the pupils coped with the fourth topic without any significant problem. During the elicitation stage they gave the answers immediately and confidently. When they were given the task to divide the words into four groups according to the stress pattern, they probably overheard the teacher because they divided them only into two groups, according to the number of syllables. The teacher praised them and asked them to divide these two groups further. At first, the pupils did not seem to know how to do so but when the teacher prompted them by asking various questions they managed to divide the words correctly.

The most difficulties were met with in the first practice exercise. The children were working individually and the teacher monitored them. All pupils managed to solve at least half of the exercise successfully and if some mistakes occurred children were able to find them easily after the teacher had read the words for them. In the clapping activity the pupils faced difficulties with production. They were usually unable to produce the words stressed correctly, even though they obviously knew the stress pattern because they were clapping it correctly. The teacher tried to draw pupils' attention to the way the words should be pronounced but most of them continued in mispronouncing them. Since this pronunciation feature causes problems even at higher levels the teacher was satisfied with the fact the pupils apparently realized the stress and did not correct their mistakes constantly as it might have led to demotivating the children.

## 3.5 TOPIC 5: RHYTHM

### 3.5.1 Lesson plan

#### Lead-in

The focus of the whole lesson is the chant *I can* (see Appendix 5). The T introduces it to the class by playing a tape. Pupils are asked to listen and remember as much information as possible. After the first listening the T elicits what children in the chant can do. The second listening serves for drilling the correct pronunciation, especially stress, rhythm and the weak form of can /kən/. After the drilling pupils are given worksheets (see Appendix 5). They cut out the boxes and put them in the correct place in the poem. If they still cannot remember the order the T plays the recording again. The T reads the poem with pupils, paying special attention to the stress, then writes the first line on the blackboard and elicits which words in the poem are stronger and which weaker. The words are marked correspondingly and pupils are given the task to mark the rest of the poem in the same way (the T can play the recording repeatedly when pupils work on the task). Feedback is performed on the blackboard.

Then the T demonstrates actions to the rhyme and pupils are asked to say the chant in a chorus and accompany it with actions, too. Finally, the recording is played again for pupils to chant and mime along so they gain fluency and confidence.

#### Practice

##### 1) Playing with the poem.

This activity tests if pupils are able to feel the rhythm. Instead of saying the whole chant, children are invited to drop the second part of each line and demonstrate it only with the corresponding actions (e.g., instead of saying *I can comb my hair* children say just *I can* and they mime the rest of the line by combing their hair). As a result, they have to recognize when the next line starts. The activity can be done chorally or in a chain (each pupil says one line).

2) Write your own poem.

Having the poem written on the blackboard, the T wipes off the second part of each line (the same part that was dropped out in the first activity) and asks pupils to think of something else to fit the pattern.

### ***3.5.2 Comments and evaluation***

In the presentation part of the lesson the pupils cooperated well, as usual. The tasks they were given to solve were simple and so the pupils worked them out easily. When drilling the poem children did not keep the rhythm very well but later they marked the stress patterns successfully, just with a few mistakes. As the lesson proceeded the pupils chanted the poem with more fluency and confidence and they also seemed to be amused by the accompanying actions.

In the first activity of the practice stage the children again had some problems with keeping the rhythm. When they were chanting and miming the poem in chorus, they recognized where to start the new line but when they were chanting in chain the pupils often fell out of rhythm. This might have been caused by the fact that drilling in chorus gives confidence to learners, in contrast to the individual drill that puts them on the spot. The second activity, writing the poem, was very time-consuming and so after filling in the stress pattern of the first line collectively, the children were asked to do the rest of the poem for homework. In the next lesson the pupils presented their ideas. Regarding the number of syllables, they filled in the poem correctly. However, the pupils did not respect the stress pattern in most cases.

In conclusion, the last lesson can be claimed successful. Even though the pupils had problems with finding the words to fit the stress pattern of the poem, they realized the existence of rhythm and stress in abstract, which is important for further development of their pronunciation skills. Learning supra-segmental features of pronunciation takes a long time so the pupils cannot be expected to excel at the very first lesson.

## 4. CONCLUSION

Taking into account the five pronunciation lessons and evaluating the results, several conclusions can be drawn.

The teacher's ambition to get the pupils involved already at the lead-in stage, was fulfilled. Even though in the first lesson the pupils were reluctant to participate actively, they got used to this kind of presentation very quickly and with each consecutive lesson they cooperated with fewer doubts and more confidence. The fact that they took part in discovering new pronunciation patterns also seemed to increase the pupils' memory. The short revision at the beginning of each lesson might be seen as a proof of this claim. The pupils always remembered the previous topic very well even though they had been assigned no homework.

Regarding the practice activities, the pupils usually had no problems with solving them. This might have been the result of the preceding lead-in stage at which the pupils found out the rule for themselves and therefore were already familiar with the new topic so that no significant difficulties occurred. Another aim was to create playful activities. The pupils seemed to enjoy the learning process, they were active and eager to carry out the exercises correctly. Even though the use of drilling was minimised, the pupils seemed to have a good command of the target pronunciation feature at the end of each lesson. Supra-segmental features, needing more time to be acquired, appeared more difficult than segmental features for the learners. Nevertheless, the supra-segmental phenomena such as stress, rhythm and intonation are hard to be acquired so the pupils cannot be expected to master them after one lesson of practice.

The teacher noticed that when practising pronunciation, the pupils made an effort to pronounce correctly but later in the lesson (e.g., in the reading activities) they did not pay enough attention to the features they had learned. If they had mispronounced them before they usually continued mispronouncing after the training, too. They went through five lessons only and this problem would be probably eliminated if pronunciation was fully integrated into the curriculum and was trained more often.

To summarize, teachers should not feel discouraged by an initial lack of pupils' success. They should try to integrate pronunciation as much as possible so that pupils stop seeing it as something marginal and start using the knowledge gained in the pronunciation activities in other parts of the lesson.

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## Appendix 1 – Topic 1: /æ/ vs. /ʌ/

Read aloud in pairs. Red or blue?

 cat	×	cut 
 bag	×	bug 
 cup	×	cap 
 ankle	×	uncle 
 fun	×	fan 
 hut	×	hat 
 bat	×	but

Created by the author.

Follow the /ʌ/ sounds (bus) →


b <u>u</u> s	m <u>u</u> m	u <u>g</u> ly	b <u>o</u> ttle	n <u>u</u> mber	u <u>s</u>	c <u>o</u> usin	m <u>o</u> on
a <u>u</u> nt	r <u>u</u> ler	s <u>o</u> n	f <u>a</u> ther	s <u>o</u> me	d <u>o</u> or	u <u>p</u>	o <u>u</u> t
b <u>a</u> d	c <u>u</u> p	m <u>u</u> st	bl <u>o</u> nde	h <u>u</u> ngry	q <u>u</u> iet	col <u>o</u> ur	l <u>o</u> rry
com <u>i</u> c	u <u>n</u> der	gl <u>u</u> e	com <u>e</u>	u <u>n</u> cle	bl <u>u</u> e	b <u>u</u> t	sq <u>u</u> are
fr <u>u</u> it	broth <u>e</u> r	du <u>c</u> k	lun <u>ch</u>	sh <u>o</u> e	r <u>u</u> n	y <u>o</u> ung	work
hou <u>s</u> e	guit <u>a</u> r	lot	ou <u>r</u>	bu <u>r</u> ger	double	cu <u>r</u> ly	song
gr <u>a</u> nge	put	bu <u>y</u>	quest <u>i</u> on	hur <u>t</u>	moth <u>e</u> r	j <u>u</u> ngle	sun





Start → Finish


Now listen and check



## Appendix 2 - Topic 2: /v/ vs. /w/

**2**  Listen to the words and repeat: when they are surprised

	SOUND 1	SOUND 2
	/v/ <b>vet</b>	/w/ <b>wet</b>
	<b>vine</b>	<b>wine</b>
	<b>veil</b>	<b>whale</b>
		

**3**  Look at the pairs of sentences. Listen and tick ✓ the sentences you hear.

EXAMPLE: a) He's a vet student. ☐ He's a wet student. ☒

b) There's a little vine here. ☐ There's a little wine here. ☐

c) That's a veil. ☐ That's a whale. ☐

Baker, Ann. *Tree or three?: An elementary pronunciation course*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Read the dialogues of William and Vanessa. Underline all the /w/-sounds green and /v/-sounds yellow.

- W**: What time is it?

**V**: It's quarter past twelve.
- V**: Have you got a vase for these flowers?

**W**: Yes, I have. It's in the wardrobe next to the window.
- W**: Do you like swimming?

**V**: No. I can't swim very well. Let's play squash!

Created by the author.

## Appendix 3 – Topic 3: /θ/ vs. /ð/

### UNIT 4 /θ/ three



1

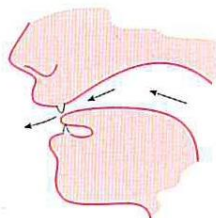
A20

Listen to /θ/.

A20

Look at the mouth picture.

Listen to /θ/ and repeat.



You do not need your **voice**, just air. /θ/ is **unvoiced**.

### UNIT 5 /ð/ feather



1

A26

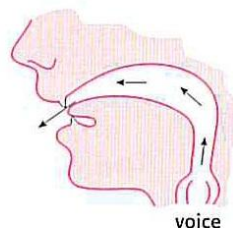
First say /θ/ (see page 9).

Now listen to /ð/.

A27

Look at the mouth picture.

Listen to /θ/ and /ð/ and repeat.



A27

Put your fingers on your **throat**.

Say /θ/. What can you feel?

Say /ð/. What can you feel?

You do not need your voice to say /θ/.

/θ/ is **unvoiced**.

You need your voice to say /ð/.

/ð/ is **voiced**.

6

A31




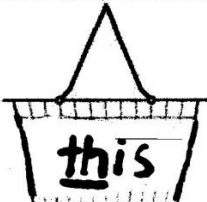
Listen to the words. Put them in the correct column.

<b>mouth</b>	<b>fourth</b>	<b>these</b>	<b>father</b>	<b>thumb</b>
<b>feather</b>	<b>those</b>	<b>think</b>	<b>this</b>	<b>the</b>




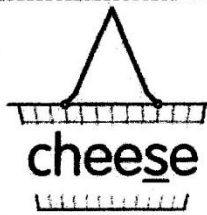
EXAMPLE:

/θ/	/ð/
mouth	these

Baker, Ann. *Tree or three?: An elementary pronunciation course*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

 <u>they</u>	 <u>thin</u>	 <u>thumb</u>	 <u>this</u>
<u>mo</u> ther	birth <u>da</u> y	bu <u>s</u>	mu <u>sic</u>
feath <u>er</u>	mouth <u>th</u>	mon <u>st</u> er	ea <u>s</u> y
weath <u>er</u>	noth <u>ing</u>	mo <u>u</u> se	jea <u>n</u> s
broth <u>er</u>	teeth <u>th</u>	six <u>th</u>	plea <u>s</u> e
<u>th</u> ere	<u>th</u> row	<u>th</u> ose	trou <u>s</u> ers

Adapted from Nixon, Caroline and Michael Tomlinson. *Primary Pronunciation Box: Pronunciation games and activities for younger learners*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

 <u>four</u> th	 <u>th</u> in	 <u>dr</u> ess	 <u>ch</u> ee <u>s</u> e
<u>tooth</u>	birth <u>da</u> y	bu <u>s</u>	mu <u>s</u> ic
<u>th</u> ink	mouth <u>th</u>	mon <u>s</u> ter	ea <u>s</u> y
<u>mon</u> th	noth <u>ing</u>	mo <u>u</u> se	jea <u>n</u> s
anoth <u>er</u>	tee <u>th</u>	wor <u>s</u> e	plea <u>s</u> e
<u>th</u> ere	<u>th</u> row	fa <u>m</u> ous	trou <u>s</u> ers

Adapted from Nixon, Caroline and Michael Tomlinson. *Primary Pronunciation Box: Pronunciation games and activities for younger learners*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

## Appendix 4 – Topic 4: Word stress

Odd one out:

1) balloon    flowers    guitar    shampoo

2) kangaroo    lemonade    magazine    banana

3) pizza    butter    apples    champagne    candies

4) umbrella    giraffe    potato    computer

Created by the author.

## Appendix 5 – Topic 5: Rhythm

### I can

### PRIMARY PRONUNCIATION BOX

2.6

1 Listen and repeat

I can tie my shoe lace



I can comb



I can wash my



And dry myself



I can brush my teeth, too,



And put on my



I can say



And eat up



2 Cut out the boxes and put them in the poem

all my greens	hands and face
my hair	'How are you?'
blue jeans	with care

From *Primary Pronunciation Box* by C. Nixon and M. Tomlinson © Cambridge University Press 2005

PHOTOCOPIABLE

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Nixon, Caroline and Michael Tomlinson. *Primary Pronunciation Box: Pronunciation games and activities for younger learners*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.