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Department of English Language and Literature

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Missionary ESL classes and their perception by the Czech
students

Misionářské kurzy anglického jazyka a jejich vnímání
českými studenty

Jana Čáslavská

Supervisor: Craig Alan Morgan, M.A.

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Declaration

I hereby declare, that the bachelor thesis entitled *American Missionaries and Their Impact on Teaching English in the Czech Republic* is a result of my own work and it is based exclusively on the sources listed on the Works Cited Page.

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Jana Čáslavská

In Prague, March, 2015

Abstract

The aim of this work is to introduce an important direction in teaching English — the American missionaries, who work in the Czech Republic as ESL teachers. The theoretical part will introduce the basic principles of the missionary work in terms of TESL. Historical development of the missionary movement will also be presented. The practical part focuses mostly on the conformity of the goals of the missionary teachers and their often atheist students. The research should thus reveal both, students' and teachers' perception of the missionary classes.

Key Words: English, teaching, learning, missionary, approach, goal, perception

Abstrakt

Tato práce si klade za cíl představit jeden z důležitých proudů ve výuce anglického jazyka - americké misionáře, kteří v ČR působí jako učitelé anglického jazyka. Teoretická část se snaží představit základní principy jejich práce v rámci výuky angličtiny. Nastíní také historický vývoj misí a misijních hnutí. Praktická část se především zaměřuje na srovnání vzdělávacích cílů misionářů a jejich studentů. Výzkum by tedy měl odhalit, jakým způsobem studenti a jejich učitelé-misionáři výuku vnímají.

Klíčová slova: Anglický jazyk, výuka, učení, misionář, přístup, cíl, vnímání

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Introduction

The motivation to write a thesis on this particular topic arose from years of great experience with one of the American Missionary communities working in the Czech Republic together with the fact, that the Czech public is not very familiar with the concept of studying English under the guidance of qualified native speakers without attending ordinary commercial language courses. As the need for English language competence has increased, the number of TESL¹ missionaries has proliferated, as well, and now plays a very important role in English learning and teaching especially in post-Communist countries, such as the Czech Republic. These countries are very specific in terms of their attitude towards religion, which was usually considered unacceptable by the Communist regimes. Most of the post-Communist countries stayed largely secular even after the regime had been cut short, which is why these locations are so attractive for American Protestant missionaries. Thanks to the demand for qualified English native speakers, their number has been continually growing in the past few years.

This bachelor thesis has as its objective to introduce one of many directions in teaching English in countries where English is not the native language. The teaching of ESL² by American missionaries who work in various parts of the world teaching religion through the medium of English—the language which is the most widespread in the world—that allows access into all countries, even those that are considered the most secular in the world. Their specific approaches to language teaching, such as creating interpersonal relationships or enhancing their student's curiosity about cultural particulars are to be introduced and possibly legitimized in this work.

The theoretical part presents the basic principles of the mission work, its history and its organizational aspects. It is also meant to highlight the importance of their work in terms of providing language education to the wider public. This part of the paper will be based on interviews with several mission workers currently serving in the Czech Republic, on studies about the topic and on related literature and internet sources describing the missionary work as a whole, using practical examples of their approaches

¹ TESL = Teaching English as a Second Language

² ESL = English as a Second Language

and strategies to make the students open not only to the language, but also to the spiritual level of the Protestant mission. The hypothesis of this paper will be presented in this section.

The practical part in the form of a survey will show how the efforts of the missionary ESL teachers are being perceived and to prove or to refute the conformity of the goals of the two parts. The minor part of the research is to compare students' experience with commercial courses and English classes provided by a missionary community in terms of quality of teaching and other factors that highly influence students' feelings about the classes. The survey will use questionnaires with open and multiple choice questions. The results will then be analyzed and transformed to various diagrams. Each diagram will be commented on in detail. The last few pages will be dedicated to a brief summary of the whole paper especially the results found and their conformity with the hypothesis made in the theoretical part of the work.

Theoretical Part

1. American Protestant Missions and ESL

American Protestant Missions experienced a long development throughout history. Thanks to numerous changes in the 20th century a new dimension of the mission work has emerged. It is the conception of sending missionaries to different parts of the world as ESL teachers. This trend of English teaching and learning that is based on the law of supply and demand is definitely worth mentioning as a significant rival to commercial English classes provided by private language schools (Snow loc 175). As the English language has served as a global language, the language of science and technology, of the tourism industry, of the sea and airlines industries, of the internet and the popular culture as such, the demand for English native speakers with pedagogical training has dramatically grown (Snow loc 1172).

The demand for English native speakers presents a huge opportunity for American Protestant Missionaries, who can work as ESL teachers even in the countries where traditional mission workers would not be accepted (Snow loc 182).

Nowadays, approximately one fifth of all mission workers are serving as ESL teachers using English as a tool for Evangelism (Snow loc 79). It is absolutely necessary for the missionaries to balance their motives of going overseas for the short-term, mid-term or long-term mission trips. Their mission consists of two main parts. The historically older one is to share their faith with non-Christians, to introduce Christianity in different parts of the world and to bring the Bible to those who are not familiar with the Scripture. The modern part of the mission is to teach English in countries where English is not the mother tongue.

The locations for these missionaries are chosen according to various factors such as the need of the host country for native English speakers, the role of English in the educational system of the country and future opportunities that a knowledge of English can bring to local students. The last factor is certainly the religious constitution of the population in the candidate country (Snow loc 1269). It is not surprising that the most popular destinations are those with the most secular population. In other words, missionaries working as ESL teachers focus their effort on people that are more likely to be converted to Christianity than on others who are not.

Teaching English is a wonderful opportunity not only for the mission workers, but also for the inhabitants of the host country, the students of English as a second language. It is necessary to mention that the relationship between the American missionary teachers and their often atheist students is usually greatly beneficial for both of them. People are eager to learn English to have more possibilities in education, such as the student's mobility within various exchange programs, and to have access to lucrative job opportunities, therefore, they find missionaries helpful in the learning process. Generally speaking, at least a basic knowledge of English tends to be an inevitable part in most people's lives.

1.1. Historical Development of the Protestant Mission Movement

1.1.1. The Age of Enlightenment

The emergence of the very first missionary movements is very closely connected with the Age of Enlightenment, a period of significant change in the way of thinking, of religious reformation and a period of acceptance of new paradigms. Reformation represented difficult times for the Church, therefore, the first widespread missions had to wait until after the Reformation was completed for several reasons: first of all, the main focus of the Reformation was directed towards the survival of the Church and its reformation. Secondly, the countries where Protestants established their churches were usually not in contact with non-Christians. Finally, as the Protestant missionaries rejected the mission work of other religious orders, they had to find their own mission models which took some time (Bevans and Schroeder 195).

Science played an incredibly important role at that time. It was an era of numerous scientific discoveries that turned the previously unthinkable into reasonable premises. Also “the ideology of progress acquired a dominant position”(Rist 35). People at that time strongly believed that the boundaries of knowledge could be moved and they thought it important to strive for new discoveries and inventions. They started to feel a need for a rational explanation of different phenomena in the world and they perceived the significant scientific progress and technical advancement as immensely positive. These factors represented an imminent threat to Christianity which resulted in an impulse for the Christians to make some effort overseas (Barnes loc 414).

1.1.2. The Formation of Mission Societies

Although the spirit of the time was not very inclined towards Protestantism, the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century were crucial for the emergence of Protestant mission societies and church planting (Barnes loc 429).

According to Protestant thinkers of that period, such as Jonathan Edwards, the ongoing progress from the uncivilized pagan society towards the civilized Christian society and the sharing of the Gospel would lead to improvement of the world especially in terms of humanitarianism. People were supposed to stick to the Christian

principles and to apply them in everyday life. The Bible should also provide answers to some of their questions about human life and death.

The foundation of the first modern missionary society was inspired by the secular voyages of James Cook, by writings of Jonathan Edwards (Bevans and Schroeder 211) and by the contemporary commercial world, for example overseas trading companies (Bosch 330). Right after William Carey founded the first Protestant missionary society, an exponential growth followed. Printed magazines and pamphlets were published and theories formulated (Barnes loc 516).

Mission at that time was based on the biblical understanding of the life and the teachings of Paul. The foreign missionaries were perceived as apostles who acted as advisers and leaders for the local church planters. Missionaries were sent to the most uncivilized parts of the world where they would not only bring the Gospel, but also social, moral and intellectual transformation. For this to happen, the Bible had to be translated into the local languages and dialects (Barnes loc 192).

1.1.3. The Nineteenth Century, the Century of Missions

The next century brought changes as well. With the increasing number of mission societies all over the world a need arose to gather together, to discuss the problems and search for new directions. The first conference took place in 1855 in India (Hogg 16-17). Quality defeated quantity and missionaries were newly recruited from university-educated people to increase respect for their missions (Harder). The focus of the missions was divided to the sharing of the Gospel and the introduction of the benefits of Western civilization. However, this impact was not always perceived positively. The opponents used the term “spiritual imperialism” to support their viewpoint that the Protestant influence is more of an expansion than a mission (Harder 145).

In 1900 The Ecumenical Conference on Foreign Missions took place in New York. It was the largest conference of Global Christian missions where for the first time it was officially suggested to include sharing education, culture and commercial interests in missions. The missionaries found it necessary to go hand-in-hand with the progress that the world was experiencing. Great changes followed in the organization of missions. The

newly established churches were now independent and completely self-reliant in terms of finances (Barnes loc 1974-2245).

1.1.4. The World Missionary Conference – Edinburgh (1910)

The World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh was the last important gathering before World War I. The focus was pointed on improvement of missionary methods to have greater impact on the manner of how the host countries were being westernized. The aim was to make Westernization as beneficial as possible and to soften possible negative consequences of the interventions made by Western governments. The most significant point of the gathering was the foundation of the Continuation Committee, which would help to work more effectively and to coordinate the missionary work (Barnes loc 2789-3472).

1.1.5. The Effects of World War I

Generally speaking, World War I had largely negative effects on international missions. Most importantly, former unity and fellowship of the countries were completely disrupted by destroying each other during the war and by rising national pride on the part of the different nations. Another problem caused by war was a noticeable lack of finances which caused the international mission movement to decline greatly. As a consequence, the Continuation Committee was cut short.

However, the need for an institution providing coordination was still present and therefore in 1921 the International Missionary Council was established in New York. This event meant a rebirth of the mission work. The central theme of the mission during the 1920s became education. The methods such as treating each other with mutual respect and cultivation of friendship have come into operation and have stayed completely unchanged until today (Barnes loc 4054-4374).

1.1.6. Missions After World War II

After World War II the political, economic and social background had changed dramatically. The highest priority for the missionaries was to reestablish the

international bounds between churches and Protestant missionary communities all around the world. The only way to reach the targeted unity was to change completely the Protestant mission movement in order to meet the newly emerged needs. To make this happen almost all the missionary communities have so far participated at nine assemblies of the World Council of Churches. All the nine assemblies dealt with the most prominent problems of the missions in the post-war world (Barnes loc 4701).

1.2. American Protestant Missionaries

Generally speaking, an American Protestant missionary is a representative of the Protestant church usually sent to a secular country to introduce his faith and to share his culture (Snow loc 210). American missionaries have the undeniable advantage of their mother tongue and a worldwide demand for it. They are usually sent overseas as English teachers so that they can reach even into countries which do not support traditional missionary work. Fortunately, for the recipient countries, those missionaries are usually officially trained as English teachers (Snow loc 182).

Their position in the host country might be more or less difficult with regard to the cultural background of the particular country; however, no matter where exactly the missionary is sent, he has to be very flexible, sensitive and professional (*Teaching More than English* 30, 35, 46). The missionary needs to acquire at least the basic knowledge of the local language. He also has to show respect for the country, its culture and traditions. Beyond that he also needs to familiarize with the history of the nation so that he does not behave inappropriately and does not lose his visa as a consequence (*Teaching More than English* 59-62).

The missionary has to bear in mind that he not only represents his faith but also his home country. In the case of Americans, they are usually perceived as representatives of the whole western culture, and the impression that they make on their students can be crucial to future intercultural relationships (*Teaching More than English* 34).

The missionaries' role as an English teacher requires empathy and compassion for their students. They need to work in an encouraging and inspiring spirit. Learning the local language makes the missionary teachers even more sensitive. They understand

their students better and they are more likely to be aware of the difficulties their student might have with English (Snow loc 898-917).

1.3. Activities related to English teaching and learning in the Czech Republic

Missionaries often try to offer a wide range of activities in order to attract the attention of people of all ages, social groups and different interests. They spend plenty of time in the presence of their students who over time often become friends. The activities do not necessarily have to be based on the differences of cultures. However, the sharing of different cultures is always considered to be an interesting and enriching topic for both sides.

1.3.1. English Classes

In the minds of the students, English classes with pedagogically-educated native speakers definitely hold a privileged position over other activities offered by the Protestant missionary communities. As English has become a very precious commodity, there are hundreds of people who appreciate attending morning and evening English classes usually combined in one or another way with Bible studies. These classes take place every week and for continuity last for an academic year. Students can choose from a wide variety of levels, from complete beginners to advanced learners. Most of the people find it very useful that within these classes English is being taught in small groups of students and, therefore, the process of learning is much more efficient and each participant of the course has plenty of opportunities to express his or her opinion and to be active. Both, students and teachers work with a textbook suitable for the particular level of English and, of course, the teacher brings additional materials and activities, so that the classes are not monotonous. All the lessons are carefully structured and it is always crystal clear what the objective of a lesson is. To remove any doubts about objectivity, missionaries tend to be even more explicit about the particular language learning objective for every single activity.

Students can gradually develop all four basic skills, reading, writing, listening and speaking during the classes. The combination of the English classes and the Bible studies might be represented in differently, however, it is very popular to offer, for example, sixty minutes of English and twenty to thirty minutes of Bible studies, which are optional. A very popular tool to legitimately present the gospel is using activities based on value clarification and diverse discussion topics. Discussing cultural particulars, as well as, searching for the similarities serve as a valuable tool for the missionaries to share at least some features of their culture, including faith. For example, discussing the topic of holidays, such as Easter or Christmas and comparing different kinds of celebrations in different countries can be general enough not to make anyone feel uncomfortable, on the other hand, it can be a great opportunity for the missionary teacher to show the spiritual value and to refer to the origin of such holidays.

As the classes are declared to be English it is obvious that the Bible part has to be marginal. But still, the Bible studies work with a simplified English translation of the Bible and are taught in English in a conversational style. People might, therefore, attend the second part of the classes out of pure interest in Bible or for the sake of practicing their English. When it comes to the combination of English and gospel teaching, the missionaries always reveal their intentions right at the beginning of the course, so that no one can feel tricked or taken advantage of.

It is also worth mentioning that the fees are incomparably lower than in private schools providing English classes so as a result, the missionary principle of humanitarianism is being followed and their English classes are not an elitist issue. On the contrary, they are open to the wider public. (CB Skalka | Cesta Blíž k Bohu a k lidem.)

1.3.2. Summer Camps

As mentioned above, the Protestant missionary teachers do not spend their time with student only inside the classroom. They organize many outside activities, such as trips or summer camps. There may be several models for this kind of activities which can differ with the country where they are organized and its cultural standards. The model practiced in the Czech Republic works as a week in the countryside where a large team of teachers from different parts of the United States of America prepares morning

English classes and afternoon and evening programs for many participants, usually Czech students of the English language. As with the regular weekly classes, the English part is focused exclusively on the language skills improvement, while the programs that come afterward show a hint of gospel sharing and introduction of the evangelical faith. The attendance to all of the programs is not required and the students can thus decide according to their own preferences to join the activities or not. (CB Skalka | Cesta Blíž k Bohu a k lidem.)

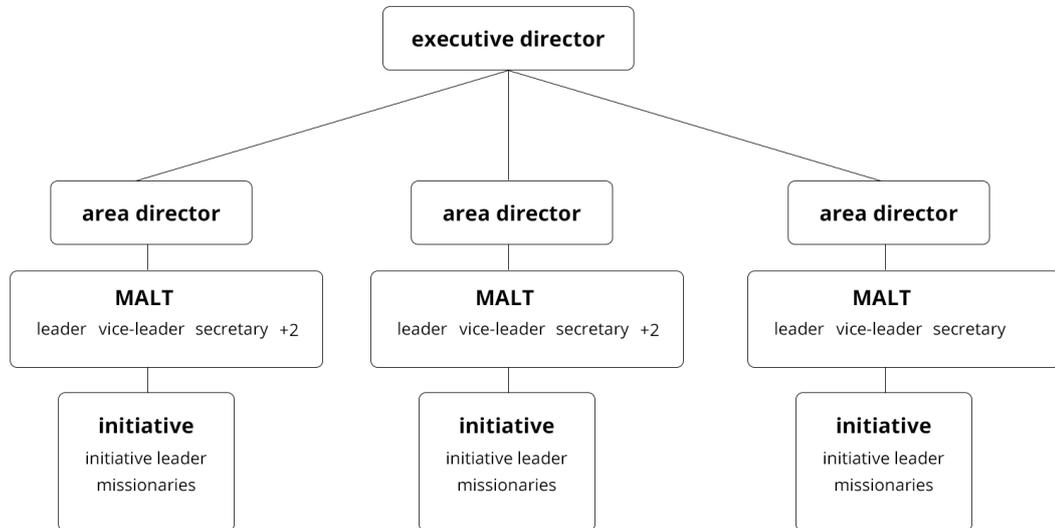
1.3.3. English Clubs

English clubs are one of the activities designed for children and teenagers. Apart from the English classes for adults, the clubs tend to motivate the club members to acquire the language through playing games, theater acting, listening to music or reading fairytales so that the children do not feel like learning a foreign language, but they just have great fun with friends. Children and teenagers usually visit their club once or twice a week.

1.4. Missionary Organizations

There are two possible platforms on which the missionary organizations can function. Firstly, the organizations can be funded by a church denomination, which means that in terms of financing, the organization is supported by the churches of the particular denomination. The second common possibility of financing such an organization is that the organization is completely independent and has to manage the financial issues itself. These organizations live from money that comes in “by faith”, in other words, some church members donate money to the headquarters of the missionary organizations and they redistribute the funds to the individual missionary workers considering the different costs of living in different parts of the world. It is also possible to support an individual missionary. It might be quite surprising that this kind of financing is fully based on the faith of the missionaries in the promise of their donors. There is no binding agreement between the two parts that would guarantee the amount of money actually given to the missionary organizations and to the missionaries.

1.4.1. Organisational structure



The Executive Director is the head of a group of area directors who are responsible for different areas of the world. On the second tier in the hierarchy is situated the Ministry Area Leadership Team³ consisting of a leader, a vice-leader, a secretary and two more members, who are elected and usually stay in office for two years. Then they can be elected again or replaced by someone else elected by the group. The smallest units are the initiatives with their own leaders and the missionaries.

2. Conflicting questions

Mission work as TESL generates a certain number of questions. Primarily, it is the dual role of a missionary, of a Christian and of a teacher, that provokes the discussion. One can ask whether the main goal of the missionaries really is teaching English or whether the language is not just a tool to attract people's attention and to gain opportunities to convert those who might not be interested (Snow loc 86).

³ MALT = Ministry Area Leadership Team

The second question that might come across one's mind deals with the original purpose of the mission which is generally perceived as helping the poor. Is English teaching a real help to those who need it the most or is it an elitist activity? Does it really contribute to the society, in other words, is it really a mission (Snow loc 86)?

Another question might be linked with the perception of the term *linguistic imperialism* and Western culture as a whole. The possible consequences of strengthening the already dominant role of English represent a subject of numerous discussions. The most detrimental of these consequences is strengthening of the monopolistic position of English speaking nations and successive oppression of the non-English speaking cultures (Snow loc1190).

In contrast to the previous paragraph, there are undeniably positive effects of English teaching and learning such as providing job opportunities, better access to education all over the world and making international communication and peacemaking much easier.

3. Hypothesis

The hypothesis of this paper deals with some of these conflicting questions. Having focused on the pedagogical aspect of the phenomenon of American Protestant missions, the hypothesis will be based on the literature providing a vivid picture of how the missionary work should be realized and perceived by the host countries from the educational point of view.

A hypothesis about what the real purpose of the American Protestant missionaries coming to the Czech Republic and their working as English teachers is will be formulated in this part of the work. The hypothesis will then be weighed with the findings made within the practical part of the thesis.

Based on literature, namely *Teaching More Than English*, the main goal of the missionaries working as ESL teachers should be providing “an academic advancement without pressuring their students to convert”(Teaching More than English 12). In other words, “the primary motive behind each method performed during the English classes

should simply be to teach English. Being able to communicate with them in English about the gospel is an added benefit”(Teaching More than English 12). The missionaries should thus fully realize that the role they are playing in the host country requires a certain degree of professionalism and that they need to balance their motives to be good, helpful and sensitive teachers who make an effort to make the classes interesting and primarily beneficial for their students’ English skills and who try as hard as possible to build interpersonal relationships and to meet their students’ personal and educational needs.

As Donald B. Snow says in his book *English Teaching as Christian Mission* “Christian English teachers should not conceal their faith, however, once they accept a job of English teaching, their first agenda must be effective teaching of English.” Again, the missionaries are supposed to do the teaching job with precision and absolute devotion. Teaching English should be a mission itself, not just a vehicle to achieve conversions (Snow loc120). Their faith should be shared through the quality of their teaching inside the classroom and in various activities such as Bible studies that should not be directly included in the English classes as such (Snow loc 646).

It also might be assumed that most of the missionary teachers will be properly trained (Snow loc 175) as ESL teachers unlike numerous native speakers with no pedagogical education often hired by private language schools. Therefore, they will be perceived by their students as real professionals even in cases, where the students are focused exclusively on English and do not appreciate other qualities and benefits the missionaries might offer.

In terms of the quality of teaching, one can expect that the missionaries might be very ambitious to be seen as sensitive and helpful to their students (Wipfly 46). The students could possibly appreciate the individual approach that is being highlighted in the related literature. On the other hand, it might be presumed that as a large part of the students are supposed to be atheists, their interest in the Bible studies and other church related activities will not be very strong.

4. Summary

The theoretical part of this thesis is to introduce missionaries and their work from various points of view, to provide some information about how the missions work and why they are an important component of the whole English teaching and learning mechanism.

Missionary activities, such as English classes, summer camps and English clubs are presented and their distinctive features are highlighted. Several controversial aspects of the English teaching as mission were brought up and will be analyzed further.

Finally, a hypothesis for the practical part based on the literature is formulated in this section and will then be compared with the results of the survey. The hypothesis consists of three main parts that will be discussed separately and then proved right or wrong.

Practical Part

5. Survey

The practical part of the thesis is a survey aimed to cast light on some of the conflicting questions formulated in the theoretical part of the paper. The main goal of the research is to find out whether the intentions of the American missionaries conform with the expectations of their Czech students or not. The research will also try to illustrate the attitude of the Czech learners of the English language towards the extra activities offered by the missionary communities such as Bible studies or summer camps. A minor part of the survey is to compare the quality of teaching within the classes provided by missionary teachers and those provided by private language schools. The data gathered will then be analysed and correlated with the hypothesis. Apart from the use of the survey for the thesis, it will also be used as a helpful source of information to one of the missionary initiatives in Prague that enabled data collection for the research. The data was collected in the course of a few weeks at the seventy-five-minute English classes followed by thirty-minute optional Bible studies.

5.1.Method

Research in form of a survey was done for this paper. A questionnaire was designed for each of the two major groups of respondents (see appendix 1,2). Each of the questionnaires consists of dichotomous questions, multiple-choice questions and contingency questions. Both versions of the questionnaire contained very similar questions, so that it is not difficult to compare the answers and to draw a conclusion. All the questions were posed in a way that they did not suggest any expected answer, so that the respondents were free to answer the questions honestly. For the same reason, the questionnaires were anonymous.

5.2. Respondents

The total of eighty respondents for the survey were divided into two major groups. Twenty-one missionary teachers and fifty-nine students in English classes. These two groups were then subcategorized according to different criteria such as sex, age, religion or level of English in order to get a detailed picture of the reality. The respondents were asked to fill in the questionnaires designed for their group.

As it is stated in chart 1, the students' group consists mostly of women, who represent the vast majority of the student respondents. The most numerous age category was the one of people from 31 to 50 years old. Whereas, the group of missionaries is a bit more balanced when talking about gender. Still, women are a largely prevailing gender working in education. The age of the teachers was not a part of their questionnaire because in this case it would not be a valuable piece of information for the research. In the case of the students, the age was an interesting variable in the relation to the achieved level of English (see chart 2) or in terms of indication of the target group of the missionaries. A slightly higher popularity of the missionary English classes for the students over 30 is quite evident.

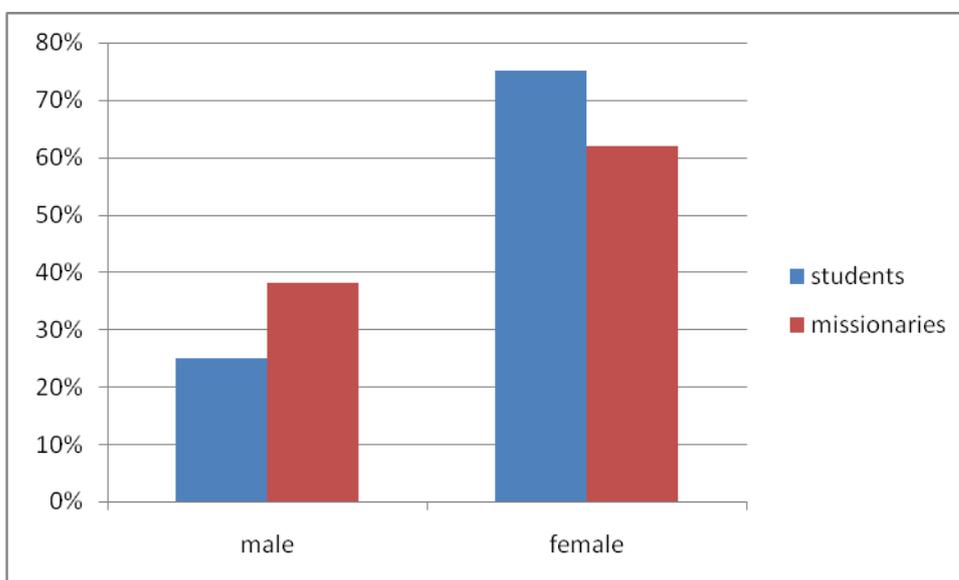


Chart1. Gender of missionary teachers and their students.

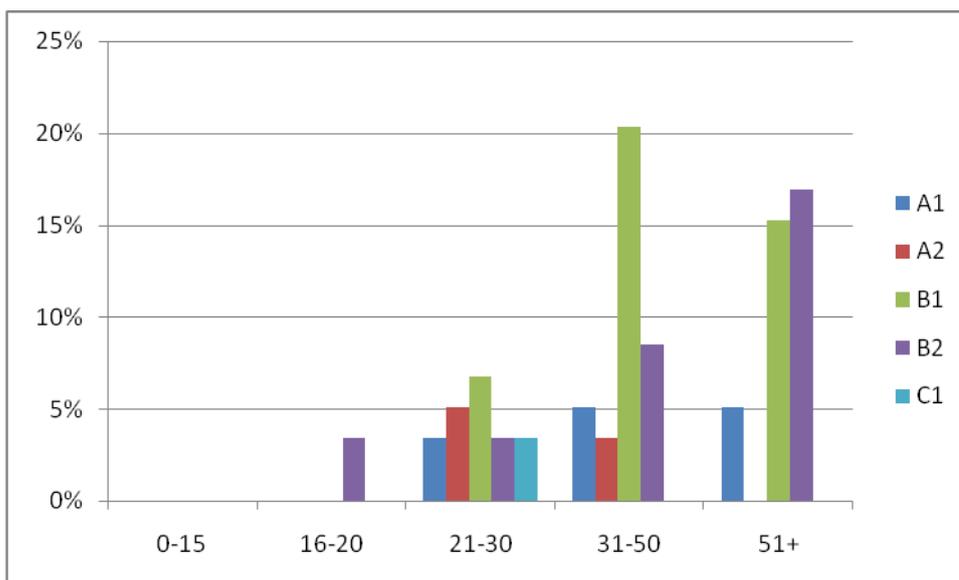


Chart 2. Age of the students in relation to the achieved level of English.

In terms of religion, it might not be surprising that the largest group of students are atheists. They represent almost half of the total number of student respondents. The second largest group was Protestants, followed by Catholics. The smallest group stated that they profess another religion than any of the religions given (see chart 3).

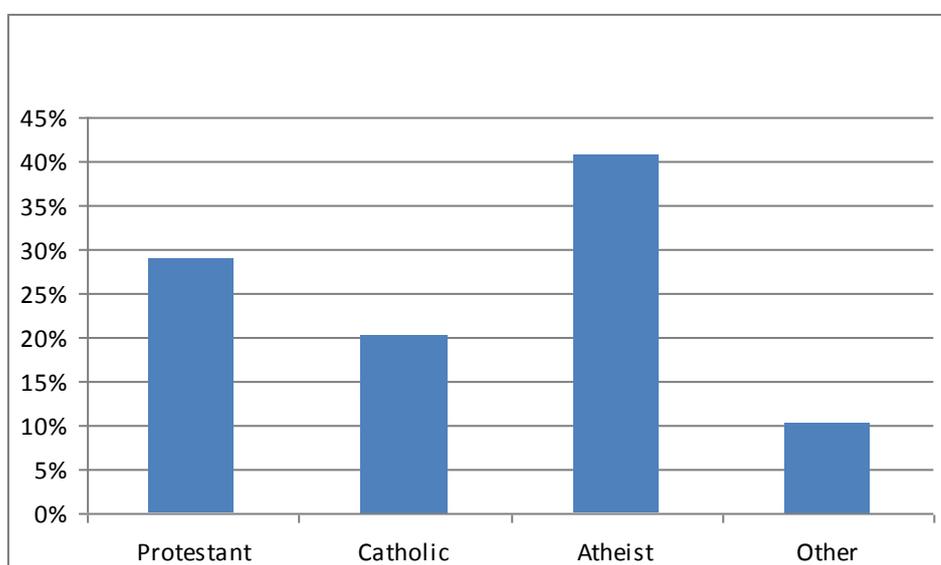


Chart 3. Students' division according to their faith.

Another surprising fact about the student respondents of the research is that very few of them stated that their reason for learning English is their job or further career advancement. A slightly higher number of respondents perceives English learning as a

hobby and that is why they want to improve their skills. A similar number of students feel that they need English for comfortable travelling. Finally, almost half of the students feel a kind of social pressure caused by globalization that drives them to learn at least the basics of the English language (see chart 4).

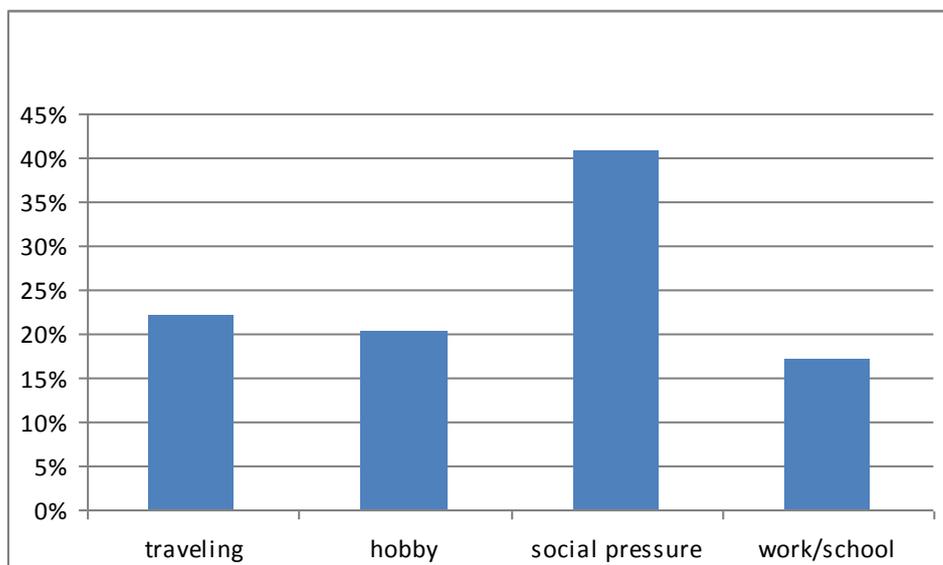


Chart 4. Reason why the students learn English.

An interesting link can be seen between the achieved level of English and the reason, why people want to improve their English skills. The students who need English to be able to meet requirements for their job are more likely to be more advanced than those who are simply interested in learning the language regarding it as a hobby or those who feel that it is the society that forces them to acquire at least the basic skills in English.

The teachers were asked why they chose to work as ESL teachers. It was an open question so it was necessary to create several subcategories in order to generalize the answers. Four categories were made (see chart 5). The first and largest one included those who answered that the reason why they teach English is to help the people who are eager to learn it and to help them increase the number of possible opportunities English could bring to them. The second one represented those who claimed that they do it to create interpersonal relationships and share their life experiences and values as well as their faith. The same number of teachers took

advantage of meeting new people and learning about the culture and history of the host country. The smallest group of teachers directly admitted the main intention of introducing their faith to their students.

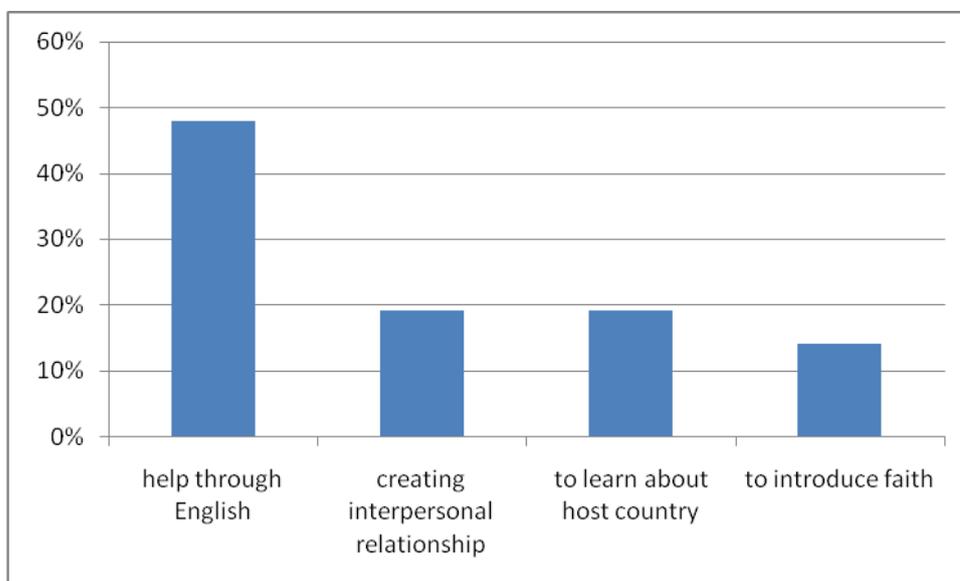


Chart 5. Why missionaries work as ESL teachers.

5.2.1. Summary

Students attending the missionary English classes are largely women in their thirties. However, there is a small proportion of male students either. In most cases they feel the need to improve their English skills because of the pressure of globalization, however the driving force to achieve one of the highest levels is a promise of career advancement or access to better education. The largest group of students are atheists, the target group of the missionaries.

The group of the missionary teachers is represented by both genders, however, the dominance of women working in education is more than evident. The teachers usually want to help the students to achieve their goals through the teaching of English. The teachers also proved a notable interest in the host culture and relationships with the local students. Only a very small part admitted that the reason for choosing the work of an ESL teacher is to share their faith, which slightly foreshadows the results of the survey.

5.3.Results

The data collected via the questionnaires (see appendix 3, 4) was analysed and put into charts and diagrams to be clearly organized and easily read. The answers to each question were analyzed separately for each group of respondents. Each group of respondents was analysed individually and subsequently put side-by-side and compared in order to come to a conclusion.

The analysis was based on various aspects that were to confirm or disprove the hypothesis made in the theoretical part of the paper. These aspects partly differed for each group of the respondents, however, the majority of the questionnaires was quite similar for both, thus making the results compatible for the process of correlation.

The first common question of the questionnaires was dealing with the students' aim for attending the weekly English classes. They had to choose from four possible answers and only two of them were finally chosen by the respondents (see chart 6).

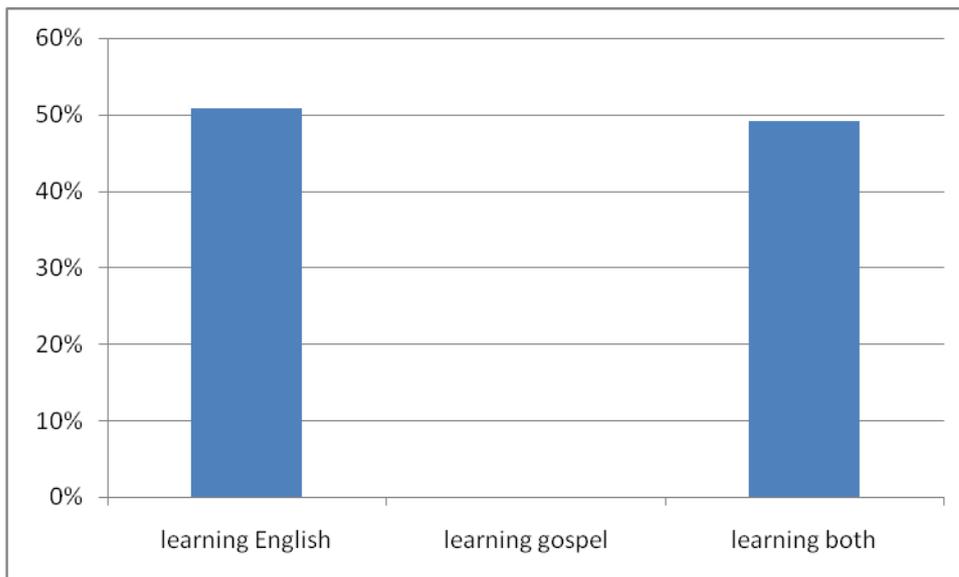


Chart 6a. The aim of students' attending the classes.

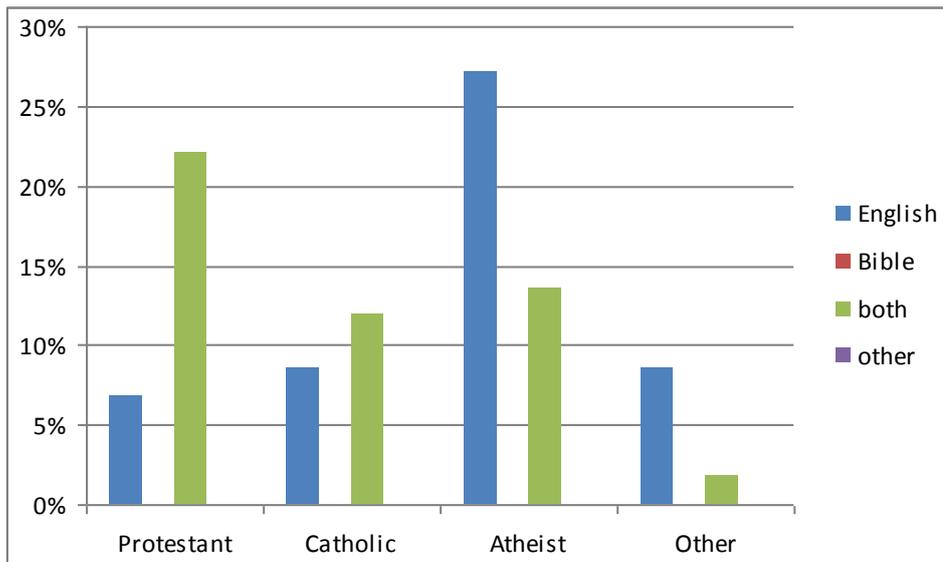


Chart 6b. The relation between their faith and the aim of their attending the classes.

The teachers were asked a similar question. They were supposed to choose from four possibilities to express what the object of their teaching is. In this particular case, three of the offered answers were used (see chart 7).

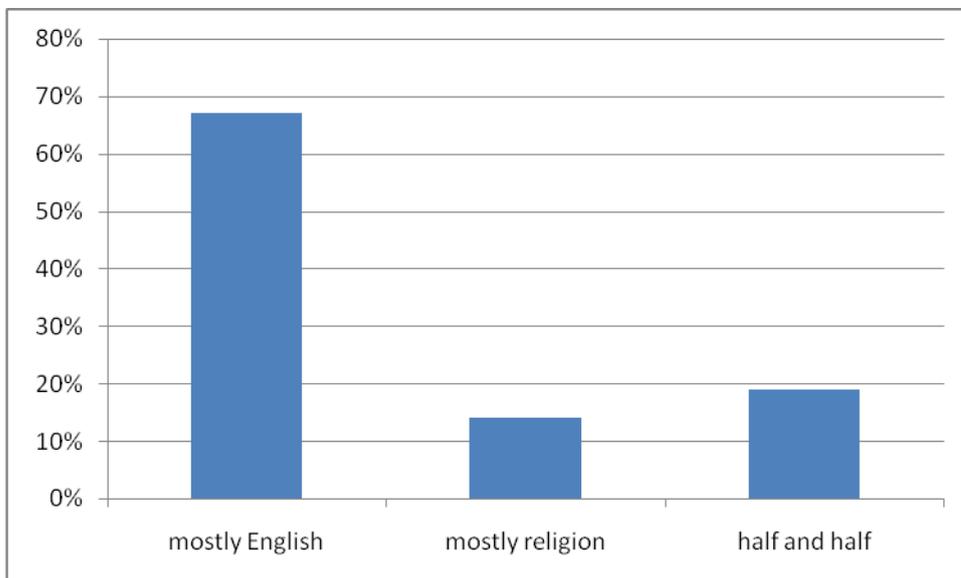


Chart 7. Object of the teaching within the classes.

The second question was intentionally the same for both sides. The objective of posing this particular question was to discover the opinion of the proportion of the English and Bible teaching within the classes (see chart 8). Three possible answers were

offered and whereas the students had diverse feelings about the question, the teachers proved an absolute consistency.

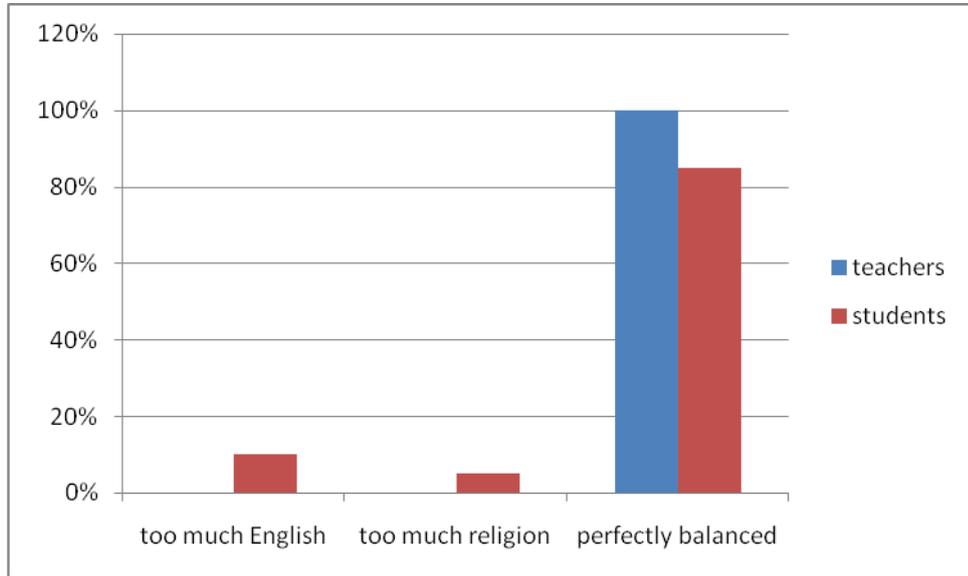


Chart 8. Opinion on the proportion of English and the Bible within the classes.

The research showed that the majority of the teachers have a formal pedagogical education (see chart 9).

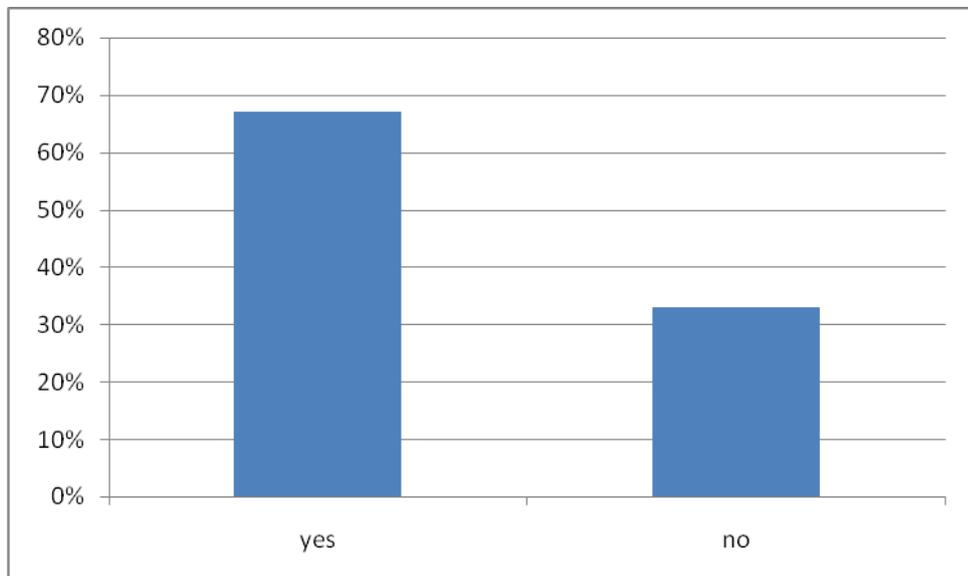


Chart 9. Do you have pedagogical education?

They also proved a considerable concern about the quality of their teaching and about the desirability of their classes, which was found on the grounds of several answers.

First, there was the open question concerning the time spent on the lesson-planning and other preparation for the English classes. The question was open, which is why four categories were made to sort the individual answers out. These categories stand for different time periods the individual teacher needs for the preparation of his classes (see chart 10). A very interesting discovery was that the minimum time for the preparation of one lesson was less than an hour while the longest time took three hours. A conclusion could be drawn, that in general, missionary teachers obviously do care about the quality of their teaching and thus act as real professionals.

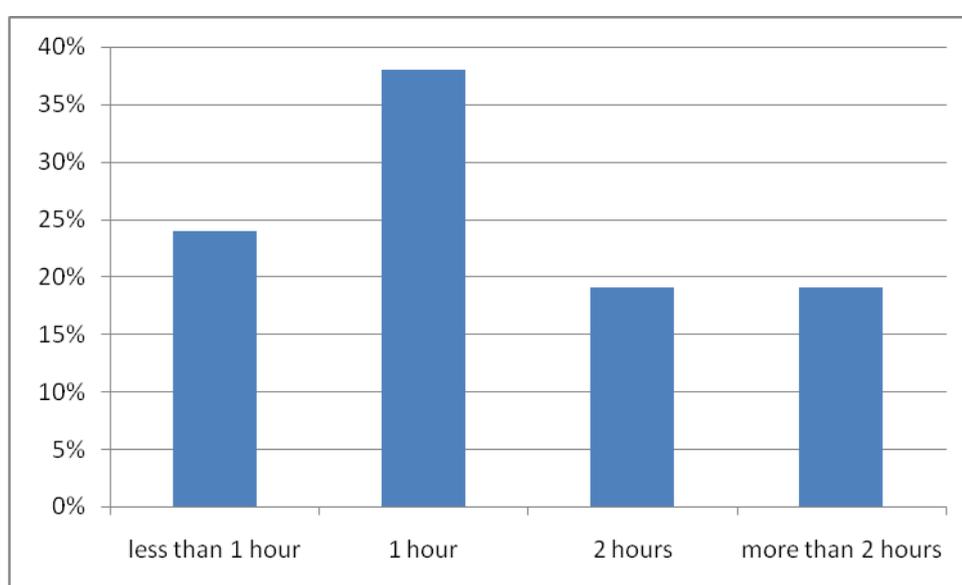


Chart 10. Time spent on lesson-planning and other preparation of the classes.

Secondly, when the missionary teachers were to justify their choice of the answer to the question dealing with their opinion of students' appreciation of the English classes (see chart 11), they all felt quite positive about it and their comments usually concerned an expression of their longing to teach in an interactive and enjoyable way. Some of them highlighted students' curiosity for the American culture, others mentioned, for example, the low price of the classes or students' happiness about how useful they find the things they have learnt thanks to the classes.

Unfortunately, they were not that optimistic about their students' appreciation of the Bible study part of the classes (see chart 11). Not only did some of them claim that a certain number of students were not interested in the Bible at all, but also that there are

students who obviously did not like it. However, there is still a large group of those who seem to like the Bible studies and who try to profit from the extra time spent by reading from the Bible in English and listening to the teachers relating stories in the Gospel. According to the missionaries, the motivation of the individual students differs. There are a few of them who are purely curious and eager to learn something they have never heard about, but the prevailing motivation is seeing the Bible studies as an opportunity to practice English more than being aware of any informational value.

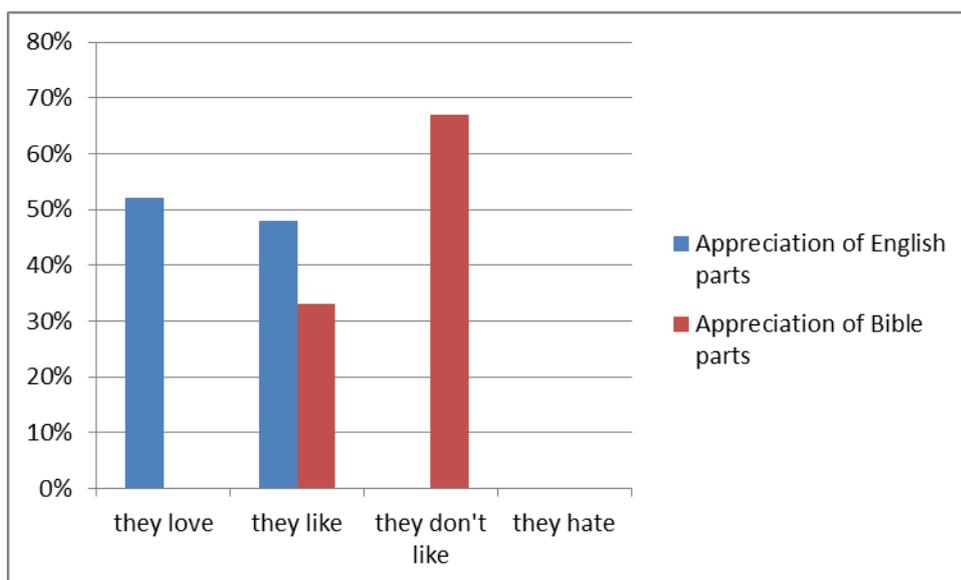


Chart 12. Missionaries' opinion on their student's appreciation of the English part and the Bible part of the classes.

The truth is that a large number of the students do think, that the teachers are doing a great job and they appreciate the professionalism evident in their work (see chart 13). That might be the reason why most of the students have been in touch with the missionary teachers for more than four years, which makes the impression that once a person starts attending the courses, it is very likely for that person to continue.

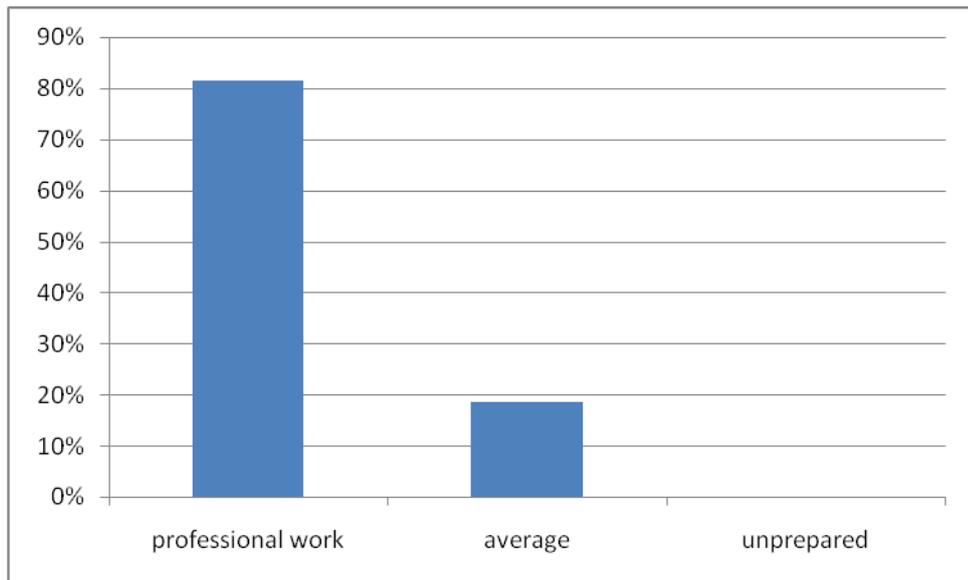


Chart 13. Students’ opinion on the preparation of the classes.

Moreover, many students seek out their missionary teachers even outside the classroom (see chart 14). They either participate at various activities organized by the missionary community, such as the camps and trips, or they meet them occasionally for a lunch or a cup of coffee or they meet them regularly at the church.

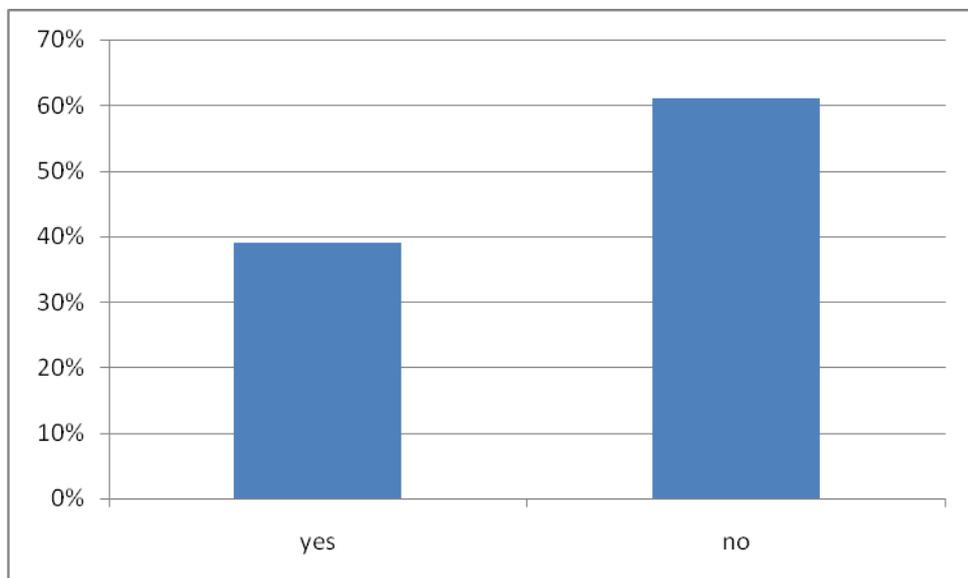


Chart 14. Do you meet missionaries outside the classroom?

Their satisfaction with the teaching style was also expressed in the question comparing the missionary English classes with the commercial ones (see chart 15) where the students had four possibilities to answer and then were supposed to justify

their decision. Approximately one third of the students have never attended any other classes that is why they chose the option suggesting that they do not know or cannot compare because they have never attended any other classes. The majority was extremely positive about the classes. The reasons that made them feel that way were diverse. Some of those which appeared several times are definitely worth mentioning: excellent teachers excited about their job, friendly atmosphere making them feel comfortable, low fees allowing access to the economically disadvantaged, small groups of students increasing effectiveness of learning and the added value of the Bible studies and introduction to the Protestant faith.

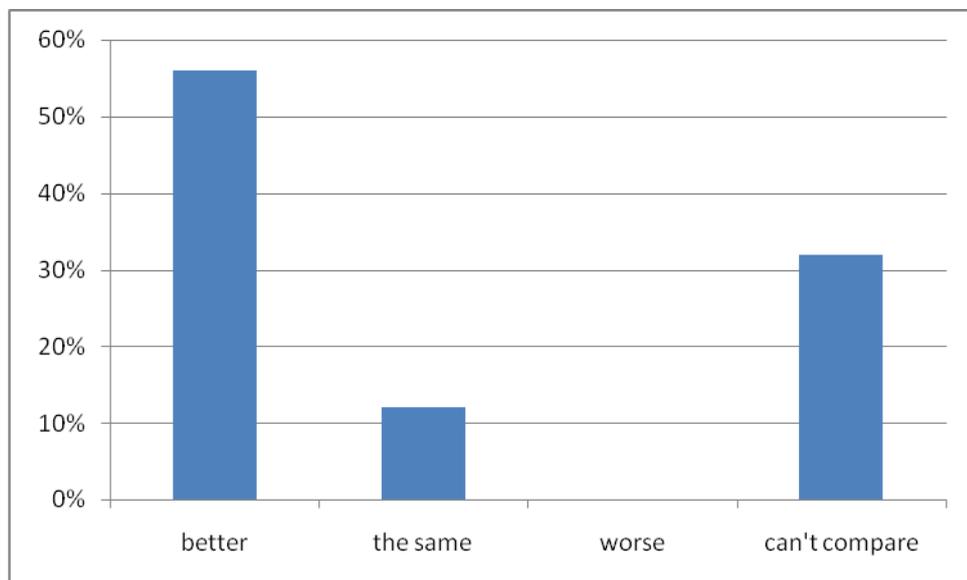


Chart 15. In comparison to the commercial classes these classes are...

Although it might surprise the missionaries, the Bible studies after the English part of the classes are actually quite popular. Almost half of the students found them instructive and there are some of them who feel that they are even beneficial (see the chart 16). On the other hand, almost one fifth of the respondents feel completely indifferent about them.

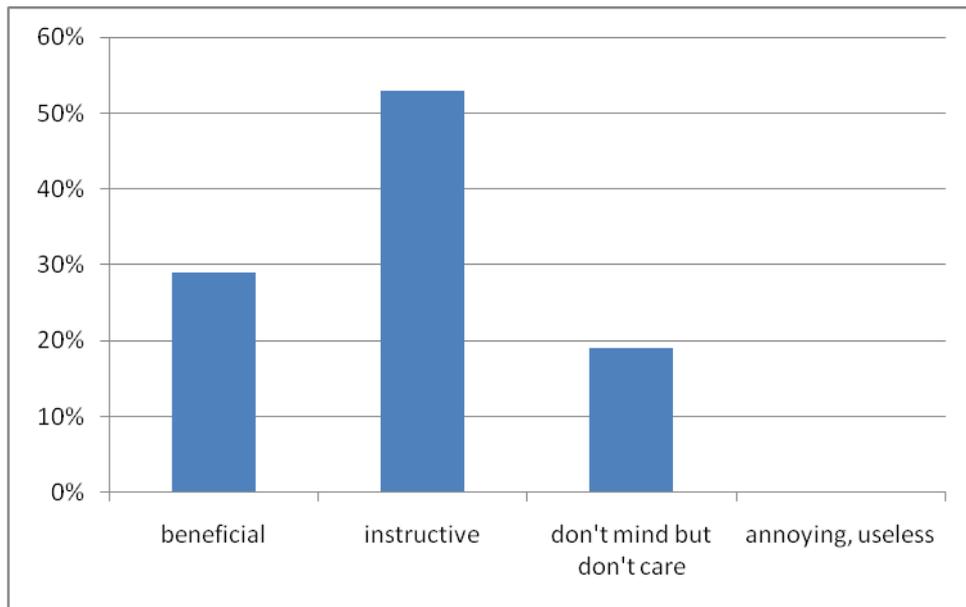


Chart 16. Students' perception of the Bible studies.

The final question on the teachers' questionnaire represented the crucial piece of information for this research. The question was supposed to find out what their main teaching aim was proposing three possible answers (see chart 17). More than a half of the respondents claimed that the main teaching aim was to improve their students' English skills. The rest of the answers split between those who first and foremost want to introduce their faith to the students and those who directly admitted their trying to convert them.

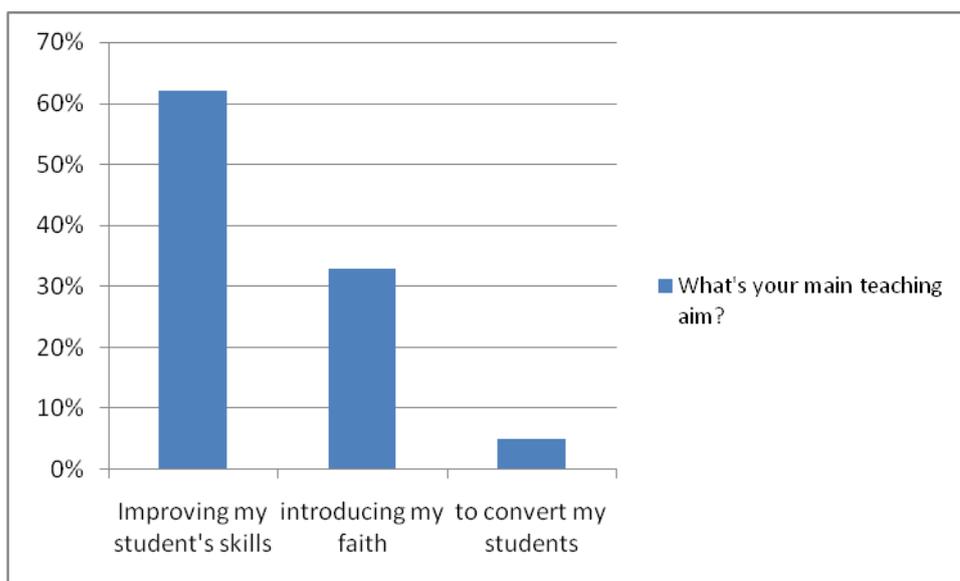


Chart 17. Missionaries' main teaching aim.

5.4. Discussion

In the theoretical part of this bachelor thesis, three basic hypotheses were created. The first one dealt with the intentions missionaries should have when coming overseas as ESL teachers. Referring to the literature depicting in detail the stand missionary teachers should take, it was presupposed that the missionaries should make the teaching itself a service to society as their mission. This hypothesis has been confirmed considering the results of the survey. It was proved that, generally speaking, the missionary teachers fulfill the role as a professional and they truly want to be respected, legitimate teachers. Their effort expended on the lesson-planning was rated highly by their students.

The second hypothesis stated that unlike the common practice of employing English native speakers by the private language schools, the missionary teachers are not only native English speakers but are also properly trained for the work as an ESL teacher simply because if they weren't they might be easily accused of not being serious about their job and of only having the goal generally related to missionaries, that of conversion. Again, the second hypothesis has been confirmed with respect to the fact that the majority of the survey respondents have pedagogical education, often specializing in the teaching of English to foreigners.

The third hypothesis claiming that the missionary English classes would be highly valued by the students, but that the focus of their interest is very likely to be the English part only was shown to be partly true and partly inaccurate. The survey showed that the students highly appreciate the friendly atmosphere, qualification of the teachers, reasonable fees and individualized approach of the teachers which is why they generally like the missionary classes more than the commercial ones.

On the other hand, the skepticism concerning students' interest in the gospel and sharing faith activities was refuted in the survey. It was found that the students usually find it instructive and some of them actually enjoy it so the overall impression supported by the answers was largely positive which might come as a nice surprise to the missionaries who were not very optimistic about this particular question.

5.5. Summary

Generally speaking, the survey proved that the missionary work definitely contributes to society and overturn the ingrained prejudice against the strongly religious people working in the Czech Republic as ESL teachers. The teaching and learning aims apparently are similar or the same in each group and the expectations of both sides are in most cases fulfilled. However, there are some deviations and it would be very interesting to apply such a survey to a significantly larger mass of people to get more objective and conclusive results. For this to happen, it would be helpful to do some more research focused on the quality of teaching in private language schools and then compare the results with the results found in the research done within this thesis. The results of the research could be negative for the directors of the private language institutions and could act as an incentive for improvement. Obviously, the lack of qualifications, as well as the impersonal approach to the students is a considerable problem. Paying customers are very sensitive about the quality of teaching they receive and once they are not fully satisfied they do not come back.

This also might be perceived as a suggestion for further research in this area. Moreover, the research could concentrate on different practices in English teaching and learning within the Czech Republic and then compare the quality and effectiveness in relation to the costs. Quality language education is often perceived as an elitist business and the research could possibly prove that it is more accessible than it might appear.

6. Conclusion

This bachelor thesis had as its aim to introduce and legitimize one of the conceptions of English teaching and learning which has experienced an exponential growth in the past twenty years. It was meant to explain where this phenomenon came from and why it is a significantly important issue these days.

A survey made as the practical part of the paper provided support for the information presented in the theoretical part and to prove the great potential in the work of the missionaries coming to the Czech Republic to work as ESL teachers.

The hypothesis dealing with the possible different aims of the missionary teachers and their often atheist students was primarily confirmed so that it is possible to

state that the teaching and learning aims largely conform, but of course, there are cases where the two aims distinctly differ. The deviations might serve as a source of inspiration and reinforcement for the missionaries in considering the results of their mission.

The results of the research showed that most of the students are open to learning not only the language but also the cultural specifics or a slightly new approach towards religion as an institution and faith as a personal attitude to life. With certain exceptions, they enjoy the extralinguistic activities offered and profit from lively creation of interpersonal relationships with people from different cultures.

With regard to the presence of several conflicting perceptions accompanying the idea of missionaries teaching English in order to get access to secular countries where the sharing of the Gospel is not allowed or is frowned upon, this paper tried to explode some of the myths related to the matter.

The never ending need for acquisition of a global language which English certainly is, leads the native speakers of the English language to search for innovative ideas to provide competition within the language market. It might be presumed that this field will experience an emergence of brand-new conceptions and will be an interesting source of inspiration for further research.

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Appendix 1

Teaching x learning aims – do they differ? Questionnaire – Student

- I am: Male / Female
- My faith: Christian / Catholic / Atheist / Other religion
- My age: 0 – 15 / 16 – 20 / 21 – 30 / 31 – 50 / 51 +
- I 've been in touch with American missionaries for: less than a year / 1-3 years / 4 – 10 years
- My level of English is: A0 / A1 / A2 B1 / B2 C1 / C2
- Why do you study English? _____

What's the aim of your attending missionary English classes?

- a) Learning English b) Learning gospel c) Learning both d) Other

What's your opinion on the proportion of English and religion teaching within the classes ?

- a) Too much English b) Too much religion c) Perfectly balanced

What's your opinion on how the English classes are prepared?

- a) Professional work b) average c) Unprepared, Boring

What's your opinion on reading the Bible within the classes?

I find it:

- a) Beneficial b) Instructive c) I don't mind but I don't care d) Annoying, useless

Do you meet your missionary teacher outside the classroom?

- a) Yes _____ b) no

Compared to commercial English classes the missionary English classes are:

- a) Better b) The same c) Worse d) don't know / can't compare

Why?

Appendix 2

Teaching x learning aims – do they differ? Questionnaire - Teacher

I am: Male / Female

Why do I work as a ESL teacher?

What do you teach at the English classes?

- a) Mostly English b) Mostly religion c) Half and half d) Other

What do you think about the proportion of English and religion teaching?

- a) Too much English b) Too much religion c) Perfectly balanced

How much time do you spend lesson-planning and working on the other aspects of teaching English classes?

Do you have pedagogical education?

- a) Yes _____ b) No

What's your opinion on your student's appreciation of the English part of the classes?

- a) They love it. b) They like it. c) They don't like it. d) They hate it.

Why?

What's your opinion on your student's appreciation of the gospel part of the classes?

- a) They love it. b) They like it. c) They don't like it. d) They hate it.

Why?

What's your **main** teaching aim?

- a) to improve my student's English skills
- b) to introduce my faith
- c) to convert my students

Appendix 3

in touch with the missionaries	level	why english?	the aim of attending the classes	proportion	preparation of the classes	opinion on Bible part	meet them outside	comparaison	why?
	B2	traveling	learning both	perfectly balanced	professional work	instructive	no	better	
1-3 years	B2	necessity, social pressure	learning both	perfectly balanced	professional work	instructive	yes	better	
4-10 years	B1	hobby	learning both	perfectly balanced	professional work	instructive	no	don't know	
4-10 years	B2	traveling	learning both	perfectly balanced	professional work	instructive	yes	better	atmosphere
4-10 years	B2	work	learning both	perfectly balanced	professional work	instructive	yes	better	friendly
4-10 years	B1	necessity, social pressure	learning both	perfectly balanced	professional work	instructive	yes	don't know	
less than a year	A2	necessity, social pressure	learning English	too much English	average	I don't mind	no	better	

1-3 years	B1	hobby	learning English	perfectly balanced	professional work	instructive	no	better	relationships
1-3 years	B1	traveling	learning English	perfectly balanced	professional work	beneficial	no	better	native speakers who love the job
4-10 years	B1	necessity, social pressure	learning both	perfectly balanced	professional work	beneficial	no	better	teachers
less than a year	A1	necessity, social pressure	learning English	too much English	average	I don't mind	no	don't know	
less than a year	A1	necessity, social pressure	learning English	too much English	average	I don't mind	no	don't know	
less than a year	A2	necessity, social pressure	learning English	too much English	average	instructive	no	better	
1-3 years	B2	necessity, social pressure	learning both	perfectly balanced	professional work	beneficial	yes	better	friendly
1-3 years	B2	necessity, social pressure	learning both	perfectly balanced	professional work	beneficial	yes	same	

4-10 years	B1	hobby	learning both	perfectly balanced	professional work	beneficial	yes	same	
less than a year	B1	necessity, social pressure	learning English	perfectly balanced	professional work	beneficial	no	better	friendly
1-3 years	B1	work	learning English	perfectly balanced	average	I don't mind	no	better	teachers, price
1-3 years	B1	traveling	learning English	too much religion	professional work	I don't mind	no	better	
less than a year	B1	necessity, social pressure	learning English	too much English	average	instructive	no	same	
4-10 years	B2	necessity, social pressure	learning English	perfectly balanced	average	I don't mind	no	don't know	
1-3 years	B1	traveling	learning English	perfectly balanced	professional work	instructive	no	better	small groups
less than a year	B2	traveling	learning English	perfectly balanced	average	I don't mind	no	better	small groups

4-10 years	B2	work	learning both	perfectly balanced	professional work	instructive	yes	better	bible
1-3 years	B1	traveling	learning both	perfectly balanced	professional work	instructive	yes	better	friendly
less than a year	B1	necessity, social pressure	learning both	perfectly balanced	professional work	I don't mind	no	better	
4-10 years	B1	hobby	learning English	perfectly balanced	professional work	beneficial	yes	don't know	
1-3 years	B2	necessity, social pressure	learning English	perfectly balanced	professional work	instructive	no	don't know	
less than a year	B1	necessity, social pressure	learning English	perfectly balanced	professional work	instructive	no	don't know	
1-3 years	B1	work	learning both	perfectly balanced	professional work	instructive	no	better	preparation
less than a year	B1	traveling	learning both	perfectly balanced	professional work	instructive	no	better	friendly

4-10 years	B1	hobby	learning both	perfectly balanced	professional work	instructive	no	better	
4-10 years	A1	necessity, social pressure	learning both	perfectly balanced	professional work	beneficial	yes	better	Christian approach
4-10 years	B1	hobby	learning English	perfectly balanced	average	beneficial	no	same	
4-10 years	B1	hobby	learning both	perfectly balanced	average	beneficial	yes	don't know	
4-10 years	B1	necessity, social pressure	learning both	perfectly balanced	professional work	beneficial	yes	better	Friendly
less than a year	B1	hobby	learning English	perfectly balanced	professional work	beneficial	no	better	
4-10 years	B1	necessity, social pressure	learning both	too much English	professional work	instructive	no	better	
4-10 years	B1	hobby	learning English	perfectly balanced	average	instructive	yes	don't know	

4-10 years	A1	hobby	learning English	perfectly balanced	professional work	instructive	yes	don't know	
4-10 years	B2	necessity, social pressure	learning both	perfectly balanced	professional work	beneficial	yes	don't know	
4-10 years	B2	necessity, social pressure	learning both	too much religion	professional work	beneficial	no	better	teachers
1-3 years	B2	work / school	learning English	too much English	professional work	I don't read it	no	better	teachers
1-3 years	B2	necessity, social pressure	learning English	perfectly balanced	professional work	beneficial	yes	don't know	
4-10 years	A1	hobby	learning both	perfectly balanced	professional work	instructive	yes	better	teachers
less than a year	A2	school	learning English	perfectly balanced	professional work	beneficial	no	same	
less than a year	A2	hobby	learning English	perfectly balanced	professional work	I don't mind	no	don't know	

less than a year	B1	necessity, social pressure	learning English	perfectly balanced	professional work	beneficial	yes	same	
less than a year	A1	traveling	learning both	perfectly balanced	professional work	instructive	no	better	teachers
1-3 years	A1	necessity, social pressure	learning English	perfectly balanced	professional work	instructive	no	don't know	
1-3 years	A1	work	learning both	perfectly balanced	professional work	instructive	yes	don't know	
4-10 years	B2	work	learning both	perfectly balanced	professional work	instructive	no	don't know	
4-10 years	C1	work	learning English	perfectly balanced	professional work	instructive	yes	better	individual approach
less than a year	C1	work	learning English	perfectly balanced	professional work	i don't mind	no	don't know	
less than a year	B2	necessity, social pressure	learning English	perfectly balanced	professional work	instructive	no	same	

less than a year	A2	traveling	learning English	perfectly balanced	professional work	instructive	no	don't know	
4-10 years	B2	traveling	learning both	perfectly balanced	professional work	instructive	yes	better	atmosphere
1-3 years	B2	traveling	learning both	perfectly balanced	professional work	instructive	no	don't know	
4-10 years	B2	traveling	learning both	perfectly balanced	professional work	instructive	yes	better	

Appendix 4

Sex	Why do you work as ESL teacher?	What do you teach the most?	Proportion of English and the Bible?	How much time do you spend on lesson-planning?	Pedagogical education?	Students' appreciation of the English part?	Students' appreciation of the Bible part?	The main teaching aim.
F	help people through English teaching	mostly English	perfectly balanced	1 hour / a class	yes	They love it	They like it	To improve my students' skills.
F	help people through English teaching	mostly English	perfectly balanced	1/2 hour / a class	yes	They love it	They like it	To improve my students' skills.
F	to learn about the host country	mostly English	perfectly balanced	1/2 hour / a class	yes	They like it	They're not interested.	To introduce my faith.
F	creating relationships	mostly English	perfectly balanced	1 hour / a class	yes	They like it	They're not interested.	To introduce my faith.
F	creating relationships	mostly English	perfectly balanced	more than 2 hours	yes	They like it	They're not interested.	To introduce my faith.
M	to introduce the faith through English	half and half	perfectly balanced	2 hours / a class	yes	They like it	They're not interested.	To improve my students' skills.
F	creating relationships	mostly English	perfectly balanced	1/2 hour / a class	no	They like it	They like it	To introduce my faith.
F	to learn about the host country	mostly English	perfectly balanced	1/2 hour / a class	no	They love it	They're not interested.	To improve my students' skills.
M	to help people through English teaching	mostly religion	perfectly balanced	2 hours / a class	yes	They like it	They like it.	To introduce my faith.
F	to help people through English teaching	half and half	perfectly balanced	more than 2 hours	yes	They love it	They're not interested.	To improve my students' skills.
F	help people through English teaching	mostly English	perfectly balanced	3/4 hour / a class	yes	They love it	They're not interested.	To improve my students' skills.
F	help people through English teaching	mostly English	perfectly balanced	2 hours / a class	yes	They love it	They're not interested.	To improve my students' skills.

M	to introduce the faith through English	mostly religion	perfectly balanced	1 hour / a class	no	They love it	They like it.	To convert my students.
M	help people through English teaching	mostly English	perfectly balanced	1 hour / a class	yes	They like it	They're not interested.	To improve my students' skills.
M	to introduce the faith through English	half and half	perfectly balanced	1 hour / a class	yes	They love it	They like it.	To introduce my faith
F	help people through English teaching	mostly English	perfectly balanced	more than 2 hours	no	They like it	They're not interested.	To improve my students' skills.
F	to create interpersonal relationships	half and half	perfectly balanced	2 hours / a class	no	They love it	They like it.	To introduce my faith.
M	to learn about the host country	mostly religion	perfectly balanced	1 hour / a class	no	They like it	They're not interested.	To improve my students' skills.
F	help people through English teaching	mostly English	perfectly balanced	1 hour / a class	yes	They like it	They're not interested.	To improve my students' skills.
M	help people through English teaching	mostly English	perfectly balanced	1 hour / a class	yes	They love it	They're not interested.	To improve my students' skills.
M	to learn about the host country	mostly English	perfectly balanced	more than 2 hours	no	They love it	They're not interested.	To improve my students' skills.