Univerzita Karlova v Praze

Filozofická fakulta

Ústav anglického jazyka a didaktiky

Filologie – Didaktika konkrétního jazyka (anglický jazyk)

Hana Ždímalová

The Pre-listening Stage in L2 Listening Instruction to A2 - B1 Adult Learners

Předposlechová fáze ve výuce poslechu u dospělého žáka na úrovni A2 - B1

Dizertační práce

Vedoucí práce – Doc. PhDr. Jarmila Mothejzíková, CSc.

2013

Prohlašuji, že jsem dizertační práci vypracovala samostatně, že jsem řádně citovala všechny použité prameny a literaturu a že práce nebyla využita v rámci jiného vysokoškolského studia či k získání jiného nebo stejného titulu.

……

Hana Ždímalová

V Praze dne 25. 7. 2013

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation would not have been possible without the cooperation of the Department of Language Studies, Institute of Czech Language, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic (ASCR), namely the present and former heads of the Department, PhDr. Eva Škarková and PhDr. Libuše Sýkorová.

I am particularly grateful to the 109 respondents of the preliminary research (2006-2008) and to the 473 study participants who took part in the 2012 online survey. I want to thank them all for devoting their time to fill in the questionnaires and/or to participate in the semi-structured interviews. I also want to thank all the teachers from the Department of Language Studies whom I had a chance to observe and who helped me to inform their students about the 2012 questionnaire survey.

My sincere and profound thanks go to my supervisor, doc. PhDr. Jarmila Mothejzíková, CSc., for her professional advice as well as personal support. Her broad knowledge of the field of foreign language teaching methodology was of immense value.

I am also indebted to the Charles University Grant Agency for supporting a part of my 2012 online survey research with the grant no. 521912, in particular the work on the online version of the questionnaire and on the statistical analyses in the SPSS software. My thanks go namely to Mgr. Petra Anýžová and PhDr. Mgr. Jiří Vinopal, Ph.D., from the Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague, for their advice on the statistical analyses in the SPSS software, and for being willing to give me valuable feedback on drawing conclusions from the quantitative data.

I would also like to express my special thanks to my colleagues Kamila Etchegoyen Rosolová, PhD, from ASCR and Markéta Faltysová from the Czech Technical University for their feedback and support whenever I was in doubts.

There are many other people to thank and I cannot list them all but I owe many thanks especially to my husband Vladimír and my daughters Eva and Jana, who have patiently witnessed the whole researching and writing process and helped me to get through.

ABSTRACT

The Pre-listening Stage in L2 Listening Instruction to A2 - B1 Adult Learners
By Hana Ždímalová

This dissertation deals with listening instruction to adult EFL learners in the Czech Republic and the phenomenon of pre-listening, which is currently under-researched. It examines adult EFL students' perspectives and perceptions of listening instruction and of the inclusion of different pre-listening techniques, particularly at CEFR A2-B1 proficiency levels. The theoretical part of the study focuses on current developments in listening research and the historical context of the development of listening instruction in classical FLT methodology.

The pre-listening stage has been integral to L2 listening instruction since the beginning of Communicative Language Teaching. However, some controversial issues have recently been raised. For example, teachers are sometimes suspected of spending too much time on the pre-listening stage (Field 2002; 2008) and the overall usefulness of previewed comprehension questions in testing listening has been challenged (Sherman 1997). Moreover, adult students' listening needs and their perceptions of listening instruction have not yet been thoroughly researched (Graham 2006; Graham and Macaro 2008). This study argues that we should ask the students about their perceptions because we assume that learners and their needs determine how effective listening instruction and the pre-listening stage will be.

The dissertation was inspired by a quantitative study of learners' needs (a 2006 survey of one hundred learners at A1-A2 levels) and a 2008 qualitative inquiry (semi-structured interviews with A2 learners), which identified speaking, listening and vocabulary as preferred areas for learners' improvement in general English courses (Ždímalová 2009a). It draws on initial 2011-2012 classroom observations and primarily on a 2012 quantitative inquiry based on a large-scale online survey conducted at the Department of Language Studies, ICL, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic. The survey was carried out with adult students of face-to-face courses in order to learn about their opinions, attitudes, needs, and preferences regarding listening instruction and pre-listening techniques. Altogether, data were collected from 473 foreign language learners (at varying levels of proficiency); the sample focused on 374 EFL learners.

The empirical study focuses mainly on four research questions: 1) How do students perceive the time devoted to listening instruction in their EFL courses? 2) How do teachers use the pre-

listening stage? 3) How do students perceive the usefulness (or otherwise) of pre-listening for listening comprehension? 4) Which pre-listening techniques are perceived as the most effective for listening comprehension from the students' perspectives?

The dissertation findings (i.e. classroom observations and the 2012 survey results) confirm that, according to adult learners, (1) listening instruction should be allocated more time in the course / curriculum (approx. 30% of class time), (2) teachers do not overuse the pre-listening stage (pre-listening takes approx. 4 minutes), and (3) the pre-listening stage is considered 'definitely useful' by the majority of the students. The findings also indicate that (4) the most effective pre-listening techniques are deemed to be those that focus on lexis (brainstorming topical lexis and pre-teaching less familiar key words).

These findings apply to all levels of proficiency but appeared to be particularly important for lower-proficiency levels. Implications from the study for teaching listening to adult EFL learners at A2-B1 proficiency levels are drawn.

Key words: listening comprehension; listening instruction / teaching L2 listening; communicative competence; pre-listening stage; pre-listening techniques/activities; students' perceptions; needs analysis; schema theory; reciprocal/interactive listening; non-reciprocal/non-interactive listening; bottom-up processing; top-down processing; prediction; pre-teaching key words; brainstorming topical lexis; question preview.

ABSTRAKT

Předposlechová fáze ve výuce poslechu u dospělého žáka na úrovni A2 - B1
Hana Ždímalová

Tato dizertační práce se zabývá výukou poslechu u dospělých studentů angličtiny jako cizího jazyka v České republice a zejména faktorem předposlechu, který zatím není dostatečně probádán. Práce zkoumá názory studentů na poslech a jejich vnímání výuky poslechu v kurzech obecné angličtiny a použití různých předposlechových technik ve výuce poslechu, a to zejména z pohledu dospělých studentů jazykové úrovně A2-B1 (dle CEFR). Teoretická část dizertace se zabývá současnými poznatky z výzkumu výuky poslechu a mapuje historii výuky poslechu v rámci klasických (didaktických) metod výuky cizích jazyků.

Předposlechová fáze je integrální součástí výuky cizojazyčného poslechu od začátku komunikačního přístupu, avšak v poslední době se vynořila některá kontroverzní témata. Učitelům se vytýká, že tráví předposlechovou fází příliš mnoho času (Field 2002; 2008) a dále je zpochybňována zásada, že studentům mají být při testování poslechu předloženy otázky na poslech předem (Sherman 1997). Poslechové potřeby studentů a jejich vnímání dovednosti poslechu s porozuměním navíc nebyly ještě v dostatečné míře zkoumány (Graham 2006; Graham - Macaro 2008) a v ČR zatím vůbec. Domníváme se, že je třeba se studentů ptát na jejich názory a vnímání, protože studenti a jejich potřeby jsou důležitým faktorem, který ovlivní, jak efektivní ve skutečnosti bude výuka poslechu a předposlechová fáze.

Studie se inspirovala předvýzkumem, který obsahoval kvantitativní a kvalitativní šetření (dotazník u sta studentů úrovně A1-A2 v r. 2006 a polostrukturované rozhovory u studentů úrovně A2 v r. 2008). Jeho výsledky ukázaly, že daní studenti se chtějí nejvíce zlepšit v mluvení, poslechu a znalosti lexika. Vlastní výzkumný projekt pak spočívá v pozorování (observace ve třídách angličtiny v r. 2011-2012) a zejména v rozsáhlém dotazníkovém šetření (realizovaném v r. 2012), které zkoumá názory, postoje, potřeby a preference u studentů prezenčních kurzů v Kabinetu studia jazyků, ÚJČ, AVČR, v.v.i. Data byla sebrána celkem od 473 studentů cizích jazyků (různé úrovně jazykové pokročilosti), z nichž studentů angličtiny je celkem 374, a tito tvoří základní vzorek pro podrobné analýzy.

Základními výzkumnými otázkami bylo: (1) Jak studenti vnímají čas věnovaný výuce poslechu v prezenčním kurzu? (2) Jak učitelé používají předposlechovou fázi? (3) Jak vnímají

studenti užitečnost (nadbytečnost) předposlechu pro porozumění? (4) Které předposlechové techniky vnímají studenti jako nejefektivnější pro poslech s porozuměním?
Výsledky ukázaly, že z pohledu dospělých studentů angličtiny (1) by měla výuka poslechu v prezenčním kurzu obecné angličtiny tvořit více času (přání studentů je 30% času výuky ve třídě), (2) učitelé netráví předposlechem příliš mnoho času (průměrně pod 4 minuty), (3) většina studentů považuje předposlechovou fázi za „rozhodně užitečnou“, a (4) za nejefektivnější předposlechové techniky považují studenti techniky zaměřené na lexikum (brainstorming lexika k tématu a prezentace klíčových slov učitelem).
Tyto výsledky byly naměřeny napříč jazykovými úrovněmi (A1-C), ale nastíněné tendence se nejdůrazněji projevily u nižších jazykových úrovní. Didaktické principy a doporučení jsou formulována pro výuku poslechu u studentů jazykové úrovně A2-B1, kde se prokázaly jako nejvíce relevantní.

Klíčová slova: poslech s porozuměním; výuka poslechu; komunikační kompetence; předposlechová fáze; předposlechové techniky/aktivity; vnímání a názory studentů; analýza potřeb studentů; schematizační teorie; reciproční poslech; nereciproční poslech; predikce; prezentace klíčových slov; brainstorming slovní zásoby; otázky na poslech zadané před poslechem.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

ABBREVIATIONS

ALM	Audio-Lingual Method
ASCR	Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic
AVM	Audio-Visual Method
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BSc	Bachelor of Science
CAE	Certificate in Advanced English / Cambridge English: Advanced
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2001)
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
CPE	Certificate of Proficiency in English / Cambridge English: Proficiency
CTU	Czech Technical University in Prague
DELTA	Diploma in English Language Teaching to Adults
DM	Direct Method
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELF	English as a Lingua Franca
ELT	English Language Teaching
ESL	English as a Second Language
EU	European Union
FCE	First Certificate in English / Cambridge English: First
FLT	Foreign Language Teaching
GTM	Grammar Translation Method
IATEFL	International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language
ICL	Institute of Czech Language
ICT	Information and communication technologies
JARO	Jazykový rozvoj pedagogických pracovníků
KET	Key English Test / Cambridge English: Key
KSJ	Kabinet studia jazyků, ÚJČ, AVČR, v.v.i.
LAD	Language Acquisition Device
L1	First language / Mother tongue
L2	Target language (includes both EFL and ESL)
LMS	Learning management system
MA	Master of Arts

MPhil	Master of Philosophy
MSc	Master of Science
PET	Preliminary English Test / Cambridge English: Preliminary
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PPP	Presentation-Practice-Production
Q	Question in the 2012 survey (followed by its number in the questionnaire: see Appendix 2)
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
SPSS	IBM SPSS Statistics software version 19
STT	Student Talking Time
TBL	Task-based Learning
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) by the Educational Testing Service, US
TPR	Total Physical Response
TTT	Teacher Talking Time
UCLES	University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Foreign language (FL) listening is a very interesting area of study and I have been focusing on it for the past five years, especially concerning the ways in which teaching listening and speaking can be integrated within listening instruction at lower-proficiency levels. I specialize in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) to adult students at A1-B1 proficiency levels (according to the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* 2001, CEFR)[1]. Originally, I was interested in researching speaking at lower-proficiency levels, in particular the technique of the 'communicative mill-drill' (Kay 1997; 1997; Ždímalová 2009a). In a preliminary research project in 2006 I carried out a questionnaire survey of one hundred Czech EFL adult learners at A1-A2 levels on their language needs (see Chapter 6.1.1). The respondents attended courses of lifelong learning at the Czech Technical University in Prague (CTU). The research findings indicated that the majority of the learners want to improve mainly their speaking skills and knowledge of vocabulary. (Listening skills were usually mentioned in second place in the four language skills, i.e. after speaking.) In 2008 I decided to do some follow-up qualitative research with some aspects of 'grounded theory' (Strauss and Corbin 1999; Hendl 1999; Švaříček and Šeďová 2007); I carried out nine semi-structured interviews with my students from one of the A2 classes at CTU in order to learn more about their needs in speaking and their perceptions of the chosen 'communicative mill-drill' technique (see Chapter 6.1.2 and Appendix 1).

When transcribing the nine interviews, I noticed that four of the students had mentioned that the main challenge of their learning does not reside in the 'expected' skill of oral production, speaking, but in the other part of the oral communication process, in listening. They reported difficulties mainly in comprehension of native speakers, in particular in face-to-face encounters (e.g. on holiday), and in listening to audiorecordings of native speakers in the

[1] The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR 2001) was put together by the Council of Europe as a way of standardising the levels of language exams in different regions. It is very widely used internationally and all important exams are mapped to the CEFR. Proficiency levels according CEFR (2001: 23) include six levels from A1 to C2: A: Basic User: A1. Breakthrough or beginner, A2: Waystage or elementary (KET). B: Independent User: B1: Threshold or intermediate (PET), B2: Vantage or upper intermediate (FCE). C: Proficient User: C1: Effective Operational Proficiency or advanced (CAE), C2: Mastery or proficiency (CPE).

classroom. (Surprisingly, two of the students were the most successful students in that class.) Their comments are in accord with Field's statement (2002: 242) that 'one is rather handicapped in conversation unless one can follow what is being said, as well as speak'. The preliminary research findings showed that listening and speaking are more interwoven than I had originally realised. (For student quotes from the interviews, see Appendix 1.)

Thus the dissertation theme emerged from the qualitative data. The 2006 survey and the 2008 interviews served mainly as a starting point for the present study. They inspired me to begin to focus on listening in more detail and I managed to make several interesting observations very soon. I found out that the listening component had never been tested in any placement test[2] in the language schools and departments where I had taught EFL, neither in the Czech Republic, nor in the UK. As a result, my students of supposedly 'the same level' varied in their listening skills in virtually every class, sometimes also due to the age factor (see Chapter 1.2).

Given the fact that listening is a 'hidden' process and teachers cannot see into their students' minds (see Chapter 2.3), we have to keep in mind that adult students are often shy to admit that they have more problems with listening comprehension, especially when listening to audiorecordings, than we as teachers assume. This fact is well described in literature (Ur 1984; Rixon 1986; Underwood 1989; Rost 2002; Field 2008; Lynch 2009) and I could confirm it not only based on the 2008 interviews, but also during the next stage of my preliminary research: observations of other teachers in the EFL classrooms at the Department of Language Studies, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic (ASCR), in 2011-2012 (see Chapter 6.1.3).

I observed that often only the best listeners in class know the answers to comprehension questions and after eliciting the answers the teacher is usually tempted to move on with the lesson (see also Chapter 4.6). Unfortunately, sometimes the teacher even reveals the answers instead of eliciting them from the students (e.g. Field 2008; Scrivener 2012). The research findings showed that there is a *considerable variation in the teachers' approaches to listening instruction*, e.g. the time allocated for listening instruction, the inclusion of the pre-listening stage, the choice of pre-listening techniques, etc (see Chapters 4.6, 5.5, 6.1.3 and also Chapter 7).

---

[2] Placement tests comprise mainly of 'Use of English', i.e. they test the students' knowledge of grammar and lexis.

These were interesting observations and based on them I decided to focus predominantly on *the pre-listening stage*. In my own lower-proficiency classes I have experimented with possible ways to make students more prepared for the listening process and thus enable them to be more relaxed (Ždímalová 2009b). In addition, I have studied many published pre-listening activities and techniques and attempted to develop them further through experimentation and discussion with my colleagues at various conferences I have attended, and at workshops and seminars I have given in recent years, for example at IATEFL conferences in the Czech Republic, Poland, and Hungary (see e.g. Ždímalová 2009b; 2009c; 2010a; 2010b; 2011a; 2011b; 2012a; 2012b; Ždímalová and Anýžová 2012).

Surprisingly, I have found out that pre-listening is an under-researched phenomenon and that there is not much agreement about how long pre-listening should take proportionally in the listening session and which techniques should be used at different levels. Recently, some authors even started to suggest that listening instruction may be improved by cutting down the pre-listening stage (Field 2002: 246 and 2008: 83-85) or that previewed (i.e. preset) comprehension questions in testing listening 'seem more helpful than they really are' (Sherman 1997: 185). In addition, investigation of listening instruction in general is a relatively recent phenomenon in the research literature and a number of central questions regarding foreign language listening research methodology are 'underexamined' (Santos *et al*. 2008).

This gap in our knowledge directed me to the present dissertation research project that aims to assist in explaining the phenomenon of pre-listening in listening instruction to adults in the foreign language classroom.

1.2 English language teaching to adults in the Czech Republic

Adult foreign language teaching (FLT) and learning have undergone numerous, mostly positive, changes in the Czech Republic since the Velvet Revolution of 1989, mainly thanks to the influence of globalisation, the social and economic changes of the post-communist era and the communicative methodology itself (see Chapter 3.5). Having specified earlier that our teaching context is teaching EFL in a formal setting to adult learners at A1-B1 levels in Prague, the Czech Republic, let us have a brief look at least at some of the changes and juxtapose them with some current shortcomings in order to set the scene.

In the contemporary era of globalisation, foreign language learning is considered a lifelong process[3] and the ability to speak foreign languages is stressed in many strategic documents. For example, the CEFR (2001) holds that in accordance with the requirements of contemporary society, plurilingualism and intercultural awareness should be supported in foreign language teaching in the EU.

In addition, FL learning as a form of lifelong learning has been very popular in our country since the Velvet Revolution of 1989, thanks to the newly-formed socio-economic context. People started to travel, work abroad, etc, and Russian ceased to be the compulsory foreign language (e.g. Rosolová 2008: 34; Malinovský 2009: 23; Semrád 2013). Since the 1990s there has been a variety of adult language courses offered by various institutions, including universities and private language schools.

Even though English has been traditionally taught as 'a foreign language', it has a very special position in the FLT context today, including both formal and informal settings, because it absolutely dominates as a 'global language' (Crystal 2013), a 'lingua franca' (e.g. Seidlhofer 2003; Quinn Novotná 2012), and/or 'an international language' (e.g. Kostková 2012: 9). In the three formal teaching settings where I have had a chance to teach EFL to adults for many years in a row since the early 1990s (Natural Science Faculty of Charles University in Prague, CTU, and ASCR), the situation has been very similar in terms of the division of the FL courses (e.g. Zelenda, Šafařík and Ždímalová 2003; Ždímalová and Anýžová 2012). English has dominated, with approximately 70-85% of adult students registered in the courses, and the remaining 15-30% have usually been divided among German, French, and Spanish (see Chapter 6.2 for more details on the research project sample).

In the post-communist era, adult EFL learners have been taught more 'communicatively' mainly thanks to the influence of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), e.g. Betáková (2010: 51, see Chapter 3.5.1), and by a sufficient number of native teachers. Many FL courses are taught by native speakers or by a tandem of a native and a non-native (for more details on the number of native versus non-native teachers in the research project, see Chapter 6.2 and Appendix 2: Q8). In addition, learners have been exposed to English speakers while travelling

[3] Lifelong learning applies to all individuals during their lives and in a range of learning contexts, both formal and informal (Kotásek 2002: 11 cited in Černá 2005: 13).

and/or meeting tourists in the Czech Republic and have had access to live English language in movies, TV and radio, etc. (see also Appendix 1).

It is generally accepted that listening plays a key role in foreign language learning and acquisition (see Chapter 2 and Chapter 3), and thanks to 'the digital revolution' we can use technological innovations such as interactive whiteboards or authentic listening materials from the Internet in the classroom, even setting materials for students' self-study outside the classroom via e-learning and blended learning (e.g. Černá 2005; Tůma 2012). Furthermore, the boom in information technologies is reflected in modern teaching materials that are supported on the Internet, including standard general textbook titles, e.g. *New English File* (http://elt.oup.com/student/englishfile/?cc=cz&selLanguage=cs 2012), one of the most commonly used textbooks in both the private and the state teaching sector throughout the Czech Republic (see Chapter 2.2 and Chapter 3.3.5). In addition, most learners have recently been learning English often outside the classroom in computer games and virtual worlds (Stanley 2011).

Overall, from the aforementioned list of advantages it follows that the new political era that came after 1989 established much better conditions for learning EFL listening comprehension than there were before the revolution. However, more than 23 years after the revolution, adult learners, especially at lower-proficiency levels, still seem to have substantial difficulties in listening to English (see Chapter 1.1 and the Empirical part of the dissertation).

Due to the nature of lifelong learning there is often a huge variation in the learner age factor, and hence it is not uncommon to teach students of a very different age (e.g. 21-70) in one language course (see Chapter 6.2). From my teaching experience it is obvious that younger students have been at an advantage because they have been exposed to English much more intensively than the previous generations mainly for the reasons mentioned above. In this respect, they probably have conditions similar to other young people in the EU (Tůma 2012: 17). In addition, younger adults acquire L2 skills more quickly than older adults (Rubin 1994: 208).

Nevertheless, a lot of scholarly literature written on the subjects of CLT and on listening instruction deals with contexts different from ours, in particular with teaching immigrants in English speaking countries, where the learners are usually exposed to English most of the day, or teaching so called 'immersion courses' in Canada (e.g. Vandergrift 1999; 2003). Fortunately, there is a growing body of research into EFL and ESL listening in different parts of the world (e.g. Berne 1995; 1998; Goh 1998; Tsui and Fullilove 1998; Elkhafaifi 2005;

Graham 2006; Graham and Macaro 2008), and the term L2[4] is used in most studies as a shelter term for the target language, be it EFL or ESL.

Our local context is very specific in that most of the EFL courses run once a week for 90, or in the best case for 180, minutes per week, and most of the learners do not use English in personal encounters in their everyday lives but mainly while travelling (see Appendix 2: Q46J). Consequently, many Czech adult learners repeat the A1-B1 courses and stay at the same level for several years feeling they still need to improve their speaking, listening and vocabulary in order to get to a higher-proficiency course (see Chapter 6.1.1).

Furthermore, adult EFL learners' listening comprehension has not been studied in detail in the Czech Republic yet. In total, there is only a general chapter on teaching listening in three teacher's guides (Hendrich 1970 in Beneš 1970; Mothejzíková 1988; Hendrich *et al.* 1988) plus one tiny book on L2 listening comprehension for general public (Kollmannová 2003), all of which more or less summarise general facts from foreign literature. (Plus one dissertation focused on integrated skills in EFL to primary school children (Šebestová 2011).

1.3 Introduction to terminology

At the very beginning we have to focus on terminology because a lot of terms unfortunately overlap either within our field or regarding other, related fields, such as linguistics or psychology. First, the concept of L2 listening instruction is defined, followed by definitions of the key concepts of the topic in question: the concepts of 'pre-listening', 'the pre-listening stage' and 'pre-listening techniques'. Next, the 'listening session' as a part of the general language course (or 'integrated skills course') lesson is defined. At the end of the chapter, we distinguish the pairs of terms 'listening for perception' versus 'listening for comprehension', 'listening skills' versus 'listening strategies' and 'interactive/reciprocal listening' versus 'non-interactive/non-reciprocal listening'.

In the scholarly literature of the last two or three decades the terms *L2 listening skills* and *L2 listening instruction* began to be used. They apply to both EFL and ESL contexts and therefore we use the terms throughout the dissertation. The abbreviation 'L2' thus includes both second and foreign language (e.g. Tůma 2012).

[4] Throughout the dissertation the term L2 is used as an abbreviation to mean the students' foreign/target language which is being learned in the language classroom. However, we acknowledge that in our country the L2 is not spoken as an official language and the L2 student is not immersed in the L2 outside the classroom.

For the purposes of this study, L2 listening instruction is defined as follows: 'a targeted activity during which students listen to a type of listening text and respond to questions/tasks focused on listening comprehension and meaning' (see Appendix 2: Part VI). The types of listening input used in the classroom vary, e.g. listening to audiorecordings, listening to the teacher telling a story or reading a text (see also Chapters 4.6.3 and 4.6.4), and we speak about listening instruction under the condition that these concern some kind of listening task fulfilment. In this definition we will not include: students' dialogues when they learn how to speak, teacher's explanation of grammar rules while teaching grammar, or even short and non-targeted teacher's narration which is not accompanied with some kind of listening task fulfilment, etc.[5]

Let us now consider the term *'pre-listening'*. It is generally accepted that 'pre-listening' is an integral part of the listening process (e.g. Richards 1983), be it in the mother tongue (L1) or in the foreign language (L2). One of the first authorities on pre-listening, Mary Underwood, who started to incorporate pre-listening into her EFL listening instruction materials in the late 1970s, explains why teachers should use pre-listening (1989: 30):

> 'There are very few occasions when people listen without having some idea of what they expect to hear…. But when students sit in the classroom and the teacher says `Listen to this` and then switches on the cassette recorder or begins to read aloud, the students may have no idea what to expect.'

Furthermore, it is vitally important to prepare students for the listening passage not only when listening is taught in the classroom, but also when listening comprehension is tested (see Chapter 4 for changes in the listening instruction in the second half of the 20th century). Underwood concludes her argument with the following definition of 'pre-listening' (1989: 30):

> 'It is unfair to plunge students straight into the listening text, even when testing rather than teaching listening comprehension, as this makes it extremely difficult for them to use the natural listening skills… of matching what they hear with what they expect to hear and using their previous knowledge to make sense of it. So, before listening, students should be `tuned in` so that they know what to expect, both in general and for particular tasks. This kind of preparatory work is generally described as `pre-listening work` or just `pre-listening`.'

[5] However, generally we have to admit that students obtain some kind of listening practice even when listening to the teacher who uses L2 for other purposes than listening instruction (e.g. Choděra 2006: 142).

The '*pre-listening stage*' is then defined as the part of an L2 listening session in which we prepare students for the listening itself (Rost 2002; Vandergrift 2003; Field 2008; Lynch 2009), whereof the listening session usually forms a part of a lesson within the general language course (i.e. 'integrated skills course') and does not necessarily represent the whole 'listening lesson'. Thus, for our purposes, we will use the term *listening session* for the part of our general EFL course lesson (normally 90 minutes long) that focuses on L2 listening instruction.

Next, we have to justify our choice of the term '*pre-listening technique*'. Most experts agree that when planning lessons, time should be allocated for pre-listening activities (e.g. Rost 1991; 1994) and if possible the most effective activities should be chosen (e.g. Richards 1983: 237; Berne 1995: 316). Because of the intentional nature of this process, it has been decided to use the term '*pre-listening techniques*' for all the pre-listening activities that are realised by teachers in the pre-listening stage based on their informed decisions about the form of listening instruction (appropriate for their particular groups of learners, including their proficiency level). The choice of this term is in agreement with the use of the more general term 'teaching technique' as defined, for example, by Mothejzíková (1988: 224) or by Choděra (2006: 91), who state that the teaching technique describes teacher's action and belongs to the practical action level, or by Stern (1983 and 1992) who writes:

> 'In the terminology we adopt we reserve… the term `(teaching) technique` for more specific behaviours, operations, procedures, and activities.' (1992: 277)

At the same time, we should acknowledge that traditionally two kinds of teaching listening are distinguishable, *listening for perception*, e.g. sentence repetition or dictation, and *listening for comprehension*. Ur (1984: 33) describes the difference in terms of the main objective. The main objective of the former is 'simply to train the learner to perceive correctly the different sounds, sound-combinations and stress and intonation patterns of the foreign language'. This type of listening is sometimes called 'discriminative listening' (e.g. Richards 2005: 87). In this writer's opinion, such exercises now belong to practice in phonology or at the border of phonology and listening for details. However, our primary focus is listening for comprehension, which entails broader discourse than just sounds, words or phrases, and also students' response to the meaning of the message, not just mere repetition (e.g. Ur 1984: 47).

For listening comprehension, some authors prefer to distinguish between *listening skills* or *sub-skills* (e.g. Richards 1983; Field 2008) and *listening strategies* (e.g. Vandergrift 2003), seeing the former as native listener competencies that non-natives need to acquire. On the other hand, listening strategies are sometimes described as 'strictly compensatory', used to

make up for learners' imperfect knowledge of the L2 syntax and vocabulary (e.g. Field 1998: 117; 2008: 134). There are many detailed taxonomies of language learning strategies (e.g. Wenden 1986; Oxford 1990), but there is little agreement between writers as to what should or should not be included. Field suggests that the distinction between 'listening skills' and 'listening strategies' should not be applied too narrowly (Field 1998: 118; 2008: 293). Being primarily concerned with learners' beliefs, we use the terms listening skills and subskills for both L1 and L2 listening, in agreement with Richards (1983) and Field (1998; 2008).

Last but not least, we should mention the terms *interactive*/*reciprocal listening* versus *non-interactive/non-reciprocal listening* (see Chapter 4.5). Most listening in real life is interactive (i.e. reciprocal) rather than non-interactive (i.e. non-reciprocal). In interactive listening, the listener can interrupt the speaker, affect the course of conversation, and ask for repetition or explanation (e.g. Cook 1989: 60). Interactive listening is also known as two-way, bi-directional, or conversational listening (e.g. Lynch 2009: 60). In non-interactive listening, the listener cannot interrupt the speaker, e.g. when listening to the radio or watching TV. In Chapter 2.11, I argue that in L2 listening instruction we should look for ways of combining non-interactive listening activities (e.g. listening to audiorecordings) with interactive listening activities (such as conversations in pairs in the pre-listening stage), as proposed by Anderson and Lynch (1988: 16-17).

Other terms are defined in subsequent chapters at points where the particular issues are discussed in depth, e.g. the terms 'language skills' versus 'language systems' (see Chapter 2.1.1), 'communicative language functions' (see Chapter 2.1.1), 'listening as comprehension' versus 'listening as acquisition' (see Chapter 3), 'global listening' versus 'intensive listening' (see Chapters 2.6), and so on.

1.4 Literature review

As our primary focus is listening comprehension, it is necessary to list the factors that are believed to affect listening comprehension in general. The most comprehensive framework of listening comprehension factors can be found in Rubin (1994: 199). She identifies five major groups of factors: (1) *text* characteristics (variation in a listening text, e.g. presence of visual support, see Chapter 4.4.4); (2) *interlocutor* characteristics (variation in the speaker's personal characteristics, e.g. gender); (3) *task* characteristics (variation in the purpose for listening and associated responses, see Chapter 4.4.3); (4) *listener's* characteristics (variation in the listener's personal characteristics, e.g. learner's proficiency level, musical ear, learning style,

etc., see Chapters 5.2.4, 6 and 7); and (5) *process* characteristics (variation in the listener's cognitive activities and in the nature of the interaction between speaker and listener, see Chapters 4.5, 4.6 and 5). Unfortunately, many research projects have not taken into account Rubin's conceptual framework and fail to describe the variables appropriately for future researchers to be able to compare the results, e.g. the proficiency level has often not been measured or analysed (e.g. Berne 1995; Elkhafaifi 2005) as one of the most important variables.

The main area of our interest here, the preparation of students in the pre-listening stage, belongs to the 5th category (process characteristics) because the inclusion of pre-listening techniques is in fact one of the available tools for adjusting the listening difficulty of most listening passages (Anderson and Lynch 1988: 46-48). However, pre-listening is also associated with the 3rd category (task characteristics) as, in the pre-listening stage, we give students a purpose for listening and set a task (see Chapter 4.4.2). The second focus of our attention is the variable of language proficiency level from the 4th category (listener's characteristics).

Although it is generally accepted that the pre-listening stage should form an integral part of the listening session (e.g. Underwood 1989: 30, see Chapter 4) and that the main purpose of pre-listening is to provide sufficient context to match what would be available in real life (e.g. Field 2002: 243), i.e. mainly to activate students' schemata (see Chapter 5), it is mentioned less frequently that the actual choice of appropriate pre-listening techniques in our teaching practice in fact depends on a number of variables that can be based on Rubin's categories. For instance, apart from the aforementioned proficiency level we can consider the following factors: how much time the teacher allocates for teaching listening in the classroom and how frequently he or she includes listening comprehension practice (see Chapters 4.6.1 and 4.6.2), how many times one listening passage is played (multiple replays, see Chapter 4.6.7), how much visual support is given to students prior to listening and in the while-listening stage, etc (see Chapters 4.4.4 and 7.3.4). Rubin herself (1994) admitted that the variables had not been sufficiently researched. To our knowledge, the 'web' of the variables connected with the pre-listening stage has been neither sufficiently described nor researched till this date.

The results depicted in the recent listening instruction research seem to be inconclusive as to the usefulness, length and form of the pre-listening stage. Some ELT authors highly recommend pre-listening (Richards 1983; Berne 1995; Vandergrift 2003; Vandergrift 2004: 11; Vandergrift 2007: 199; Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari 2010: 475), others are more

sceptical and state that pre-listening is often *overused* at the expense of while-listening (Field 2002: 243; Field 2008: 83), or that pre-listening is most probably less useful than we tend to assume (even though students believe otherwise, see Sherman 1997). For example, Field (2002: 243) comments on the character of pre-listening activities:

> 'This phase of the lesson (the pre-listening stage) usually lasts longer that it should. A long pre-listening session shortens the time available for listening. It can also be counterproductive. Extended discussion of the topic can result in much of the content of the listening passage being anticipated. Revising language points in advance encourages learners to focus on examples of these particular items when listening – sometimes at the expense of global meaning.'

Field further asserts that the main aim of pre-listening (i.e. to introduce the context and motivate the learners) 'can be achieved in as little as 5 minutes' (2002: 243), and he claims that teachers *overuse* pre-listening and use more than 5 minutes for it (see Chapter 4.6.8).

Consequently, in his 'proposal for revised methodology for listening instruction' (see Chapter 4.6), Field (2008: 83-85) suggests that we should *cut down the pre-listening stage*, even at A1-B1 levels. He argues that, in particular, lower-proficiency students fall back on so called 'compensatory strategies' (Field 2008: 134, based on Stanovich's 1980 Interactive Compensatory Hypothesis), i.e. they rely too much on the activated schemata (see Chapter 5) at the expense of decoding the linguistic input. On the other hand, Graham and Macaro (2008) disagree with Field, arguing that the activation of schemata and decoding the linguistic input are *complimentary* to each other. This writer, too, disagrees with Field's statement (see Chapter 4.6.8). Unfortunately, his claims are not based on any classroom research. It would be more understandable if Field suggested cutting down the pre-listening stage for students at B2-C2 proficiency levels, where students' listening skills are believed to be automatised (e.g. Godfrey 1977; Field 2008: 32).

This discussion takes us to a broader discussion on which type of processing is more important for listening comprehension, whether *bottom-up* (i.e. linguistic or text-based) or *top-down* (i.e. non-linguistic or knowledge-based), (see Chapter 5.4). Some experts have attempted to prove that top-down processing is primary. For example, Tyler (2001) showed that background knowledge assists comprehension by freeing up the listener's mental resources, allowing more attention to be directed at processing the linguistic input. Other experts showed that bottom-up processing is more important, e.g. Tsui and Fullilove (1998), exploiting a large data set of EFL listening test items and analysing listening performances of 20,000 candidates in Hong Kong, concluded that bottom-up processing was more important

than top-down processing in discriminating the listening performance on test items. Some experts come to a conclusion that it is vital to introduce the students to the topic and context of the listening passage in the pre-listening stage, but at the same time the students-listeners have to continually monitor their current understanding against the linguistic evidence in the input (e.g. Vandergrift 2003; Lynch 2009: 53-54, see also Chapter 5.4).

Furthermore, there is often a *discrepancy between the listening instruction theory and practice* (Berne 1998; Field 2008) including the pre-listening techniques and their use at different proficiency levels, especially regarding the inclusion of the '*pre-teaching vocabulary*' technique (see Chapters 4 and 5.5) and whether teachers should pre-teach, apart from key words, also 'unknown' words. This is obvious not only from the theory explained in the current ELT books for practising teachers on listening instruction (Rost 2002; Field 2008; Lynch 2009) but also from the current teaching materials (e.g. *New English File*, *Straightforward*, etc), in particular the extent to which they use the technique of pre-teaching lexis and whether they encourage teachers to elicit the lexis from the students themselves (see Chapter 5.5). In addition, the pre-teaching vocabulary technique is used differently at higher versus lower levels.

The technique of pre-teaching unknown vocabulary has fallen out of favour because learners cannot expect unknown words to be explained in advance in real life (e.g. Field 2008: 17). As a result, so called *top-down processing* (e.g. based on pictures) seems to be the major approach in the pre-listening stage according to the current standard textbooks for adults (see Chapters 5.4 and 5.5). In reality, many practising teachers still have the tendency to prepare a group of learners for a listening task by selecting the words the students are unlikely to know and pre-teaching them those words (see also Chapters 4.1, 4.3.1 and 6.1.3). However, we have to acknowledge that 'hearing an unfamiliar word can impede understanding' (Lynch 2009: 35). Many experts now recommend that teachers should limit pre-teaching lexis to 3-4 key words (phrases) of the listening passage. Field explains that these should be only '*critical words*', i.e. 'absolutely indispensable key words without which any understanding of the text would be impossible'. (Field 2002: 243; 2008: 17)

On the other hand, many authors have pointed out that 'the most frequent cause of lack of comprehension' is '*lexical ignorance*' (Kelly 1991: 147), especially regarding 'known words that have not been recognised' (Field 2008: 106), and our students seem to be aware of it (see Chapters 2.4, 2.5, 2.8, 6 and 7.5). Moreover, Berne (1995) and Sherman (1997) were surprised to find out that the students in their studies showed very positive attitudes towards

being informed about the listening topic in the pre-listening stage. The students in Berne's study, which was based on Taglieber *et al*. 1988, highly appreciated the technique of pre-teaching unknown vocabulary, even though this technique did not prove to be more effective than the so called *question preview* technique (Berne 1995), in which the listening comprehension questions are asked before the listening is heard (see Chapter 4.2). However, Berne (1995) reports that the group of students who were pre-taught lexis had lower scores after the 1st listening but achieved the larger gain in listening performance scores after the 2nd listening than the other two groups (one being provided with question preview and the other being a control group). Therefore we can hypothesise that during a third listening the 'pre-teaching lexis' group may even outperform the 'question preview' group.

Overall, there is a gap in the literature in that it does not present enough data on the usefulness and effectiveness of different techniques for different levels, let alone when accompanied by the perceptions of students themselves. The studies available have not sufficiently addressed the question of whether or not the relative effectiveness of different pre-listening activities/techniques varies as a function of listening proficiency (Berne 1995; Elkhafaifi 2005).

Based on the literature review, it can be concluded that the topic of pre-listening is under-researched. In particular, there is not much information on how exactly teachers should go about pre-listening, what exactly to do in the pre-listening stage at different levels, how long the pre-listening stage should take in proportion to the other stages (see Chapters 4.3 and 4.6.8), whether students should work alone, in pairs or as the whole class (for interaction mode, see also Chapters 4.6.5 and 7.3.5), etc. In addition, the very few resources available contain contradictory suggestions and results (Berne 1995; Sherman 1997; Vandergrift 2003; Elkhafaifi 2005; Field 2008; Lynch 2009). The existing explanations of the pre-listening process seem inadequate and one cannot help feeling that the current view on pre-listening has not changed much since the 1980s when schema theory made an impact on listening instruction (Richards 1983; Underwood 1989; Field 2002: 245, see also Chapter 4.6 and Chapter 5).

Moreover, although it is generally accepted that student needs, opinions, attitudes, and beliefs play an important role in L2 learning, and that they have a strong influence on motivation in foreign language learning (e.g. Nunan 1988a; Spolsky 1989; Etchegoyen Rosolová 2012), there is not enough research into students' perceptions of teaching/learning L2 listening. Graham (2006: 166) states:

> ‘Given this complexity (of the listening comprehension process) and perhaps because the process is largely unobservable, it may be difficult for learners to have a clear understanding of how they go about listening in a foreign language, or, more importantly, how they might improve their performance. Learners are likely, however, to have certain beliefs about listening, which may influence the way in which they approach it. While there is a growing body of research devoted to learners’ beliefs about language learning in general, comparatively few studies have looked at beliefs about listening.’

To date, we have not found any empirical research into students’ perceptions of the usefulness of the pre-listening stage and of the effectiveness of different techniques at lower versus higher proficiency levels (see also Chapters 5.5 and 7.5). Hence the main goal of this dissertation is to assist in explaining the phenomenon of pre-listening from the students’ perspectives.

Furthermore, no empirical research has been found to date in the Czech Republic which investigates EFL listening comprehension or students’ perspectives and perceptions of listening comprehension (see Chapter 1.2).

This dissertation argues, in agreement with Graham (2006), that before we can hope to improve learners’ listening skills, we should be aware of the student needs and perceptions that learners hold, particularly where they perceive listening as a difficult skill to master (e.g. Rixon 1986; Graham 2006, see Chapter 2.3) and where their self-evaluation is very low in comparison with other language skills and knowledge (see Chapters 7.1 and 7.2). This is also in agreement with the current view that teaching methods and principles should be flexible and ‘adaptive to student needs and interests’ (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 247, see Chapter 3.6). The aim of the present study is to shed light on such student needs and perceptions.

1.5 Aims of the dissertation and the research questions

The ultimate goal of the dissertation is to contribute to the current knowledge of the learning of L2 listening and L2 listening instruction in the field of FLT/ELT methodology.

The main aim of the theoretical part is to contribute to literature mapping the history of the teaching of listening (see Chapter 3), where each main FLT approach/method is critically reviewed and juxtaposed with the adult student needs we have identified in our preliminary research (see Chapter 6.1). The dissertation further explores current approaches to the teaching of L2 listening especially concerning the pre-listening stage, i.e. the preparation of learners for the listening itself (see Chapters 4 and 5).

The main aim of the empirical part of the dissertation is to investigate adult students' perceptions of listening instruction and in particular of the pre-listening stage in listening instruction. For this purpose, the research instrument of a questionnaire was employed (see Appendix 2, Chapter 6.2 and Chapter 7); for the Czech version of the questionnaire, go to: http://langdpt.avcr.cz/dotaznik . By examining the students' perceptions, this study attempts to contribute to our understanding of the complex phenomenon of 'pre-listening', especially regarding the students' perspectives and proficiency levels. The students' perceptions, attitudes and opinions will be compared to what this writer considers the most comprehensive proposal for a current methodology for listening instruction (Field 2008), which is accepted here as the basis for our conceptual framework (see Chapter 4.6).

As noted in the previous chapter, the *main research problem* concerns the issue of length (and effectiveness) of the pre-listening stage, in which the writer's approach differs most considerably from the conceptual framework based on Field (2008), (see also Chapter 4.6.8). While Field claims that pre-listening is *overestimated* and *overused* in the language classroom, our results indicate the contrary. Therefore, apart from the main research instrument (the 2012 survey), a supplementary instrument has been used in order to measure the length of pre-listening in proportion to the length of the listening session, namely in the form of the 2011-2012 teacher observations (see Chapter 6.1.3 and Appendix 3). Thus it is hoped, a wider picture will be obtained.

Finally, the study results should help us juxtapose the students' perspectives and perceptions with the major teaching principles for effective L2 listening instruction devised by current leading experts in the field (see Chapter 4.6), or even to formulate new teaching principles for teaching lower-proficiency levels that may be acceptable for both teachers and learners (see Chapters 7 and 8). At some point in the future, it is hoped, it should be possible to arrive at a systematic, coherent, and relevant methodology for listening instruction, in which the pre-listening stage would be used, appropriately and sensibly, as a tool which aids the development of students' listening comprehension and acquisition of students' listening skills in a long run.

Based on the literature review (see Chapter 1.4), five mutually interconnected areas of research can be identified:

I. *Students' self-evaluation* in the main language skills and language systems (knowledge). (See Chapter 7.1)

II. *Needs analysis* regarding the main language skills and systems, and the main purpose of students' language study. (See Chapter 7.2)
III. Students' perceptions of *listening instruction* and learning listening in the language classroom in general. (See Chapter 7.3)
IV. Students' perceptions of *the pre-listening stage* in the listening session. (See Chapter 7.4)
V. Students' perceptions of *pre-listening techniques*. (See Chapter 7.5)

The concrete research questions/subquestions that are asked in the empirical study are the following:

1. How do adult students evaluate their listening skills in comparison with the other language skills? In addition, how do they evaluate their knowledge of the language systems? (See Chapter 7.1)
2. Which language needs do students identify as their priority? (i.e. the most important language skills and language systems to improve, and priorities in learning the L2) (See Chapter 7.2).
3. How do students perceive listening instruction in their EFL courses? Approximately how much time is devoted to listening instruction and do students consider the amount of time sufficient or not? How do students perceive other important characteristics of listening instruction in general, e.g. the quality of teaching listening, number of multiple replays, mode of interaction, etc? (See Chapters 6.1.3 and 7.3).
4. How do teachers use the pre-listening stage? Do they overuse it? How do students perceive the usefulness (or otherwise) of pre-listening for overall listening comprehension? Are there any differences in their perceptions of the pre-listening stage as a function of proficiency level? (See Chapters 6.1.3 and 7.4)
5. Which common pre-listening techniques are used most frequently in the classroom? Which pre-listening techniques are perceived as the most effective for listening comprehension from the students' perspectives? Are there any differences as a function of proficiency level? (Chapter 7.5)

For the fifth question *a typology of common pre-listening techniques* is presented (based on Underwood 1989, see Chapter 5.5, and for a definition of 'technique', see Chapter 1.2).

For the purposes of the empirical study, an original questionnaire was designed, which includes the five areas in question (see Appendix 2). Future researchers may decide to implement some of the suggested questions to their own research/teaching.

The research project enables us to focus on different approaches to the application of pre-listening techniques in the classroom and find out the students' perceptions. The results should lead to the identification/confirmation of principled decisions about how best to approach the pre-listening stage in the teaching of listening, especially for lower-proficiency levels.

This dissertation hopes to contribute practically to the knowledge in the field of FLT methodology. The present author intends to apply the knowledge about students' perceptions in seeking solutions to the problem in question and to draw implications not only for her own teaching, but in order to help other teachers understand the topic by writing articles and designing activities for listening instruction to adult learners at lower levels in the future.

1.6 Overview of the dissertation

The structure of the dissertation reflects the aforementioned aims, which implies that it is necessary to theoretically address the areas in question. These comprise the theoretical part of the dissertation.

Chapter 1 explains the purpose of the study, introduces the reader to the Czech context and to the key terminology chosen for our purposes, reviews the main results of the literature pertinent to the present study, and sets up the aims of the dissertation.

Chapter 2 introduces listening skills as one of the four main language skills. It stresses the importance of listening in our everyday life and in the current globalised society. The 'hidden' nature and the complexity of the listening process are discussed as two of the most important reasons why L2 listening is difficult to teach and research. A distinction is made between listening for accuracy and listening for fluency, and the implications for listening instruction are explained. Next, listening is considered in relation to the other main language skills and integration of the skills is recommended for the pre-listening stage in particular. Productive and receptive skills are compared. Similarities and differences are examined between listening on the one side, and reading and speaking respectively, on the other side. The chapter concludes our present knowledge of the listening comprehension process with defining the primary goal for listening instruction to our target population of adult L2 learners in the Czech Republic.

Chapter 3 attempts to obtain the necessary orientation in the history of FLT as one of the major foundations of our conceptual framework (Stern 1983: 44). The chapter relates to the recent developments in FLT in the past approximately 100 years and characterizes the major methods and approaches in a chronological order, with a special focus on the listening component of the language classroom, starting from the Reform Movement (Chapter 3.3.2). We examine why listening was overlooked in FLT in the past, and when and how teaching listening started to be considered and developed in its own right. Two roles of listening in the language classroom are distinguished, listening as comprehension and listening as acquisition, and the particular methods and approaches are discussed accordingly (Chapters 3.3 and 3.4). The most appropriate FLT approach for our target learners is identified.

Chapter 4 focuses on the listening session and its stages and on the pre-listening stage in particular. The role of the pre-listening stage is examined and the conceptual development and rationale behind the changes in teaching listening since the 1970s are described. The chapter summarises recent and current developments in L2 listening instruction research and their implications for the classroom, especially the development regarding the inclusion of pre-listening. In Chapter 4.6, a conceptual framework for a 'new' methodology of listening instruction is identified (based on Field 2008) and reviewed. The teaching principles serve as a basis for the construction of the main research instrument, the 2012 questionnaire survey.

Chapter 5 deals with schema theory, which describes how knowledge is structured in human memory and exploited in comprehension. Specific attention is given to current interactive approaches to listening, examining research which argues that listening comprehension is a combination of identification and interpretation skills. Chapter 5.5 presents a typology of pre-listening techniques.

In the second, empirical part of the dissertation, **Chapter 6** introduces and explains the stages of the empirical research, including the preliminary research. The dissertation research methodology and results are presented and discussed in **Chapter 7**. Finally, the implications are drawn for teaching listening to adult learners at A2-B1 proficiency levels in **Chapter 8**.

THEORETICAL PART

Having explained that pre-listening is an integral part of listening instruction (Chapter 1), it is now necessary to turn our attention to the current views on listening as a language skill and on listening instruction in general (Chapter 2), the historical developments in FLT approaches and methods with a specific focus on their inclusion of listening instruction (Chapter 3), and the issues connected with pre-listening in particular (Chapters 4 and 5).

In the following theoretical part, theoretical issues are dealt with in order to prepare the reader for the Empirical Part of the dissertation by answering the following questions: How much of what is currently known about the listening comprehension process and L2 listening instruction can be applied in our research and in the teaching of listening to adult EFL learners in general? How much of what has already been done is likely to be effective in the adult EFL classroom?

2 LANGUAGE SKILLS AND LISTENING COMPREHENSION

Current listening comprehension research follows from certain assumptions on the nature of the listening process; these assumptions are reviewed and general perspectives on the listening process are presented. The chapter concludes with setting a goal for the development of listening comprehension in adult students within the general language course.

2.1 The position of listening amongst language skills

2.1.1 Language skills and language systems

We can classify the subject matter of foreign language teaching (FLT) under two main headings: *language systems/components/elements* and *language skills* (e.g. Beneš 1970: 56). To limit the problem of overlapping terminology in the field, we will first define the terms.

Language systems/components/elements are the formal properties of language (Saussure 1996) and different FLT authors use different terminology. The most frequently used term seems to be '*language systems*' (e.g. Stern 1992: 127; Scrivener 1994: 20; Nunan 2002: 140),

but ‘language components’ (e.g. Ur 1996: 46; Nation 2002: 267), ‘language elements’ (e.g. Mothejzíková 1988: 3), and the ‘building blocks’ of language (e.g. Chastain 1976: 278; Rixon 1986: 30) are also used to mean the same. For our purposes, I have chosen the term ‘language systems’ because it is the one which is most widely used, even though it should be acknowledged that, in linguistics, the term ‘language system’ is often used in its broader sense to mean ‘language as a system’, for example when L1 (Czech) and L2 (English) systems are compared, (e.g. Dušková 1988; 2009; Mothejzíková 1992; Wilkins 1999: 13; Sternberg 2009).

Language systems have traditionally included grammar, lexis, phonology, and spelling (Mothejzíková 1988: 55), and recently discourse / communicative language functions have been added (e.g. Van Ek 1977; Stern 1992: 308; Ur 1996: 46; Hedge 2000; Richards 2009; Scrivener 2011: 114), where communicative language functions are for example: asking for information, offering help, agreeing and disagreeing (see Chapter 2.6, Chapter 3.5.1 and Chapter 4.3). However, we should bear in mind that each of these terms has its own history as, for example, Stern points out when speaking of grammar:

> ‘The term *grammar* is sometimes used very widely so as to include the entire analysis of a language, including phonology, morphology, syntax, lexicology, semantics, and discourse analysis. In view of the close inter-relatedness of these aspects it is not unreasonable to work with a wide definition, in which grammar is synonymous with linguistic analysis. As we are concerned in language teaching with the language in its entirety, boundaries between the sound system, the grammatical system, the lexical system, and the system of discourse are not too important.’ (1992: 127)

Traditionally, four main language skills are distinguished: *listening, speaking, reading and writing* (e.g. Mothejzíková 1988: 55; Stern 1992: 309). They are often called ‘the four skills’ (e.g. Beneš 1970: 117; Ur 1996: 103; Hinkel 2006), ‘the Big Four’ (Oxford 1990: 5), or ‘macro-skills’ (e.g. Richards and Rodgers 2001: 230). When considering different FLT approaches and methods, Stern (1983: 512) notes that this traditional separation of language skills started to be further explored as a teaching strategy at the beginning of the 20th century (see the order of the skills in the Reform Movement, Chapter 3.3.2, and in the Audio-Lingual Method, Chapter 3.3.4). However, according to some experts, e.g. Whitney (1999: 639), listening started to be considered as ‘a skill in its own right’ as late as the 1960s (see Chapter 4).

Some authors add translation to the four skills as they consider translation a specific language skill (e.g. Dodson 1967 cited in Bahenská 2013; Beneš 1970: 120; Mothejzíková 1988: 223;

Cook 2010). Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009: 196-202) even consider translation ‘a fifth language skill’: ‘Translation as a fifth skill – a forgotten art’. (Bahenská 2013)

In general, it is believed that all four language skills are important for the development of communicative competence (see Chapter 3.5.1) and deserve special attention and action (Oxford 1990: 57, 244). Many practising teachers agree that learning a foreign language necessarily involves developing all four language skills but in varying degrees and combinations, according to the learners’ needs. The learners’ needs are often associated with areas of primary difficulty, which can be identified by learners’ self-evaluation (Graham 2006). These two issues are pursued in the first two areas of our research project in which the collected data are analysed in terms of our adult students’ self-evaluation and needs in both language skills and language systems (see Chapter 7.1 and Chapter 7.2).

2.1.2 Receptive versus productive language skills

Traditionally, the four language skills were grouped in two different ways. The grouping is summarised in Tab. 1:

A. *Receptive versus productive skills,* i.e. listening and reading versus speaking and writing.

B. Skills referring to spoken language versus skills referring to written language, i.e. listening and speaking versus reading and writing (see Chapter 3).

	Skills referring to spoken language	
Listening		Speaking
Receptive	_____	**Productive**
Reading		Writing
	Skills referring to written language	

Tab. 1: The four language skills (based on Beneš 1970: 117 and Stern 1983: 506).

Reading and listening are considered so called ‘receptive skills’, while writing and speaking are called ‘productive skills’ (e.g. Chastain 1976; Rivers 1987; Ur 1996; Harmer 2001). In the receptive processes we are involved in interpreting and understanding the text or message produced by an interlocutor (speaker in discourse) or a writer, whereas in the productive processes we transmit our ideas and intentions to an addressee. In the process of reception, i.e. when interpreting discourse, we combine discourse knowledge (see Chapter 2.1.1) with

strategies of listening or reading (see Chapter 2.8), while relying on prior knowledge (sometimes called background knowledge, see Chapter 5) as well as on the assessment of the context at hand. On the other hand, when producing discourse, we combine discourse knowledge with strategies of speaking (see Chapter 2.9) or writing, while utilizing audience-relevant contextual support. (Olshtain and Celce-Murcia 2007: 7)

We can also distinguish whether a 'language product' is being created (productive skills), or whether a language product is being received and analysed (receptive skills). According to Palenčárová and Šebesta (2006: 28), we can sum up that when applying the *productive skills* we can consider two stages:

- The process of creation: speech/writing is being created,
- Speech / writing is finished and becomes a language product.

On the other hand, when applying the *receptive skills*:

- A language product is obtained (a written/spoken text),
- The process of comprehending the text, i.e. analysing the product, follows (see Chapter 2.9).

As we will see in Chapter 3, the four skills are usually ordered in the so called reception/production order (Mothejzíková 1988: 222, see Chapter 3.3.2).

2.2 The importance of listening in verbal communication today

The purpose of this chapter is to explain how important listening is in everyday communication in contemporary society and thus justify our focus on listening instruction in FLT, in which we should also make use of current technological innovations.

Listening forms a critical part of everyday life. The importance of listening was shown by Paul T. Rankin and his team from Michigan University, the U.S.A., already in 1926 (Rankin, 1928; Feyten 1991: 173). They found listening to be 'the most frequently used mode of human communication' (Rankin, 1928: 623). Rankin pointed out that of the time an adult individual is engaged in communication, approximately 42% is devoted to listening, 32% to speaking, 15% to reading, and 11% to writing. A few decades later, nearly the same division of skills was reported by Nichols and Stevens (1957: 29, cited in Elkhafaifi 2005: 505) and then by Rivers and Temperley (1978), with approximately 45% devoted to listening, 30% to speaking, 16% to reading, and 9% to writing. An even higher proportion of listening was recently measured in the Czech Republic, with 50% devoted to listening, 25% to speaking, 15% to reading, and 10% to writing (Palenčárová and Šebesta 2006: 41-46). These results

may suggest that the importance of listening might have been increasing in the past 100 years (Palenčárová and Šebesta 2006: 41).

Furthermore, some FLT authors state that the importance of effective listening skills is still increasing with the growing demands on listening in contemporary society (e.g. Elkhafaifi 2005: 505). In the past 30-40 years modern society has been shifting its attention from printed media towards sound (Hedge 2000: 229). As a result, the interest in FLT literature, and in education in general, has moved from written language to spoken language, from literacy to oracy (Crystal 1997: 250, see Chapter 3.3).

Even though FLT has been influenced by the development of technology in the past 100 years, the nature of FLT has never changed radically as a result of any new technology (Stern 1992: 10). Last century saw a lot of technological innovations, from the reel-to-reel recorder, the language laboratory, the audiocassette player, the video recorder, the DVD player, to the handheld computer (see mainly Chapter 3.3.4 and Chapter 3.3.5). Each new generation of technology 'promised to bring really radical advances' in FLT, however, the technology has not changed the ways in which learners listen to L2 speech (Lynch 2009: 7).

Nevertheless, more and more sophisticated communication technologies, e.g. online/blended learning courses, Skype, CDs, DVDs, MP3, etc, make L2 listening practice more available in the current globalised society (Brett 1997; Vanderplank 2010), and this may make listening easier, especially for young generations at present and in the future thanks to their increasing amount of immersion (see Appendix 2: Q21, Q35, Q36 and Q37). However, the technologies themselves do not lower the demands on listening skills (Lynch 2009: 7).

FLT literature has stressed the importance of listening skills in second language acquisition and learning since the 1970s. Many experts on L2 listening, e.g. Hendrich (1970: 124), Dunkel (1986: 105), Rubin (1994: 199), and Hedge (2000: 229), even state that listening has a 'key role' or 'seminal role' in language learning (see Chapter 3.4 and Chapter 3.5).

Having considered the above-mentioned reasons, we can conclude that listening skills are essential for successful communication in a FL. That is why our students need to develop good listening habits and strategies in order to achieve a high level of proficiency in listening.

2.3 Listening as a 'hidden' skill and a difficult skill to master

In most accounts of academic research into listening that draw general conclusions about how people listen to a foreign language, listening is often described as the least explicit of the four language skills (Vandergrift 2004: 3). Hence, many authors point out that listening is a

'*hidden'* skill (e.g. Postovsky 1974: 230; Lynch 1996: 89) or '*an internalised*' or '*invisible'* skill that '*may have no observable product or outcome*' (Lynch 2009: 4). It means that listening 'takes place in the mind of the learner and cannot be studied directly' (Field 2008: 3). According to Lynch (1996: 89), the fact that listening is an unobservable activity has two major disadvantages in the classroom: (1) It is difficult for teachers to judge how much their learners are understanding, and (2) it is difficult for each learner to know how well they are coping compared with other listeners in class. As a result, experts agree that not only does listening instruction 'place heavy demands upon the teacher' (Field 2008: 41, see Chapter 4.6), but

> '… conducting effective research into listening is also complex, given the number of factors that stand in the researcher's way, such as the inaccessibility of what goes on in the listeners' heads and the variety of influences on the success or failure of attempts to understand spoken language.' (Lynch 2009: 5)

Therefore, it is not surprising that many adult learners perceive L2 listening as the most difficult skill to master, often together with speaking. If asked to rate the relative difficulty of the four language skills, students often cite listening as the area which they want to develop most or about which they feel most insecure (e.g. Rixon 1986: 36; Graham 2006; Field 2008: 4). Graham (2006), in her study of British learners of French, investigating the lack of popularity of foreign language learning in England, found that for lower-intermediate (A2) learners, listening was not only the skill in which they experienced the greatest difficulty but also the skill they felt was most difficult to improve.

This is also apparent from this writer's preliminary research (Ždímalová 2009a, see Chapter 6.1.1 and 6.1.2). Findings from the research proper (the 2012 survey) confirm those of the preliminary research in that students identify speaking and listening as areas for improvement, plus their self-evaluation in these skills is low (see Chapters 7.1 and 7.2 and Appendix 2: Q4C and Q6C). It may be due to the complexity of the 'hidden' skill itself. However, it seems there might be some objective reasons also on the teaching side, including the fact that until the late 1970s listening comprehension had been overlooked in FLT (see also Chapters 3.1 and 4.6).

On the other hand, when asked about their most important long-term goal in FL study, in both the preliminary survey and in the research proper the majority of learners claim that they need to improve mainly their speaking skill (see Chapters 6.1.1 and 7.2). This is consistent with statements of many authoritative authors in the field (e.g. Field 2008: 2).

However, a follow-up qualitative research concerning students' challenges in their foreign language study (semi-structured interviews with nine A2-B1 learners, see Chapter 6.1.2)

made it clear that learners' long-term needs in fact reside in interacting orally with other speakers of the foreign language, when travelling or communicating with foreigners in the Czech Republic. Students stated that they are hardly able to sustain a conversation with their counterparts because of their limited listening skills. Furthermore, a few learners were identified, whose ability to interpret the listening text from an audio recording lagged significantly behind the level of the language they were capable of producing in speech (see Appendix 1).

2.4 The complexity of the listening comprehension process

No one knows exactly how listening works and how we learn to listen and understand (e.g. Crystal 1997: 145; Field 2008: 1; Lynch 2009: 4). As speakers of our L1, we tend to take listening for granted because we develop it easily as children. As adults we can process spoken input in our L1 with little or no effort, as our listening skills are automatic (Godfrey 1977; Underwood 1989: 1; Rost 2002: 110). This ability is a result of a number of factors, mainly the large amount of L1 and the number of different speakers we are exposed to in our childhood, and our acquired knowledge of the context, the speakers and the topic involved in the listening situation (see Chapter 5).

People only become aware of the complexity of the listening process when they start to learn (or teach) a foreign language (L2). Research suggests that when trying to comprehend the L2 we deal with some problems less flexibly than we would in our L1 (e.g. Lynch 1996: 89, see Chapter 2.5). On the other hand, when L2 learners achieve high proficiency in oral communication, their oral skills also become automatised, and some authors call such learners 'competent listeners' (Lynch 1996: 89), 'expert listeners' (Field 2008: 32), 'effective listeners' (Lynch 2009: 78), or 'higher ability listeners' (Graham 2006: 168).

In general, we can define the listening comprehension process as a complex invisible mental process, which in fact includes a sum of different listening processes. According to Rost (2002: 7) listening entails 'a continuum of active processes, which are under the control of the listener, and passive processes, which are not'. Recent developments in L2 listening comprehension research have shown that listening is accomplished through *four automatic cognitive operations* of (1) *phonological perception*, (2) *word recognition*, (3) *grammatical parsing*, and (4) *contextual inferencing*. These processes are interdependent and they overlap during the listening comprehension process (Rost 1999: 290, see Chapter 5.3).

It is often assumed that both L1 listening and L2 listening entail the same cognitive operations. However, L1 and L2 listening differ in efficiency of processing, i.e. the automaticity and 'correctness' of comprehension. This has a cognitive effect on the listener's sense of ease of processing; L1 listeners process the input automatically, whereas L2 listeners may struggle for comprehension, depending on their proficiency.

2.5 Learner problems in L2 listening

L2 listeners encounter various problems due to several possible factors or obstacles. According to Lynch (1996: 88), L2 listeners may suffer from: (1) gaps in the listening input, i.e. inadequate hearing caused e.g. by outside noise (see also Chapter 7.3.8), (2) gaps in their linguistic knowledge, i.e. lexis, pronunciation, etc, (3) gaps in their schematic knowledge, e.g. topic familiarity, cultural differences, etc, (see Chapter 5), and (4) affective factors such as fatigue, anxiety (see Chapter 4.4.2), lack of motivation and interest, etc.

Among the relatively few studies that have looked at beliefs about L2 listening, investigations into beliefs about the problems associated with L2 listening have predominated (Graham 2006: 167).

Lower-proficiency learners often feel overwhelmed by the unfamiliar listening environment. They may have difficulty in separating speech from non-speech sounds, dividing speaker's utterances into words, identifying them, and at the same time interpreting what the speaker meant. Anderson and Lynch point out: '*It is hardly surprising that people everywhere believe that foreigners speak too fast*' (1988: 3).

Weaker L2 listeners, especially A1-B1 students who are learning L2 in a classroom (i.e. not immersed in the L2) often do not succeed in recognizing enough of the input to be able to infer meaning from the listening text, especially from audio recordings of unknown speakers in unknown situations (see also Chapters 5.2.4 and 6.1.2).

According to many authors (e.g. Underwood 1989: 16; Ur 1996: 112; Graham 2006), most often learners complain about the *fast speech rate* they experience as one of the main difficulties in their processing (see also Chapters 2.6, 2.8 and 2.9).

Our 2012 survey results (Appendix 2: Q30-34) indicate that for our students, too, *fast speech rate is problem number 1*, followed by '*word recognition*' and '*outside noise*', which were identified as the three main problems with listening to audiorecordings in the classroom (see Chapter 7.3.8). According to Field (2008: 27), the whole situation may lead to listener anxiety (see also Chapters 2.11 and 4.4.2). The teacher's objective should be to prevent learners from

getting too anxious (e.g. Lynch 1996: 102; Ždímalová 2009b) but at the same time to challenge them in an appropriate way for them to develop their listening skills (Field 2008: 79).

Having considered the complexity of L2 listening in this and the previous chapter, we can fully realize that listening is as important as speaking. We cannot function in face-to-face communication in the FL unless speaking and listening are developed in tandem (Anderson and Lynch 1988: 3, see Chapter 2.9). Most adult students of our general English courses are aware of this fact and when identifying their needs, they state that their priority is the development of both speaking and listening skills (see Chapter 7.2 and Appendix 2: Q6: options 6C and 6D).

2.6 Fluency versus accuracy

Language proficiency is traditionally defined in terms of ***accuracy*** and ***fluency*** (e.g. Brumfit 1984; Spolsky 1989: 80; Ur 1996: 103). Although Skehan (1996a; 1998: 112) makes a three part distinction between accuracy, fluency, and complexity, for our purposes the first two aspects are sufficient as the basis for our thinking (Nation 1999: 611; Ritchie and Bhatia 2009: 118). If a learner has mastered language successfully, he or she can understand and produce it both accurately and fluently. Therefore, in FLT in general, the focus on fluency and accuracy should be balanced (Stern 1992: 302).

Traditionally, fluency has been associated mainly with speaking (e.g. Derwing *et al*. 2004) because it is the most obvious sign of the learners' proficiency in oral communication. Thus the development of spoken fluency is usually viewed as one of the most important goals in FLT, and adult learners often perceive it this way (see Chapter 7.2 and Appendix 2: Q6: option 6D and Q7: option 7E). However, we should do our best to link fluency also with the other three language skills, in our case with listening (Field 2008: 2-3).

How can accuracy and fluency be defined from the teacher's point of view and for the purpose of our study? When we focus on *accuracy*, we are concerned with forming correct sounds, words, sentences. The teaching of language systems, e.g. pronunciation, grammar, or lexis (see Chapter 2.1.1) tends to be accuracy-oriented (Ur 1996: 103). Accuracy activities include dictation or pre-teaching lexis before listening (see also Chapter 1.4). However, when dealing with more holistic categories of communicative language functions (see Chapter 2.1.1) and topics, e.g. when predicting a topic of a listening text from a newspaper headline, we are beginning to move over towards fluency (see Chapter 5).

When we emphasize *fluency*, we are concentrating on the 'message': in our case this means receiving the message via the listening process, and in the case of speaking it means communicating the content orally. The most obvious signs of fluency are speed, i.e. the fast speech rate (see Chapter 2.5), and uninterrupted performance (Nation 1999: 611). According to Richards (2009: 1), the needs for fluency in L2 oral skills around the world are still growing.

It is commonly accepted that learners cannot give full attention simultaneously to both fluency and accuracy (Skehan 1998: 112). Therefore, we should carefully distinguish between fluency-oriented and accuracy-oriented work in our teaching practice.

At the advent of CLT (see Chapter 3.5.1) Brumfit criticized the previous methods for not paying enough attention to fluency:

> 'In one sense, the contrast between accuracy and fluency is largely metaphorical. Classrooms are always concerned with both. In spite of difficulties in defining accuracy and fluency, the distinction between them has a value in centring methodological discussion… It has been suggested in this paper that language teaching needs to concentrate far more on the concept of fluency in order to restore a genuine educational perspective to its aims.' (1979: 189).

Most experts agree that the teaching of language skills is often fluency-oriented because we teach learners to use the language systems of the foreign language fluently in communication (e.g. Ur 1996: 103; Lynch 1996: 85; Richards 2009: 3). Fluency activities involve meaning focused communication, e.g. free discussion on a topic. In the pre-listening stage, typical examples of fluency-based activities are free discussion or brainstorming ideas connected with a specific listening topic and story prediction before or while listening to the listening passage (see Chapter 4.4).

Even though the fluency versus accuracy distinction may be considered a huge simplification, it is useful to separate accuracy and fluency in planning FL lessons, and define clearly the learning objective at any given point in a lesson (Scrivener 2011: 224), including the different stages of a listening session (see Chapter 4.3). In the majority of cases classroom procedures combine both fluency and accuracy work to some extent, e.g. listening for details entails both fluency and accuracy work.

Often an activity that stresses listening skills and fluency leads into one that is based on accuracy work on language systems (e.g. lexis), or vice versa (Ur 1996: 103). An example of the former is the following sequence of tasks: a) *global, extensive* or *gist listening*, i.e. listening for general information, (fluency), b) *listening for details / intensive listening* (accuracy and fluency, see also Chapters 4.3.1 and 4.6.5), and c) studying *lexis* from the

listening text in the post-listening stage (accuracy). An example of the latter is: a) *pre-teaching or brainstorming key words* (accuracy), b) *global listening* (fluency) (see Chapter 4 for more details).

Nevertheless, it is important for the teacher to know what is in fact being learned in any specific language task. It is vital to identify where exactly the listening session starts, e.g. at the point of introducing the key lexis of the particular listening text we plan to listen to and not during a previous lexical task based on the lesson topic, which e.g. revises the vocabulary of clothing in general, and where the listening session finishes with a short post-listening activity (see Chapter 4). Where listening texts are used in coursebooks for accuracy, teachers in fact move on to teaching grammar, lexis, or pronunciation (Ur 1996: 103), which is not the focus of our study.

In summary, in teaching listening, more emphasis should be on fluency than on accuracy, as opposed to teaching the language systems. In teaching L2 listening we are concerned with the development of learners' facility in comprehending language in context. In receiving messages, listeners have to pay attention to the message as well as to the form. However, it is believed that in comprehending, the meaning has priority over the form because our brain stores meanings of propositions rather than their forms (Chastain 1976: 290; Dunkel 1986; Crystal 1997: 116-117; Skehan 1998: 26; Rost 2002: 26). Therefore, generally speaking, it can be said that in teaching listening we can logically consider lowering the emphasis on accuracy. By this we mean that even if we focus on pre-teaching or brainstorming key words prior to the listening passage, it should be done efficiently.

2.7 Listening comprehension as an active collaborative process

Communication in any of the four language skills is an active, not a passive, process in which the person's language system is fully activated (Chastain 1976: 279, Oxford 1990: 244).

'Listening comprehension' is an excellent English term to show the real meaning of the active process we have in mind. It concerns much more than just 'hearing' something. When we start to listen we pay attention to what is being said, and this active involvement is 'the essential differentiation between simply hearing and listening' (Rost 2002: 12). In Czech, on the other hand, we lack such an exact term and we have to assume that 'listening entails understanding', or we have to use other terms, e.g. 'listening with comprehension' (in Czech: '*poslech s porozuměním*') or 'active/careful listening' (Palenčárová and Šebesta 2006, use the Czech term '*naslouchání'*).

Communication is fundamentally a *collaborative process*. It involves production of signals by a speaker, who codes the message, and receiving of the message by a listener, who decodes the message. In most situations listening is interactive or reciprocal (see Chapters 1.3 and 4.5), i.e. the listener has opportunities to respond, ask the speaker for clarification etc (e.g. Rost 2002: 143). This fact is also evident from the 2012 survey results where students want to increase their own participation in the listening session (see Chapter 7.3.5 and Chapter 7.5, Appendix 2: Q10, Q20, and Q23 versus Q29).

However, even though the speaker and the listener collaborate, verbal communication remains inherently ambiguous, especially when listening to audiorecordings of unknown speakers (see Chapter 2.5). One of the main reasons is that the process of understanding does not involve only decoding processes but inferential processes as well (Rost 1990: 3). In the inferential processes the listener contextualizes the speaker's signals and arrives at personalised meanings based on his/her background knowledge (Bartlett 1932: 227, see Chapter 5). Because of this complexity, total comprehension at all times is impossible (Chastain 1976: 283; Corder 1981: 38). Hence, no procedure can ensure mutually acceptable and unambiguous understanding between the speaker and the listener, even when they share their L1 and use it for their communication (Rost 1990: 4).

In the following three chapters, listening is compared with the other main language skills, namely with reading and speaking respectively and implications are drawn for the difficulty of learning/teaching L2 listening (see Chapters 2.8 and 2.11).

2.8 The relationship between listening and reading

In general, both L1 and L2 education traditionally emphasized literacy, the ability to read and write, e.g. in the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) (see Chapter 3.3.1), over oracy, the ability to speak and listen (see Chapter 2.2). In L1 education, listening, as well as speaking, was considered to be successfully mastered in the pre-school years, before reading and writing instruction begins (Lynch and Anderson 1988: 17; Crystal 1997: 250). Therefore listening was taken for granted and teachers emphasised reading, which they considered more difficult.

As far as L2 listening is concerned, more attention has started to be paid to spoken language since the beginning of the 20th century. This gradual process is shown in more detail in the analysis of concrete approaches and methods in Chapter 3.

Given the earlier primacy of written language, it is not surprising that specialists focused on reading much earlier than on listening, e.g. Harold Palmer and Michael West investigated the reading approach already in the 1920s (Howatt and Widdowson 2004: 232-240), and reading skill was researched more intensively prior to researching listening skill (see Chapter 3 for more detail)

In the second half of the 20th century, especially in the 1980s, new research results concerning L1 listening challenged the traditional view of the listening/reading relationship (e.g. Neville 1985, cited in Lynch and Anderson 1988: 18). The researchers found that good listeners were usually good readers. Interestingly, there was no point of maximum success, and children of different ages and at any level were able to improve. It means that listening is not something we master early on in life, but that listening skills may continue to develop over most of our lives, both in L1 and L2. (Lynch and Anderson 1988: 18)

Listening and reading are in many respects similar to each other. Researchers have discovered that there seems to be a *general language processing skill* that influences performances in both listening and reading. It includes, for example, the ability to treat a text as a meaningful whole or to monitor our own comprehension of a message (Harmer 2001: 199). Thus, developing effective listening skills may also lead to improved reading skills and vice versa. In this respect, the research on schematic knowledge in reading (e.g. Carrell 1984) inspired an application of the same topic and techniques in the research of listening (e.g. Berne 1995, see Chapter 5).

On the other hand, there is one major difference: listening has a serious disadvantage in terms of *processing speed* (e.g. Chastain 1976: 286; Mothejzíková 1988: 146; Rost 1990: 9-10). Unlike readers, listeners are not able to control the stream of speech they are listening to, especially in non-interactive listening (see Chapters 1.3, 2.7 and 4.5). Whether learners understand it or not, the stream of speech continues. Therefore, especially A1-B1 learners feel a certain strain as they strive to cope with this problem of *fast speech rate* (see Chapters 2.5, 7.3.8 and Appendix 2: Q31H).

In addition, there is a difference in *word recognition* (Rost 2002: 20). L2 readers easily identify word boundaries thanks to the white spaces between the words in any foreign language text. However, there is no direct equivalent in listening to continuous speech. L2 listeners often cannot identify word boundaries. This, together with inadequate knowledge of word meanings, makes word recognition one of the most problematic processes in L2 listening (see Chapter 7.3.8 and Appendix 2: Q31).

Another difference is that in spoken discourse, speakers need not explicitly verbalize topics as writers must usually do in writing (Rost 1990: 10). The listener has to understand the topics more or less from the context and the extralinguistic reality, whereas the reader can see the topics from the organization of the reading texts (including titles, subtitles, notes etc.).

This distinction is vitally important for our understanding of how readers and listeners utilize *prior knowledge* (*background schemata*) to interpret texts (e.g. Buck 2001: 29), see Chapter 5). Anderson *et al*. (1977: 415-431) state that listeners often interpret identical passages differently if they are given different prior information, e.g. a *suggested title for the passage*, because they make *different predictions based on the prior information* (see typology of pre-listening techniques in Chapter 5.5).

2.9 The relationship between listening and speaking

There is a clear *interdependence between speaking and listening* as they are both parts of oral communication (Beneš 1970: 120). In *oral interaction* at least two individuals participate in an oral exchange in which production and reception alternate and may in fact overlap (CEFR 2001: Chapter 2.1.3; ERR 2002: 14).

To be successful in such communication, the L2 learner needs to be skilled as both speaker and listener (see Chapter 2.4). Earlier FL approaches and methods underestimated the role of listening and often focused more on speaking (Palenčárová and Šebesta 2006: 40), e.g. the Direct Method, the Audio-Lingual Method, etc (see Chapter 3.3).

In the 1970s - 1980s L1 research gave evidence that effective speaking depends on successful listening. In communication experiments, the most effective spoken performances came from speakers who had previously been listeners on a similar task, see e.g. Anderson, Brown, and Yule 1984, (in Lynch and Anderson 1988: 16; Rost 1990: 11). The experiments also highlighted the needs of the listener for clear and explicit instructions (see Chapter 4.4.2).

Apart from the above mentioned similarities there is a fundamental difference between listening and speaking. Listening is not tangible in the way that speaking (or writing) is (Field 2008: 1; Grundy 2011). In listening, we analyse someone else's product, whereas in speaking we have to create our own product, i.e. the speech (Palenčárová and Šebesta 2006: 28, see Chapter 2.1.2).

As a result, when we speak in a FL, we can limit our speech to language that we can control (Chastain 1976: 284-285) and the same applies to our speech rate. Speaking begins with the intention of the speaker, who in the process of speaking concentrates on both meaning and

form at the same time. Unlike the listener, the speaker controls the level of language by his or her selection of lexical and syntactic items. It means that FL learners can decide if they want to use the more elaborated or simplified form in their speech (Grundy 2011). Consequently A1-B1 language learners, when speaking, can keep within a simplified syntax and reduced vocabulary to express their meaning. (Rivers 1987: 7-8)

On the other hand, in order to comprehend the message, the listener has to attend mainly to the meaning, and only secondarily to the forms of the language used by the speaker (Ellis 2003, see Chapters 2.4 and 2.6). As mentioned in the previous chapters (e.g. Chapter 2.5), in many cases the listener cannot directly influence the *speed of the message* he or she is comprehending (Ur 1984: 15). Thus the speed of processing is one of the most crucial issues our target learners have to face (Hendrich 1970: 123; Grundy 2011, see Appendix 2: 31H).

Therefore, when cultivating effective listening skills, we teach students to rely on semantic cues and not to focus on the syntax because concentration on analysis of the syntax impedes the extraction of meaning (except at point of special difficulty). (Rivers 1987: 7)

Hence revision of grammar is not frequently used as a pre-listening technique and based on the dissertation results learners do not view it as a very effective technique to aid their comprehension (see Chapters 5.5 and 7.5 and Appendix 2: Q23L and Q29L), which is also in agreement with current state of knowledge (Graham 2006).

2.10 Integrated listening and speaking practice

Another connected issue is whether to teach the language skills *in separation* (analytic approach, e.g. Field 2008: 73) or *in integration* (synthetic approach, e.g. Hinkel 2006; Craven 2008). Some experts suggest that each skill should be practised separately because we learn listening by listening, speaking by speaking, reading by reading, and writing by writing (e.g. Chastain 1976: 280). Field (2008: 73), for example, warns us against switching frequently from one skill to another. However, many authors state that it is useful to integrate listening with other skills, especially with speaking (e.g. Hinkel 2006; Hinkel 2010b; Richards 2009), and this approach seems to be in agreement with the current needs of our adult students (see Chapters 2.9 and 7.2). For example, Hinkel (2010b) argues:

> ‘In the contemporary world of second and foreign language teaching, most professionals largely take it for granted that language instruction is naturally divided into discrete skill sets, typically reflecting speaking, listening, reading, and writing, and usually arranged in this order… Based on the principles of Bloomfieldian linguistic analyses and their applications to language pedagogy, the structural division of language teaching in the four skill areas has the

> learning objective of imitating the native speaker. The continual separation of the four skills lies at the core of research and testing in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Some current approaches to teaching language, however, strive to integrate the four skills in pedagogy whenever possible. Integrated language teaching and various integrated pedagogical paradigms are usually associated with outgrowths of communicative teaching.'

Since the advent of CLT we have seen attempts to give L2 learners opportunities to practise both sets of skills, speaking and listening, and to *integrate* them in conversation and in FLT in general. Some CLT proponents even started to speak about a new type of course called an 'integrated skills course' (e.g. Underwood 1989: 31; Rost 2002: 142). Nevertheless, it is generally accepted nowadays that in an effective L2 programme, listening and speaking skills are linked (Richards 2009: 18; Hinkel 2006: 113-119; Ždímalová 2010b: 135). This is also reflected in current listening materials, e.g. Doff and Becket (Cambridge Skills for Fluency series 1991), which focus on the development of fluency in listening, but the other skills are integrated in a way that reflects real-life use of language. The need for integrated listening and speaking practice is discussed mainly in Bygate (1987), Oprandy (1994: 153) and Lynch (2009: 110), and our findings are in agreement with such an approach (see Chapters 7.1.1, 7.2.1, 7.2.3 and Appendix 2: Q4, Q6, and Q46).

For our purposes it makes sense to consider integrating speaking with listening in two phases of the listening session, first directly at the beginning of the listening session in the pre-listening stage in the form of dialogues about the listening topic, and secondly by applying pair work (see Chapter 3.5.1) whenever possible in the while-listening stage, mainly for checking students' comprehension in pairs (Anderson and Lynch 1988: 15; Field 2008: 21). In our research project we attempt to confirm our assumption that students prefer this kind of interaction in the listening session to working alone (see Chapter 7.3.5). As a result, students will practise the important skill of interactive listening, not just non-interactive listening which is usually focused on when listening to audiorecordings (see Chapters 1.3, 2.7, 4.5 and 4.6.3).

2.11 The main goal of listening instruction

Based on the aforementioned knowledge of the listening comprehension process we can attempt to draw conclusions for the goals of listening instruction.

According to the majority of experts in the field (Chastain 1976; Ur 1984; Rixon 1986; Ur 1996; Rost 2002; Field 2008; Lynch 2009; Lam 2002), the main goal of listening instruction since the 1970s has been to develop students' ability to *function successfully in L2 in real-life*

listening situations, both interactive and non-interactive (see Chapter 4.5). The listening situations vary enormously. When using the target language in real life for real communicative purposes, learners may encounter a large variety of rather complex and difficult listening situations, in which they are expected to function, e.g. job interview, committee meeting, shopping, informal conversation, story-telling, etc.

For our purposes it is extremely important to ask our learners what their primary purpose of learning the target language is (see Chapter 7.2) and which types of listening situations they will most probably encounter in their real life, e.g. while travelling, and which types of listening they want to practise, including the kind of media they will use most frequently, e.g. listening to live academic lectures or listening to telephone calls etc. (see Chapter 7.3 and Appendix 2: Q36 and Q46).

Some authors point out that one of the reasons for downgrading listening in the past was in fact the difficulty of teaching it (Rixon 1986; Lynch 2009: 5), which is associated with the fact that listening is seen as a skill hidden in the student's mind (see Chapter 2.3). Another problematic issue is that improvement in listening is really difficult to measure. Hence, as Field (2008: 2) comments: 'Even after extensive practice, there may be little evidence of any improvement in (listening comprehension) performance'. In addition, even though the increasingly sophisticated technological innovations make listening more accessible and often much cheaper for learners (see Chapter 1.2), they also make 'ever growing demands on teachers' professional and technical skills' (Lynch 2009: 5, see Chapter 3.3.5).

As demonstrated in the previous chapters, L2 listening is extremely important and most learners consider learning L2 listening very difficult (see Chapter 2.3), which may cause *apprehension*, so one of the teacher's objectives in listening instruction is to prevent anxiety in learners (e.g. Lynch 1996: 102; Ždímalová 2009b, see also Chapter 4.4.2). Therefore, the majority of experts agree that teachers should practise listening as frequently as possible hand in hand with appropriate pre-listening (Ur 1984; Lynch 2009; Vandergrift 2009).

In conclusion, the main goal of listening comprehension practice in our classroom is that students should learn to function successfully in real-life listening situations. Therefore, we should make the listening situations and tasks as close to real life as possible. Listening activities based on real-life situations will be more motivating and interesting to do than textbook exercises (Ur 1996: 107). Ideally, the listening instruction should help students to develop the listening processes through activities which give a range of purposes for listening (Hedge 2000: 236, see Chapter 4.4.3).

We suggest that pre-listening should be viewed as one of the possible tools; firstly for *making listening instruction closer to real-life listening*, including the useful integration of listening and speaking (see Chapter 2.10), and secondly for a *combined focus on both non-interactive and interactive listening* in the classroom (see Chapters 1.3 and 4.5), which ensures that the students' target skills (speaking and listening) are practised in parallel.

3 HISTORY OF THE TEACHING OF LISTENING

In agreement with Stern (1992: 6), our theoretical position can best be understood against the background of historical developments in FLT. As noted in Chapter 1.5, our main theoretical aim is to contribute to literature mapping the history of the teaching of listening.

In this chapter, we will look at the FL teaching of listening from a historical perspective. Several major approaches and methods popular in the past (approximately 100 years) will be briefly discussed in terms of whether and how they used listening, including the current tendency towards methodological eclecticism and the post-method condition (see Chapter 3.6).

In Chapters 3.1 to 3.4, an outline will be given of some of the historical issues concerning listening in order to set the stage for later chapters that deal with the current position of listening in a language curriculum, namely concerning the pre-listening stage (Chapters 3.5 and 4).

The history of FLT has been characterized by a search for more effective ways of teaching a second/foreign language, especially in the 20th century (e.g. Stern 1983: 97-112; Richards and Rodgers 2001: 15; Kumaravadivelu 2005: 163). Based on a universalist view of learning theory, it was believed that it would be possible 'to deliver a *best method* which would be essentially the same for everyone'. This view would not be acceptable in today's relativist climate where the maximum that we can consider is a '*most appropriate method'* (*Czech term: optimální*) for the given context of our teaching. (Howatt and Widdowson 2004: 244; Rost 2002: 115)

In the long search for the best way of teaching a FL, hundreds of different approaches and methods have been devised. For more than a hundred years, discussion has often centred on issues such as the development of accuracy and fluency in teaching (see Chapter 2.6), the role of vocabulary in L2 learning (e.g. Michael Lewis: The Lexical Approach, 1993, see Chapter 3.5.4), teaching productive and receptive skills, the skills sequence, techniques for teaching the four skills etc. (Crystal 1997: 378)

It is very interesting to see whether listening was used before the 'methods era' (see Chapters 3.3.1 and 3.3.2), and how it was used in the 'methods era' starting with the Direct Method (see Chapter 3.3.3) and through the Audio-lingual Method (see Chapter 3.3.4), both of which are considered 'oral-based approaches', and during the most active period in the history of

approaches and methods from the 1950s to the 1980s (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 14-15, see Chapter 3.3.5 to Chapter 3.5.3).

3.1 Neglect of listening instruction in the past

In ELT literature, listening has often been described as the '*neglected*', '*overlooked*', '*undervalued'* or '*taken for granted*' skill in comparison with the other skills (e.g. Field 2008: 49; Vandergrift and Goh 2009: 395, see Chapters 2.8 and 2.9). Some ELT methods assumed that listening ability will develop automatically through practice of language systems, e.g. the Grammar Translation Method (see Chapter 3.3.1), while others, e.g. the Audio-Lingual Method (see Chapter 3.3.4), prescribed only restricted practice in scripted dialogues where students were supposed to 'listen and repeat' the lines word for word.

In the past centuries, listening was often overlooked because more attention was paid to written language than to spoken language (see Chapters 2.8 and 3.3.1). Consequently, listening was regarded as a passive language skill (e.g. Beneš 1970: 121; Chastain 1976: 279; Lynch and Anderson 1988: 6). Finally, at the end of the 19th century more attention started to be paid to spoken language and it has been gradually increasing since then (see the following Chapters 3.3.2 to 3.6).

Even with the new focus on spoken language in the 20th century, it did not automatically follow that listening would gain much attention. Learning to listen was often considered only an 'inevitable by-product of learning to speak' (Chastain 1976: 278). Another factor was that authors and teachers had a product in speaking that allowed them to correct specific errors in the use of grammar, vocabulary, etc (Rost 1990: 27, see Chapter 2.1.2). As a result, listening comprehension had been neglected with regard to both its place in FLT and the development of techniques and materials for classroom use (e.g. Morley 2001; Hedge 2000).

During the 1960s and 1970s, listening instruction largely emphasized bottom-up linguistic processing (see Chapter 5), i.e. the recognition of individual sounds, sound combinations, words, phrases and sentence boundaries, as can be seen in Hendrich (1970: 130). In typical teaching materials, e.g. Alexander 1967, short recordings of dialogues or stories on tape provided target structures to be learned (see Chapter 4). However, in the late 1970s, the role of spoken language in FL development (but also in L1 development and learning), increased and became a major focus of interest (Crystal 1997: 250).

The 1980s saw a shift from the predominantly linguistic view to a *schema-based view* (see Chapter 5). The teaching of listening started to focus on the *activation of students' schemata*,

i.e. *top-down knowledge*, e.g. topic familiarity, cultural constructs etc. (Hinkel 2006: 117). However, neither an exclusively bottom-up nor top-down approach to the teaching of listening proved to be a major success, and we have to apply both of them in listening instruction.

Despite the general agreement in linguistics on the primacy of speech in language study (Crystal and Davy 1973: 96; Mothejzíková 1988: 31), some experts point out that listening continues to be undervalued even today, e.g. Field (2008: 1). Vandergrift (1997: 494) notes that, in general, research has so far focused more on production than reception and he calls reception strategies 'the Cinderella of communication strategies'. As far as teaching L1 to children is concerned, listening comprehension had been overlooked until the 1980s (Crystal 1997), and in the Czech Republic even until the 1990s (Palenčárová and Šebesta 2006). Finally, since the 1990s we have seen a stronger emphasis on listening comprehension in both L1 and L2 teaching (Rubin 1994; Morley 2001; Hinkel 2006; Palenčárová and Šebesta 2006).

The previous neglect of listening instruction is not justified. Listening is at least as important as any of the other skills (see Chapter 2). Not only is the FL phonological system acquired by listening, but oral communication is impossible without a listening skill that is much more highly developed than the speaking skill (Hendrich 1970). Listening skills serve as the basis for the development of speaking (e.g. Postovsky 1974: 231; Chastain 1976: 278, see Chapter 3.4).

3.2 Two roles of listening in FLT

According to some experts, e.g. Rost (2002: 91) and Richards (2009: 3), listening in FLT may play two major roles which can overlap. Traditionally, listening was examined mainly in relation to comprehension (see Chapter 3.3), which is a focus of attention in this dissertation, but in recent decades, listening has also been examined in relation to language learning and acquisition (see Chapter 3.4).

A. Listening as comprehension (see Chapter 3.3)

In this view, L2 listening practice should help learners to develop their abilities to comprehend the spoken discourse they listen to, i.e. to get the meaning from the input. Therefore, in most methodologies the terms 'listening' and 'listening comprehension' are synonymous (Richards 2009: 3).

A major change came about in the 1970s, when listening started to be considered an active process in which the listener's language system is activated to decode an incoming message (e.g. Chastain 1976: 279; Anderson and Lynch 1988: 6). Current views of listening emphasize the active role of the listener in receiving the message even more (see Chapter 2.7). As an active participant in listening, the listener employs strategies to facilitate, monitor, and evaluate his or her listening (Richards 2009: 1).

In this view meaning is not simply extracted from the message but constructed by listeners, based on their knowledge of the language system, their prior knowledge, and the context of the interaction (Vandergrift and Goh 2009: 395, see Chapter 5).

B. Listening as acquisition (see Chapter 3.4)

In recent decades, listening has also been examined in relation to language learning/acquisition (Dunkel 1986: 105; Feyten 1991: 178). This view is complementary to the previous one and considers how listening can provide input for the development of FL proficiency. Here we ask an important question: How can attention to the input the listener hears facilitate FL learning and the development of communicative competence? (See Chapter 3.5.1). Field (2008: 49), for example, comments:

> 'A listener with good word-recognition skills is able to acquire new grammar, vocabulary, and idioms from exposure to target language speech.'

Ideally, language programmes should exploit both roles of listening (Rost 2002: 91), but in the present dissertation we are interested primarily in the role of 'listening as comprehension', not in 'listening as acquisition' (as defined by Rost 2002: 91 or Richards 2009: 3).

In the following chapters, historical methods and approaches are considered, firstly those which considered teaching listening as comprehension, and secondly those which started to consider teaching listening for acquisition and not merely for comprehension.

3.3 'Listening as comprehension' and the main FLT approaches and methods

This chapter provides a brief historical overview of the most influential approaches and methods dating back some 100 years, and whether and how they dealt with listening as comprehension. The approaches and methods are considered and evaluated from the adult language learning point of view. Each approach/method is based on particular views of

language and language learning and recommends the use of specific techniques and materials, usually in a fixed sequence.

The list of approaches demonstrates the growing demand for oral proficiency, which has been caused by gradually increasing opportunities for communication in our modern era (see Chapter 2.2). While Chapter 3.3.1 represents the traditional focus on skills referring to written language (in the Grammar Translation Method), the following Chapters 3.3.2 to 3.3.5 demonstrate the transition from written to spoken language, from the Reform Movement, through the use of the Direct Method to the Audio-Lingual Method (ALM), all of which gradually start focussing on skills which refer to spoken language.

However, it did not automatically follow that teaching L2 listening would receive much more attention than before. Most often these approaches and methods assumed that listening ability will take care of itself. For example, the ALM assumed that listening will develop automatically through the practice of language structures and pronunciation, and through intensive exposure to the language (see Chapter 3.3.4).

3.3.1 The Grammar Translation Method (GTM): focus on written language

As mentioned in the earlier chapters, traditional education used to emphasize written language over spoken language (see Chapter 2.8), and the GTM is a typical example of this.

This method dominated early work in modern language teaching. It derives from the traditional approach to the teaching of Latin and Greek. It was particularly influential from the 1840s to the 1940s, and in modified form continues to be widely used in some parts of the world today, mainly where understanding literary text is the primary focus of the classroom. (Crystal 1997: 378)

The GTM is based on the analysis of written language and focuses on reading and writing. The main goal is to learn a foreign language in order to read its literature or in order to benefit from the mental discipline and intellectual development that result from the FL study (grammar as a logical discipline, so-called mentalist approach). (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 5-6)

Learning mainly involves the memorization of long vocabulary lists and mastery of grammatical rules, i.e. grammar is taught deductively. Reading comprehension, translation exercises, and the written imitation of texts play a primary role. (Howatt and Widdowson 2004: 151-166)

The medium of instruction is the students' native language (see Chapter 7.3.6 and Appendix 2: Q12 and Q13: Use of L1). The L1 is maintained as the reference system in the learning of the L2. The grammars of L1 and L2 are contrasted in so called comparative linguistics or contrastive analysis (Corder 1981: 57). One of the most comprehensive works contrasting the grammars of Czech and English was written by professor L. Dušková (1988; 2009).

Because of the focus on written language, there is relatively little emphasis on the skills of listening and speaking, and on their fluency (Scrivener 2011: 31). Due to the fact that accuracy is emphasized at the expense of fluency, students are often conscious of making errors. As a result, many students are afraid to speak (Beneš 1970: 137). The majority of teachers now recognize that the GTM does little to meet the spoken language needs and interests of today's language students (Crystal 1997: 378).

In Czechoslovakia the GTM had been the prevailing method until the Velvet Revolution of 1989 (see Chapter 1.2). The present author experienced the GTM as a learner during her basic, secondary and tertiary education in Czechoslovakia in the 1970s-1980s (in the communist era), and she can confirm that the FL classroom lacked the speaking and listening components. Betáková (2010: 51) sums up that before the 1989 revolution there were many learners who had learned English for many years knowing the language system very well, but they were not able to use it 'even for simple everyday communication'.

Nevertheless, some of the GTM features are still popular today worldwide, especially grammar, as we have never really abandoned the structural syllabus, and the structural-functional syllabus continues to be the core of the majority of mainstream course materials, at least at A1-B1 proficiency levels (see Chapter 3.5.1). Furthermore, translation is coming back into fashion, as can be seen at current IATEFL conferences in Europe (Dellar 2012; Kerr 2012; Bahenská 2013).

3.3.2 The Reform Movement: focus on pronunciation

The explicit treatment of listening in FLT is a relatively recent phenomenon. Its beginning can be traced back to the end of the 19th century, when a new science of phonetics (scientific analysis and description of sound systems of languages) was established (Rost 2002: 115). Furthermore, according to Stern (1992: 8) phonetics was actually the first major linguistic discipline that influenced FLT.

Phonetics could develop mainly thanks to the invention of the *phonograph* (by Thomas A. Edison in 1877); since then we have been able to record spoken language (Hulstijn 2003,

cited in Lynch 2009: 7; Feaster 2007: 13). By approximately the 1910s, the new knowledge of phonetics was applied in most teaching and teacher training (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 9), and by the early 1920s language courses were already available on gramophone records (Stern 1992: 9).

The intellectual leader of the Reform Movement was the British phonetician Henry Sweet. He is said to be the person who 'taught phonetics to Europe' (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 9). He stated that methodological principles should be based on 'a scientific analysis of language and a study of psychology' (Howatt and Widdowson 2004: 187-208).

The main principle of the Movement is the *primacy of spoken language*. Linguists started to emphasize that speech, rather than the written word, is the primary form of language. In FLT it means that learners should hear the language first before they see it in written form. Teachers started with spoken language and arranged the four language skills in the following sequence: 1. listening, 2. speaking, 3. reading; and 4. writing. This skills sequence was later termed the '*reception/production order*' (see also Chapter 3.3.4).

However, listening meant only hearing the sentences produced by the teacher, without necessarily understanding them, and speaking meant repeating the sentences (this was later criticized as 'parroting', e.g. Corder 1981: 41; Field 2008: 22). From our current perspective, this should be considered as teaching phonology, not the skills of listening and speaking.

Other important principles include teaching lexis and grammar. Words are presented in sentences and sentences practised in meaningful contexts; conversation texts and dialogues are used to introduce conversational phrases and idioms. Grammar is taught inductively – first students practise grammar points in context, then rules of grammar are taught. Translation is avoided; but the L1 can be used to explain new words and to check comprehension. (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 10)

Sweet's ideas continued in the work of Jespersen, Daniel Jones and Harold Palmer, who were younger, less rigid in a way, and able to modify the ideas, in regard to the main objections against the Reform Movement.

The critics of the Reform Movement objected mainly to two facts. Firstly, the study of written language was postponed and the progress was rather slow. Secondly, Sweet's fundamental principle to 'start with the spoken language' in fact meant teaching pronunciation, not conversation. Students would be introduced to phonetics and phonetic transcription for years before they could see the written text, i.e. before they could start to practise reading and writing. Lower-proficiency learners sometimes learned only one sentence a week: they

memorized the pronunciation by heart (after the teacher's model), learned the meaning, and studied the grammar points of the sentence. Spoken interaction was not a point of departure in the FL classroom, but the end-point of classroom instruction. (Howatt and Widdowson 2004: 187-208)

However, many features of the Reform Movement 'have stood the test of time particularly well' and among them mainly the emphasis on the spoken language, attention to pronunciation, grammar teaching based on observation of language as it is used in text, and the emphasis on everyday vocabulary. (Stern 1983: 93)

To conclude, FLT before the 'methods era' started to be influenced by technology. The first major technological invention, the phonograph, can be considered 'the milestone in the history of second language listening instruction' (Hulstijn 2003: 420). With the phonograph 'sound could be recorded, stored, played and replayed' and FLT could start to focus on spoken language. (Lynch 2009: 7)

3.3.3 The Direct Method (DM)

There are many variants of the Direct Method (DM) around the world but they are all based on the active involvement of the learner in speaking and listening to the target language in realistic everyday situations. The DM is also known as the *Oral* or *Natural* method, in the U.S. widely known as the *Berlitz Method*. The target language is used as a medium of instruction; communication in L1, translation, and grammatical explanations are avoided; students are encouraged to think in the target language (Stern 1983: 457; Crystal 1997: 378). Grammar is taught inductively. There is a strong emphasis on fluency, often at the expense of accuracy.

Generally speaking, natural methods have a long tradition. The modern tradition of the DM originated in the work of J.J. Rousseau in the second half of the 18th century. It is worth mentioning that before 1800 natural language learning was possible only in the families of rich people whose children were educated at home by L2 native-speaker tutors. Richards and Rodgers (2001: 14) state that the DM is the most well known of the natural methods and that it marked the beginning of the 'methods era'.

The DM reached its peak of popularity between the 1860s and the 1920s. Thanks to the demands of immigrants pouring into the U.S. in the second half of the 19th century, totally new type of schools for adults started to be established. The schools ran mainly evening classes, which were happening for the first time in the history of FLT in the 1890s. The most

popular ones are known as the 'Berlitz schools' after the owner of the schools network in the US and Europe. Given the circumstances, it would be barely possible to use every student's L1 in such multilingual classes. (Howatt and Widdowson 2004: 210-227)

The DM may be efficient when native speaker teachers teach one-to-one lessons or multilingual classes in private language schools. However, it is not an easy method to use in the traditional EFL setting, e.g. in the public secondary school system or larger monolingual adult classes in the Czech Republic, because it is difficult to generate natural learning situations and provide every student with sufficient practice (Crystal 1997: 378; Richards and Rodgers 2001: 13).

In addition, while it is generally accepted that it is useful to convey meaning directly through demonstration and action where possible (see Chapter 3.4.1), translation should not be banned completely (Dellar 2012; Kerr 2012; Bahenská 2013). If used appropriately, e.g. for clarification of grammar points or vocabulary use, the L1 can be a very valuable resource. Non-native speaker teachers who share their L1 with their students are at an advantage here (e.g. Atkinson 1993: 9-19). However, non-natives may be easily tempted to overuse L1 (see Chapter 7.3.6 and Appendix 2: Q12 and Q13).

The DM continues to attract interest and enthusiasm because it focuses on the spoken interaction. It teaches both speaking and listening skills, and specifically the *interactive type of listening* (see Chapters 1.3, 2.7 and 4.5), mainly by exploiting question-and-answer techniques and second language narratives (Stern 1983: 458). Overall, it may be appropriate under specific circumstances, especially when teaching multilingual classes or 'one-to-one' students, mainly at high proficiency levels, who prefer to develop fluency and/or to be taught by native speaker teachers.

To conclude, we can consider the DM one of the earliest methods that really focuses on the teaching of listening. Thanks to its emphasis on spoken language, the DM was able to effectively integrate listening and speaking (see Chapter 2.10) by encouraging students to take part in the *two-way communication process*, i.e. in something which was later termed '*interactive listening*' (see Chapter 4.5).

3.3.4 The Audio-Lingual Method (ALM)

Also known as the *Aural-Oral* method, the Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) is associated with behaviourist psychology (e.g. B.F. Skinner: *Verbal Behaviour,* 1957), the anthropological movement, and American structural linguistics in the first half of the 20th century (e.g.

Bloomsfield). It influenced FLT especially in the 1940s - 1960s, when the focus on speech was boosted (e.g. Howatt and Widdowson 2004). Leonard Bloomsfield (1942, cited in Rost 2002: 115) declared that 'one learns to understand and speak a language primarily by hearing and imitating native speakers'.

The method derives from the intensive training in spoken languages given to the American military personnel during WWII (Army Specialised Training Program – ASTP, established in 1942) and was widely used, especially in the 1950s and 1960s. In those days, the intensive training proved to be very successful in small classes of highly motivated adults taught by native speaker teachers. The method began to fall from favour in the late 1960s. (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 50-54)

The emphasis is on everyday spoken conversation and natural pronunciation. Language is seen as a process of habit formation: structural patterns in dialogues are imitated and drilled until the student's responses become automatic. For this purpose, the *language laboratory* is used extensively (Stern 1992: 7; Rost 2002: 116; Howatt and Widdowson 2004: 318). There is a special focus on structural contrasts between L1 and L2 (contrastive analysis, see Chapter 3.3.1), but little discussion of grammatical rules (Crystal 1997: 376-378; Mothejzíková 1988: 222-223; Spolsky 1989: 117-118).

Language skills are taught in the so called *reception/production order* (1. listening, 2. speaking, 3. reading, and 4. writing, see Chapter 3.3.2), but listening comprehension still does not receive the amount of attention in the classroom that it deserves. Generally, listening is treated as almost incidental to the goal of speaking. Students listen to dialogue sentences and repeat them after the teacher (Postovsky 1974: 230). Later, they respond to oral cues in the pattern drills and perhaps even to questions that the teacher has prepared (Chastain 1976: 284). Students are then taught to read and write what they have already learned to say; more complex reading and writing tasks are introduced at more advanced stages (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 64-65).

Listening was not handled effectively enough mainly because there was a limited focus on listening for comprehension (see Chapter 2.11). A major criticism of the ALM listening can be found in Rost (1990: 27). He points out that listening was viewed as a problem of aural recognition of linguistic structures, which we earlier termed 'listening for perception' (see Chapter 1.3). Exercises to develop listening ability consisted of various types of identification and discrimination, with verbatim reproduction (e.g. Celce-Murcia and McIntosh 1979; Brown 1985; Rixon 1986: 8). A typical test of aural recognition was dictation. The teachers

focused on bottom-up processing and thus neglected the students' potential to use 'schemata' (see Chapter 5).

First it was assumed that the method would lead to the development of a high degree of listening and speaking skills, but the practical results fell short of expectations. Students in the standard adult classroom became bored of the dull imitation and were not equipped to function in real-life situations when they encountered language different from the dialogues learned by heart. Nowadays, learners wish for a wider range of linguistic experience and more creative work in the language classroom (see Chapter 7.2 and Appendix 2), and thus the ALM is not popular today. (Crystal 1997: 379)

In summary, even though the ALM focused on oral communication, it was criticized as drill-based or repetition-based methodology (e.g. Richards 2009: 2) because students were unable to transfer the skills acquired in the classroom to real communication and many found their language study boring and unsatisfying.

3.3.5 Technological innovations and the Audio-Visual Method (AVM)

In the 1950s – 1980s, the field grew large and diverse as there were many 'competing schools of thought' (Howatt and Widdowson 2004: 250). By the 1980s the main stream in FLT started to be represented mainly by CLT (see Chapter 3.5.1). Nevertheless, a lot of methods and approaches developed outside of mainstream language teaching before or at the same time as CLT was formed, or represented an application in FLT of educational principles developed elsewhere (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 15).

In 1950 – 1965 FLT was influenced by two major technological innovations which gave rise to the idea of the Audio-Visual Method (AVM), which promoted listening. Firstly, there was the invention of the magnetic tape recorder, whose mass production led to the concept of the language laboratory (see Chapter 3.3.4), and secondly, there was the filmstrip projector, which enabled teachers to aid student-listeners with *visual cues* (see Chapter 4.4.4).

The AVM is sometimes called the 'Audiovisual and Structuro-Global Method', 'Global Structure Audio-Visual Method', or in French, the Structuro-Globale Audio-Visuelle (SGAV). It was developed in France in the 1950s and its main proponents were Guberina and Rivenc (Stern 1983: 466; Blanchet 2000; Choděra 2006: 117). The most famous course is 'Voix et images de France', designed for teaching adults (CREDIF 1961).

The AVM stressed the situational context of listening texts and made use of visual support via media available in those days. Situations or short stories like 'At the baker's' or 'An evening

out' were depicted in a sequence of pictures displayed on a filmstrip (projected on to a screen), while a dialogue linked to the story was being played on a tape recorder. Thus, the visual image and spoken utterance complement each other. The dialogue is memorized by frequent replays. (Stern 1983: 467)

Later, the pictures found their way to books, e.g. the famous beginner's course 'First Things First' by L.G. Alexander (the first volume of *New Concept English,* 1967) uses this format. However, too much was expected from the pictures and more practice in listening skills was needed.

Furthermore, in the 'hectic' era of the 1960s, the AVM had rivals in the form of new media, mainly TV and the language laboratory (Howatt and Widdowson 2004: 316-317). The early language laboratory unfortunately promoted drill-based learning, so it might have been considered 'a step back in comparison with the 1950s pattern practice'. Later, the laboratory found its right place – as a library resource for listening comprehension activities. (Howatt and Widdowson 2004: 245-249)

In sum, the AVM came 'too early' and used too much of the ALM 'pattern practice' and drilling (see Chapter 3.3.4) to be able to survive. However, it was a modern attempt to exploit technology for the benefit of FLT and to teach language from the early stages of learning as 'meaningful spoken communication' in context (Stern 1983: 468). Today the method is used only in some intensive courses for adults (Choděra 2006: 117).

3.4 'Listening as acquisition' and the main FLT approaches and methods

So far we have been dealing with listening as comprehension and now we turn to another crucial role proposed for listening in TEFL, its role in facilitating FL acquisition and learning (see Chapter 3.5.2 for a further discussion of these terms).

FL learning based on listening as acquisition is sometimes called '*listening-first*' or '*listening-based language learning***'** (Rost 1990: 27-28) or '*comprehension-based language learning***'** (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 179). These terms depict the fact that some authors have proposed entire pedagogical systems based on initial listening, in which every FL lesson is based on listening and can be thus called a 'listening lesson' (see Chapter 1.3). The proponents of such methods often assumed that L2 learning is very similar to L1 acquisition. While these methodologies were popular in their time, 'research has not consistently borne out their claims' (Rost 2002: 116). In Chapters 3.4.1, 3.4.2 and 3.5.2 we will see how these

ideas developed from J. Asher, to V. Postovsky and to S. Krashen in the second half of the 20th century.

3.4.1 Total Physical Response (TPR)

Total Physical Response (TPR) was developed by a professor of psychology, J. Asher, in the USA in the late 1960s (Asher 1969). The name 'TPR' derives from the emphasis on the actions that learners have to make, as they are given simple commands.

TPR can, in fact, be considered the first method to focus on the teaching of listening in our current understanding. For the first time in the history of FLT, this method stresses the importance of aural comprehension as an exclusive aim in the early months of learning (A1 level according to CEFR). It attempts to teach a FL through physical activity. The techniques were not new – already Francois Gouin in the 19th century and Harold Palmer in the 1920s had emphasized concentration on direct commands (Howatt and Widdowson 2004) – but the focus on listening as the critical element was a new approach to FL learning, especially at the beginning stages of learning (Postovsky 1974: 230; Rost 1990: 28).

The method reflects the grammar based view of language and behaviourist psychology of the 1950s - 1960s (see Chapter 3.3.4). The teacher provides highly contextualized series of commands (using imperative forms of verbs, e.g.: '*Stand up'*, '*Turn around*', etc). The students are required to respond physically to the commands based on the stimulus-response learning theory. More advanced language is introduced by building up chains of actions, using either spoken or written commands. (Crystal 1997: 379)

Adult L2 learning is seen as a parallel process to child L1 acquisition. Children develop listening competence before the ability to speak. Similarly, it is assumed that once adults have established a foundation in L2 listening comprehension, their L2 speech 'evolves naturally and effortlessly out of it' (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 74). Based on this assumption, conversational dialogues are delayed until after approximately 120 hours of instruction, which in our teaching context usually represents one and sometimes even two years of study at a language school. Therefore, this approach would not be appropriate for our adult students. In addition, while there are similarities in L1 acquisition and L2 learning, we should not exaggerate them (Birdsong 2006: 9).

There is a concern for the role of affective domain (emotional factors in language learning). TPR is directed to right-brain learning, whereas most second language teaching methods until then were directed to left-brain learning. Right-hemisphere activities (motor movement) must

occur before the left hemisphere can process language for production. This way, it is believed, adult language learning will be 'stress-free' and will not cause anxiety (see also Chapter 2.5). (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 75)

The method may be effective with young learners, but it is not appropriate for adult EFL students in our teaching context these days. Although it is widely accepted that adults should have larger passive knowledge of vocabulary and grammar than their active knowledge, they want to activate the passive knowledge by speaking as soon as possible, even in the early stages of learning, i.e. at A1-A2 levels (see Chapter 6.1), and most of them are not willing 'to stay silent' for several years of study at a language school (see the previous paragraph). As our students repeatedly expressed that they want to speak as soon as possible, we definitely do not have to postpone speaking until they 'feel ready', and this study results further confirm this approach (see Chapters 7.1 and 7.2).

In addition, the students highly value *variety* as the 'spice' of the classroom (see Chapter 7.3.4), and therefore they may find the action-based drills of TPR quite boring (if most of the FL lesson is occupied by drilling and commands). In addition, they stated that while communicative drills are very useful for them, they do not like physical movement around the classroom because they are tired from their jobs. They also prefer to use a textbook for their FL study from the early stages of learning. (Ždímalová 2009a)

While TPR gained some popularity in the 1970s and 1980s, Asher himself stressed that TPR should be used in combination with other methods and techniques. Nowadays, practitioners continue to use TPR as a useful set of techniques compatible with other approaches to FLT. (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 79)

3.4.2 The Comprehension Approach

Also known as the 'delayed oral practice', this approach was proposed by Valerian A. Postovsky (1974), one of Asher's colleagues, and further developed by Nord and Winitz (1981). The advocates of the Comprehension Approach suggest that listening comprehension should be the focal methodology in FLT, particularly at the initial stages of learning (Dunkel 1986: 99).

They also assume that it is far easier for FL students to achieve competence in recognizing language (listening and reading) than in producing it (speaking and writing). A basic receptive competence is established, and this is used as a foundation for work involving productive skills (Crystal 1997: 379).

Similarly, grammar is taught inductively and language inputs increase in grammatical progression. Postovsky (1974) further suggests vast amounts of semantic decoding practice combined with simple selection tasks.

As the Comprehension Approach did not reach the same amount of popularity as TPR or the Natural Approach (see Chapter 3.5.2) some authors do not mention the approach at all (e.g. Richards and Rodgers 2001; Lynch 2009), whereas others consider it very useful for directing our attention to listening as acquisition (e.g. Dunkel 1986; Long 1989; Crystal 1997; Rost 2002: 116). Listening as acquisition could start to fully develop in communicative approaches (see the following Chapter 3.5).

3.5 Communicative approaches since the 1970s

Listening started to be explicitly treated in FLT with the emergence of communicative methodologies at the end of the 1970s and throughout the 1980s. Thanks to many influences, e.g. van Ek's 'threshold syllabus', listening began to be viewed as an 'integral part of communicative competence' (Rost 2002: 116, see Chapter 3.5.1). Fluency and listening for meaning became the primary focus of listening instruction.

The most influential communicative methodology has been CLT, whose general principles are still widely accepted (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 151). The development of CLT marked the beginning of a paradigm shift within FLT (see Chapter 3.5.1).

Other communicative methodologies claim to be based on the CLT philosophy, but their practices are quite diverse. One of the earliest was Krashen's Natural Approach (see Chapter 3.5.2). Among the most recent versions of CLT we can include especially Task-Based Learning (TBL, see Chapter 3.5.3), Cooperative Language Learning and Content-Based Teaching (Richards and Rodgers 2001). We have added one of the most recent approaches, the Lexical Approach (see Chapter 3.5.4).

Many experts stated that the second half of the 20th century was an era of 'methodological pluralism', sometimes called 'post-behaviourist eclecticism' (e.g. Stern 1983: 482; Howatt and Widdowson 2004: 257). In 1999 Nunan wrote that we are now in a 'post-method era' (cited in Rost 2002: 118), in which teaching is not explained in terms of classification by prescribed methodologies any more. This view now prevails (e.g. Richards and Rodgers 2001: 247; Kumaravadivelu 2005: 161, see Chapter 3.6).

3.5.1 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

According to many authors (e.g. Richards and Rodgers 2001: 153; Rost 2002: 116; Howatt and Widdowson 2004: 250), the origins of CLT are associated with several key influences, mainly the classical work of N. Chomsky and D. Hymes, Situational Language Teaching in the 1960s in Britain, and functional and communicative syllabuses.

The prominent American linguist Naom Chomsky criticized structural linguistics of that time (Syntactic Structures, 1957) because it did not account for the creativity and uniqueness of sentences an individual can come up with. His criticism contributed to the fall of the ALM (see Chapter 3.3.4). In response to Chomsky's '*language competence*', Dell Hymes later proposed the notion of '*communicative competence*'. In his famous paper 'On communicative competence' (1966, 1971), Hymes stated that our understanding of how language is used is more important than understanding of how language is structured (see also Hymes 1972 in Pride and Holmes 1972: 281; Rost 2002: 116; Howatt and Widdowson 2004: 253). Subsequently, in the 1950s - 1960s in Britain a major approach to TEFL was Situational Language Teaching, in which language was taught by practising basic structures in meaningful situation-based activities (Howatt and Widdowson 2004: 244). This approach seemed to be more successful than the ALM but its psychology was still rooted in behaviourism. Therefore, just as behaviourism started to be rejected in psychology (Sternberg 2009, see Chapter 5), structural linguistics and the ALM were falling out of favour in the US in the mid-1960s (see Chapter 3.3.4), and Situational Language Teaching also received a lot of criticism for similar reasons.

British applied linguists of that time, e.g. Candlin, Widdowson (1972), Brumfit and Johnson (1979), Corder (1981), Johnson and Morrow (1981), emphasised another fundamental dimension of language – its functional and communicative potential. They drew on the work of British functional linguists (e.g. Firth and Halliday), American work in sociolinguistics (e.g. Hymes, Gumperz, Labov), and on philosophy of language (Wittgenstein 1953, in Czech 1993, Austin and Searle, so called 'speech act theory' of the 1960s). (Cook 1989; Howatt and Widdowson 2004)

The focus on communicative language functions was not a new concept. 'Functionalism' is often associated with the Prague School of Linguistics[6] (e.g. Betáková 2010: 12) where the

[6] The Prague School was a group of scholars, mainly of Czech and Russian origin, which held regular meetings during the 1920s-30s and published the Travaux de cercle linguistigue de Prague.

term ‘function’ in its narrow sense of ‘language function’ or ‘communicative function’ was coined between the wars (Fried 1972; Yalden 1987: 57-58; Howatt and Widdowson 2004: 328-329). ‘Functionalism’ of the 1970s also implied a much broader sense when discussing the functions of language in general terms, i.e. macrofunctions. Josef Vachek (1972: 14) from the Prague School states that the most outstanding macrofunction of language is ‘the communicative function, serving the needs and wants of the mutual understanding of individual members of the given community’ (cited in Yalden 1987: 57-58).

Since the mid-1970s the scope of CLT expanded also thanks to the efforts of the Council of Europe and its groups of experts who started to work on a unit-credit system for language teaching and prepared the main documents, e.g. ‘functional-communicative definition of language’ (Wilkins 1972), ‘Notional Syllabuses’ (Wilkins 1976), ‘threshold level’ specifications (van Ek and Alexander 1980), etc. The ideas were rapidly applied by syllabus designers and materials writers and started to spread worldwide. (Richards and Rodgers 2001)

CLT proponents state that CLT aims to develop primarily students’ communicative ability (Mothejzíková 1988: 43), now commonly termed ‘communicative competence’ (e.g. Choděra 2006: 75). In order to do that, CLT aims to ‘*develop procedures for the teaching of the four language skills that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication*’ (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 155, see Chapter 2.1.1).

Among the main features of CLT are usually included *learner-centredness*, promotion of pair/group work (e.g. Larsen-Freeman 2000, see also Chapters 4.6.5 and 7.3.5), problem-solving tasks, and a balanced focus on structural and functional aspects of the language (e.g. Littlewood 1981: 1; Finocchiaro and Brumfit 1983; Mothejzíková 1991: 9; Ur 1996; Scrivener 2011). The main role of the teacher is of a ‘facilitator’ who encourages students’ speaking and will control his or her own *Teacher Talking Time* (TTT). This will automatically result in *maximizing the Student Talking Time* (STT) in the classroom (Scrivener 1994: 14; Betáková 2010: 74).

The general principles of CLT still hold and are still relevant today (Richards 2006: 14). Many of these principles are also applied in the current form of listening instruction even though sometimes not to a large extent (Field 2008: 38-39). For our purposes, the most important principle is *mode of interaction* as CLT attempts to integrate speaking and listening in the listening session in order to maximize opportunities for natural L2 interaction among learners (see also Chapters 2.10, 4.6.5 and 7.3.5).

There are many variants of CLT around the world (e.g. Yalden 1987) and many authors find CLT quite eclectic (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 161). Howatt distinguishes between a 'strong' version of CLT, which he characterizes as 'using English to learn', and a 'weak' version of CLT, which can be characterized as 'learning to use' English (Howatt cited in Richards and Rodgers 2001: 155; Ellis 2003: 28).

According to many authors, the 'weak' version pays 'systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of the language' (Mothejzíková 1988: 43), and it is the mainstream language teaching nowadays. The 'strong' version, on the other hand, is dying out because of its strict criticism of such techniques as memorization/drilling, dictation, reading aloud, some of which are now coming back 'into fashion' (e.g. Harmer 2012 on drilling and Kerr 2012 on translation). Furthermore, the main role of the teacher and the use of error correction have recently started to be more emphasized than in the recent decades (Scrivener 2012, Underhill and Scrivener 2012: blog 'Demand High ELT').

To conclude, most experts agree that listening 'eventually earned its rightful place during the communicative language teaching era' (Vandergrift and Goh 2009: 395).

3.5.2 The Natural Approach

The Natural Approach is one of the earliest communicative approaches of the late 1970s. It was quite popular in the 1980s but then started to fade. It emphasizes the role of 'natural language acquisition' and underlines the parallels between the FL learning and L1 acquisition. Among other main features we can count a focus on affective domain in learning and on mastering vocabulary rather than grammatical rules. (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 178)

Its main proponent is the American linguist Stephen Krashen, who proposed an influential language acquisition theory based on the relationship between 'acquisition' and 'learning'. In his '*acquisition/learning hypothesis*' Krashen distinguishes two forces in FLT. '*Acquisition*', the major force, is a *subconscious*, natural process, and Krashen considers it the primary source behind FL fluency. The minor force, '*learning*', he sees as a conscious process that 'monitors' the performance of the speaker and the progress of language development in general. Students who worry too much about making a mistake are believed to be 'overusing' their 'monitor'. (Krashen 1981: 1-3; 1987: 10)

However, we cannot agree with Krashen's distinction. In this chapter, and throughout the dissertation, the words 'acquisition' and 'learning' are used in their original meaning, i.e. the term 'acquisition' in the sense of child's acquisition of L1 and the term 'learning' for L2

learning, not as Krashen (1981: 1-3; 1987: 10) uses them to distinguish between 'subconscious L2 acquisition' and 'conscious L2 learning'.

In our opinion, Krashen's use of 'learning' and 'acquisition' is misleading because in the 1960s the term 'language acquisition' originally meant the process of acquiring the L1, e.g. in Chomsky's Language Acquisition Device (LAD) in infants. (Chomsky stated that infants are born with an innate predisposition to acquire language.) The usefulness of the original distinction between the two terms was shown by Lambert in 1966 (cited in Corder 1981: 6-7). Our position is in agreement with Rost (2002: 116) and other critics of Krashen, e.g. Brumfit (1984), Rivers (1987), Spolsky (1989), and Crystal (1997), who state that research has not consistently confirmed Krashen's claims.

Also, many authors have argued that the way 'learning' and 'acquisition' interact is much more complex than Krashen had stated (e.g. Brumfit 1984: 44-47; Rivers 1987: 16) and that theories like this one are inevitably controversial because of our limited knowledge of the psychological processes involved in speech production (Crystal 1997: 376).

Consequently, different terms are now used to characterize the different conditions for learning; the most appropriate and frequent are the terms *formal learning* (i.e. in the language classroom) versus *informal learning* (outside the classroom) or *explicit* learning versus *implicit* learning (Ritchie and Bhatia 2009: 674-676).

For our purposes, the most interesting of Krashen's claims is his 'comprehensible input hypothesis' (1987: 20-30), which emphasizes exposure to the FL, or so called '*comprehensible input'*. Krashen claims that people acquire language best by understanding input that is slightly beyond their current level of competence. Comprehension is further aided by situational and contextual clues, and by extralinguistic information and knowledge of the world (see Chapter 5). Krashen suggests that FL teachers should try to replicate the conditions which occur in 'L1 acquisition'. The parallel is drawn between the teacher input to student, so called '*teacherese*', and that from mother or caretaker to child, so called '*motherese*' or '*parentese*'. (Crystal 1997: 376; Long 1983)

Thus the main aim is for students to understand basic communication in informal settings. They are allowed to use their L1 in their responses while their teacher attempts to develop their L2 comprehension (Crystal 1997: 379). In many of these features we can see parallels with its immediate predecessors, TPR and the Comprehension Approach (see Chapter 3.4).

Based on his assumptions, Krashen draws a conclusion that the ability to speak fluently cannot be taught directly, but it 'emerges' independently in time after the learner has built up

linguistic competence by understanding input (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 182). The prolonged listening period and postponed speaking are not appropriate to our learners for the same reasons as in the case of the Comprehension Approach (see Chapter 3.4.2). Therefore, the Natural Approach is not relevant to our learners' needs (see Chapter 7.2).

The Natural Approach has received a lot of criticism. First of all, the 'comprehensible input hypothesis' has never been empirically confirmed (Rost 2002: 93). Even though Krashen (1987: 9) points out that he builds on the newly developing science of second language acquisition (SLA), he does not admit that many of his ideas are far from original. The issue of 'comprehensible input' may remind us of Vygotsky's important educational principle of proximal development (Vygotsky 1978; Rost 2002: 93), and the attitude to error correction is very similar to Corder's classic statement that an error is 'evidence of the learner's linguistic development at that moment' (Corder 1981: 8).

In addition, some critics claim that not much attention was given to a theory of language or even that the approach may be seen as 'mastery of structures by stages' similar to the ALM (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 180). However, it is fair to point out that the proponents of the Natural Approach viewed language as a vehicle for communicating meanings and messages, emphasized the primacy of meaning over the form (see Chapter 2.6), and stressed the importance of vocabulary in FLT. In this respect, the Natural Approach is quite similar to other communicative approaches of the second half of the 20th century, namely CLT and TBL (see Chapters 3.5.1 and 3.5.3), and it has some common ground with the Lexical Approach (see Chapters 3.5.4).

3.5.3 Task-Based Learning (TBL)

Task-Based Learning (TBL) is one of the most recent communicative approaches and it seems to be one of the current trends (Willis and Willis 1996; 2013; Ellis 2003; Oxford 2006; Ždímalová 2012c). However, its roots go back to the 1980s Bangalore Project, India. The father of the project, N.S. Prabhu (1987), rejected the traditional grammar syllabus and based his project on real-life tasks. He created so called 'task-based syllabus' (Nunan 1988b; Ellis 2003; Oxford 2006).

The term '*task*' has been defined in ELT in various ways as TBL proponents have commented on TBL from different angles, e.g. Prabhu (1987), J. Willis (1996a), Skehan (1998), and Ellis (2003). The most well-known is the original definition by Prabhu, who defines a task as an 'activity that requires learners to arrive at an outcome from given information through some

process of thought, and which allows teachers to control and regulate that process' (1987: 17). This non-linguistic outcome, e.g. looking up departure times in a timetable, distinguishes tasks from most classroom language exercises/activities (Skehan 1998: 268). Appropriate tasks are believed to provide both the input and output processing necessary for language acquisition/learning (see below).

An influential framework for TBL was developed by Jane Willis (1996a), one of the famous proponents of TBL. In the framework, she criticizes the commonly used Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) paradigm, which started to be used in Situational Language Teaching in the 1960s (Stern 1983; Hinkel 2010b), and offers an alternative in the form of three stages of a TBL lesson: 1. pre-task, 2. task cycle, and 3. language focus (Willis 1996a: 38; 1996b: 56-58).

For our purposes it is interesting to mention that listening is used in TBL primarily as a model: students listen to native speakers doing the same task. Teachers can choose whether to play such a listening directly before the task cycle, i.e. between stages 1 and 2 (for students to listen to the model first), or after the task cycle between stages 2 and 3 (for students to compare their own production with the model they listen to). (Willis 1996a)

TBL is motivated mainly by a theory of language learning that is based on the research in SLA at the time (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 226; Willis 1996b: 52; Skehan 1998). For example, SLA researchers found out that language items are acquired in a different order from the order in which they have been traditionally taught, and from what linguists originally expected. Hence, TBL recognises that instruction helps in language learning, but that instructed learners make progress 'in their own way, following their own developmental sequence' (Skehan 1996b: 19).

In TBL, primary attention is paid to meaning. It is assumed that learners learn much better through taking part in meaning-oriented interactions rather than in form-focused activities (Willis 1996b: 55). TBL is 'not concerned with language display', and therefore exposure to 'chunks of language' should precede any language focus (Skehan 1996b: 18; Skehan 1998: 98).

In common with the Natural Approach, a wide exposure to language is the 'best' way of ensuring that students will acquire the language effectively. Students are exposed to a whole range of lexical and grammatical structures, often through authentic materials (reading and listening texts). However, in contrast to the Natural Approach, students are exposed to

language mainly through their own personalised production. Conversation is the keystone of language learning. (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 228)

It is assumed that, even at the early stages of learning, students are able to produce language and that negotiation of meaning aids their output, i.e. what they say. In contrast to Krashen's 'comprehensible input hypothesis' Swain proposed her 'comprehensible output hypothesis' (1985 cited in Rost 2002: 94). Learners, while focusing on 'task', automatically use strategies to negotiate meaning (Richards 2002: 155). In the task cycle, learners work in groups and are 'free to use whatever language resources they have' without teacher's corrections (Willis 1996a: 11). Based on their free production, i.e. composing new utterances rather than comprehending new utterances, learners make inferences, hypotheses, and generalisations about the language system as a whole (Swain 2000: 97).

On the other hand, contrary to the previous assumptions, Richards (2002: 155) argues that several researchers in the 1990s found 'little evidence for negotiated interaction and modified utterances'. He concludes that, contrary to SLA theorising, learners do not employ negotiating for meaning 'when they encounter gaps in their understanding'.

The 'language focus' comes at the end of the lesson. On the basis of learners' task performance rather than a predetermined syllabus, the teacher identifies whatever needs the learners may have, i.e. concerning grammar, lexis, discourse, etc. The language focus thus seems to be determined predominantly by the teacher's monitoring during the task cycle, which may pose a risk especially for less experienced teachers or when teaching lower levels (Ždímalová 2012c).

Even though experts seem to agree that TBL leads to greater fluency and the capacity to solve communication problems (e.g. Skehan 1998: 97), fluency may be developed at the expense of accuracy. Some critics point out that during fluency-based work in the classroom, communication is often 'marked by low levels of linguistic accuracy' (Richards 2002: 155).

As lower-proficiency levels need more focus on accuracy (e.g. Byrne 1986) TBL seems to be more suitable for higher-proficiency levels. Even Jane Willis in her influential book (1996a) does not come up with any 'miraculous' activities for beginners, but her suggestions are very similar to the mainstream textbooks for A1 learners (Ždímalová 2012c).

Consequently, the teaching of grammar, or rather lack of it, is considered the most problematic issue (e.g. Thornbury 1999: 22). There is not much agreement on where to put the grammar focus and whether learners develop acceptable levels of grammatical proficiency through TBL if the grammar focus is postponed till the end of lesson. For example, Richards

(2002: 153) points out that grammar learning should be addressed at all stages of the lesson, i.e. 'prior to the task, during the task, and after the task'. However, if we present the (pre-determined) grammar in the beginning of the lesson, then we in fact use the ordinary PPP paradigm. Can such a lesson still be considered a TBL lesson? (Ždímalová 2012c)

Last but not least, TBL and the new paradigm suggested by Willis (1996a) have not influenced teaching materials for lower levels. Even though a few successful textbooks have been written for higher levels (e.g. New Cutting Edge Intermediate 2007), the majority of textbooks for A0-A2 students these days 'still' follow the traditional PPP model. At the same time, many popular textbooks use tasks, to use the currently *fashionable* term, but usually put them at the end of the lesson (production stage), e.g. the *New English File* series. Furthermore, some features of group work and length of the task cycle may pose difficulties when we apply TBL at lower proficiency levels (see Ždímalová 2012c for further details).

3.5.4 The Lexical Approach

The last and most recent approach we should discuss here is the Lexical Approach introduced by Michael Lewis in the 1990s. The Lexical Approach as presented by Lewis (1993; 1997) may in many of its features remind us of the Natural Approach mainly because of its emphasis on comprehensible input and vocabulary (see Chapter 3.5.2). In addition, it has some common ground with TBL (see Chapter 3.5.3), too, because it heavily criticizes the PPP paradigm and offers a new paradigm instead.

Firstly, the Lexical Approach offers a shift of emphasis from a predominantly grammar-based syllabus to a *lexical syllabus*. This means that words and word combinations are the building blocks of language learning. Lewis (1993: 133) claims:

> 'The basis of language is lexis. It has been, and remains, the central misunderstanding of language teaching to assume that grammar is the basis of language and that mastery of the grammatical system is a prerequisite for effective communication.'

The term '*lexis*', Lewis (1993: 193) states, is not just another word for 'vocabulary', but 'a much richer concept which we have not exploited in the past'.

In marked contrast to Chomsky (e.g. 1999), who emphasized the innate and rule-governed capacity of speakers to create and interpret sentences that are unique and have never been produced or heard previously (see Chomskian 'language competence' in Chapter 3.5.1 and LAD in Chapter 3.5.2), the Lexical Approach assumes that only a minority of spoken sentences are entirely novel and that 'prefabricated items' or 'lexical phrases' form a high proportion of fluent stretches of speech (Lewis 1993: 10-19).

Secondly, according to Lewis, since teaching grammatical structures still dominates in FLT accuracy is still practised at the expense of fluency (see Chapter 2.6), especially at lower proficiency levels:

> 'Despite the obvious fact that accuracy is a late-acquired feature of all language learning, it remains regrettably true that many teachers emphasize accuracy too early, and at the expense of fluency.' (1993: 20)

He therefore suggests turning our and learners' attention from grammatical accuracy to fluency (1997: 15):

> 'The essential idea is that fluency is based on the acquisition of a large store of fixed and semi-fixed prefabricated items, which are available as the foundation for any linguistic novelty and creativity.'

Lewis further assumes that the target language should be learned by memorization of the aforementioned 'prefabricated items' (also by various authors referred to as e.g. prefabricated patterns, gambits, speech formulae), which he terms '*chunks*' of language (1993: 121). These chunks include e.g. collocations (e.g. 'rancid butter'), fixed and semi-fixed expressions (e.g. 'it's not my fault'), and idioms (e.g. 'red-carpet treatment').

However, the idea to promote the role of lexis in FLT is not new. Already the advent of CLT set the stage for a new recognition of the meaning-making potential of lexis (see Chapter 3.5.1), which had its influence on textbook writers. This can be demonstrated by Swan and Walter's claim: 'Vocabulary acquisition is the largest and most important task facing the language learner' (Cambridge English Course, 1984: vii).

Since the 1980s, linguistic theory has also recognized a more central role of vocabulary and has paid greater attention to the lexicon (e.g. Bauer 1983; McCarthy 1990; 1991; Kelly 1991; Bonk 2000; Thornbury 2002; Plag 2003). Due to this change of emphasis, some textbooks started to apply lexical syllabus based on corpus linguistics. (Corpus linguistics provides huge classroom accessible databases for lexically based inquiry and instruction, focused on collocations of lexical items and multiple word units, Richards and Rodgers 2001). One of the first courses was the Collins COBUILD English Course, in which word frequency strictly determines the content of the course. The course authors, Jane and Dave Willis (1988), state that they chose the 700 most frequent English words, which, incidentally, constitute 70% of English text, as the content of Level I of their course. Unfortunately, the course was not pedagogically successful. (Richards and Rodgers 2001)

Furthermore, Lewis shares Krashen's views of the necessity of comprehensible input and the importance of listening. He suggests that teacher talk is a major source of learner input, and

this has consequences for the roles of teachers and learners in the classroom (see Chapter 3.5.2). Lewis (1993: 10) explains that 'students' general language abilities develop most rapidly in the early stages if the approach is largely based on controlled listening'. He describes the second methodological principle of the Lexical Approach (1993: 193) as follows:

> 'Listening, listening and more listening. In most classrooms abroad, the teacher is the best source of listening for students. With caution, increase teacher talking time.'

His advice to *increase Teacher Talking Time* (TTT) is in fact in agreement with the proponents of both TPR (see Chapter 3.4.1) and Comprehension Approach (see Chapter 3.4.2), but in sharp contrast to CLT, which advises teachers to *reduce* TTT (see Chapter 3.5.1).

Like Krashen, Lewis, too, assumes that 'it is exposure to enough suitable input, not formal teaching, which is the key to increasing the learner's lexicon' (1997: 197). Consequently, he is less concerned than CLT with students' production of 'output' (1997: 49). In this respect the Lexical Approach differs from both CLT and TBL and is not appropriate for our students (see the conclusion below).

In addition, Lewis (1993: vii) rejects the PPP paradigm in favour of a paradigm based on the Observe-Hypothesize-Experiment cycle. He thinks that not enough is known about language and language learning for teachers to present grammatical rules to students. He proposes that teachers should provide students with authentic texts in order for them to notice the lexical chunks and then hypothesize and experiment with the language. Teachers should make use of computers to analyse text data, and of appropriate software to present concordance lines to the learner that illustrate the contexts of use of words. Classroom procedures involve use of activities that draw students' attention to lexical chunks and seek to enhance their retention and use (e.g. 1997: 108).

Some critics of the Lexical Approach point out that, in language learning, two systems actually co-exist: 'a formulaic, exemplar-based one, and a rule-based analytic one' (e.g. Skehan 1998: 288; Bowen and Marks 1994; Williams and Burden 1997; Boers *et al*. 2006; Lightbrown and Spada 2007). Other critics conclude that the Lexical Approach lacks full characterization of an approach or method (e.g. Richards and Rodgers 2001; Harwood 2002) since it lacks a coherent theory of learning and 'its theory of language is not fully enough elaborated' to form syllabus specifications. (Thornbury 1998: 8)

In conclusion, Thornbury characterizes the Lexical Approach as a 'work in progress':

> ‘More first-hand accounts are needed from learners and teachers as to how such an approach is being managed and evaluated; more lexically targeted materials need to be written, published, and trialled; and more research needs to be undertaken, particularly with regard to the part memory plays in second language learning, and whether (and under what conditions) memorised language becomes analysed language.’ (1998: 13)

Even though our students may be interested in the lexical side of this approach, the suggested division of the teachers’ and students’ roles is not in agreement with the students’ preferences regarding the STT and mode of interaction as the students indicated that they want to improve mainly speaking (see Chapters 7.2 and 3.5.1).

3.6 The post-method era: Critical review of FLT approaches and methods

From the survey of approaches and methods in Chapter 3 we can see that FLT in the past 100-130 years has been characterized by a search for the ‘best method’. Good teaching was regarded as the correct use of the method/approach and its prescribed principles and techniques. (Stern 1992: 6-7)

The same is true of the search for the best method to teach oral skills communicatively, which, as we have shown, started during the major paradigm shift in FLT in the 1970s when listening started to be newly considered as a tool for L2 learning and acquisition (see Chapters 3.4 and 3.5), the most classic example being the Natural Approach (see Chapter 3.5.2). It was hoped that ‘the new, modern or more scientific’ method or approach would bring better results than the previous methods and approaches did (Kumaravadivelu 2005: 164). And, as we have seen, new ‘breakthroughs’ continue to be announced (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 244), such as TBL and the Lexical Approach in the 1990s (see Chapters 3.5.3 and 3.5.4).

However, many experts claim that the ‘methodological pluralism’ or ‘eclecticism’ was characteristic especially for the 20th century and that we are now in a ‘post-method’ era (e.g. Stern 1983: 482; Howatt and Widdowson 2004: 257). Most of the authors state that the problem with methods/approaches was that they were deemed to be universally applicable (e.g. Prabhu 1990: 161; Nunan 1999, cited in Rost 2002: 118; Brown 2006). The ‘break with method’ concept started to be considered already in the 1970s (Stern 1992: 7), but since the beginning of the 1990s many authors have claimed that the concept of the method had lost its significance and they started to speak about ‘the death of methods’ (Allwright 1991; Kumaravadivelu 2005: 168).

To our knowledge, two comprehensive frameworks for post-method pedagogy have been proposed, namely by Stern (1992) and by Kumaravadivelu (2005). They both attempt to ‘do

justice to different aspects and variations of instruction in a variety of circumstances' (Stern 1992: 277, see also Chapter 4.6.6) and they both reject the rigidities associated with the concept of method, and look beyond (Kumaravadivelu 2005: 193). They have several principles in common.

It is assumed that teaching is now explained in terms of *good practices* for teaching a specific group of learners under specific conditions, not in terms of classification by prescribed methodologies (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 247; Kumaravadivelu 2005: 161). As there is no all-purpose method, it is recommended that we should carefully consider the context in which teaching and learning occurs (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 248), which we attempt to do in our present study (see Chapter 4.6). Kumaravadivelu (1994) further argues that teachers in the 'post-method condition' need to develop into 'strategic thinkers', i.e. to be able to describe and analyse interactions among learners, and to reflect on the analysis in order to facilitate learning and maximize the learners' learning opportunities (cited in Rost 2002: 118).

The second main assumption is that teachers should be creative and acknowledge that learners bring *different preferences* and *different learning styles* to the learning process (e.g. Nunan 1988a; 1989; Mareš 1998). Hence, teaching methods and principles should be flexible and *adaptive to student needs and interests* (see Chapters 1.4, 7.2 and 7.3.4), while leaving space for the teacher's own creativity and personal teaching style. (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 247)

Unfortunately, neither Stern's, nor Kumaravadivelu's frameworks have been widely accepted, and the major problem remains: Who decides what 'good practices' are?

3.7 Conclusion to approaches and methods

As noted in Chapter 1.2, we have to keep in mind the fact that in the Czech Republic many adult learners stay at lower-proficiency levels for several years of their L2 study (see also Chapter 6.1.1). Having identified our A1-B1 learners' needs (see Chapter 6.1.1), which were confirmed by the 2012 survey (see Chapter 7.2 and Appendix 2: Q6 and Q7), we have been looking for an approach/method that would enable our students to focus on L2 speaking and L2 listening at the same time at the lower-proficiency stages of their formal study in a general language course (i.e. integrated skills course).

With our present knowledge we can conclude that only CLT is suitable for our purposes because it is in complete accord with our A1-B1 adult students' main language needs (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 247; Field 2008: 4; Etchegoyen Rosolová 2012, see Chapter

3.6). This is also in agreement with many experts for whom CLT continues to be considered the most plausible basis for FLT today (e.g. Richards 2006), even though we acknowledge that CLT includes very general principles that can be applied in a variety of ways (see Chapter 3.5.1).

Chapter 3 focused on general FLT approaches and methods and on the historical context of the development of listening instruction in the classical FLT methodology. More concrete and recent developments in listening instruction within the current communicative methodology, including students' preferences and perceptions in question, are dealt with in the following chapters.

4 CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS IN L2 LISTENING INSTRUCTION AND THE PRE-LISTENING STAGE

Listening research has undergone numerous changes in the past 30-35 years since the advent of CLT -- the approach we have chosen as the most relevant for our learners (see Chapters 3.5.1 and 3.7). According to Field (2008: 23-25), there have been three major changes in the face of listening instruction. Firstly, there has been a shift in perspective towards *communication* and towards *the four language skills* (see Chapter 2.1), which resulted in the listening component becoming an essential ingredient of any general language course (see Chapter 4.1 and also Chapter 3.5).

Secondly, there has been a tendency to relate the nature of listening practised in the classroom to *real-life listening*, which has been reflected in listening materials (see Chapters 4.2, 4.4 and also 2.11). Consequently, teachers have started to use more authentic listening, provide contextual background for listeners within the pre-listening stage, and help learners to listen selectively and infer the meaning of new words from the context (see also Chapter 5).

Thirdly, we have become aware of the importance of the pre-listening stage that provides *motivation* and a focus on listening comprehension questions (see Chapters 4.3 and 4.4). The listener is encouraged to develop expectations as to what will be heard in the listening text, and then to check them against what is actually said. By *pre-setting* tasks and comprehension questions (so called 'question preview', see Chapter 4.2) we ensure that our learners are clear about the *listening purpose* and will not have to rely too heavily on memory (see Chapter 4.4.3).

The research has brought many new insights for listening instruction, but some of them are not always exploited in classroom practice today, and some of the research results have been inconclusive (see Chapters 1.4 and 4.6).

The purpose of Chapters 4 and 5 is to present the current developments in L2 listening instruction research and their implications for the classroom. By doing so, the scene will be set for the following empirical part of the dissertation. Chapter 4.6 attempts to search for a conceptual framework for listening instruction based on current theoretical, empirical, and pedagogical insights, and thus summarise our assumptions before focusing on the dissertation research itself. Chapter 5 examines psychological assumptions regarding pre-listening.

Specific attention is given to schema theory and interactive approaches to listening, examining research which argues that listening comprehension is a combination of identification (i.e. perception/recognition) and interpretation skills. In Chapter 5.5, specific implications are drawn for the pre-listening stage and pre-listening techniques considered by the dissertation project.

4.1 Early listening research and listening instruction at the advent of CLT

As we have seen in Chapter 3, listening in FLT was taken for granted for a very long time. So it should come as no surprise that L1 listening comprehension itself was made the subject of thematic research as late as in the middle of the 20th century.

The first significant attempt to study the process of listening comprehension was made by Nichols in 1948. Nichols started to study factors in L1 listening comprehension that determined successful listening. He concluded that retention of information presented orally was related to intelligence, ability to discern organizational elements, and size of *vocabulary*. In other words, more information was retained by intelligent persons, by those who understood discourse organization, and by those with a large vocabulary than those with a smaller vocabulary. The importance of lexical knowledge for listening comprehension is now widely accepted and our students are aware of the importance too (see Chapters 1.4, 4.3.1, 5.5, 6.1.1, 7.1.2, 7.2.2 and 7.5). (Bostrom 1990: 3)

Dunkel (1986: 105) reminds us of another influential area, the research into children's L1 acquisition and language development in the 1970s, which showed that listening comprehension plays a key role in the language acquisition process (see also Chapters 3.4 and 3.5). Consequently, the L2 listening skill in its own right started to be researched with the advent of CLT (Whitney 1999: 639).

Most experts associate the beginning of the modern form of L2 listening instruction primarily with the paradigm shift towards communication in FLT in the 1970s-1980s (see Chapter 3.5), when listening instruction started to focus primarily on listening for *meaning* (e.g. Rost 2002: 116). According to Field (2008: 13), listening practice already featured 'quite regularly' in language schools' programmes in Britain from the late 1960s onwards. One of the first listening courses was written by Abbs, Cook and Underwood and came out in 1968. Generally, it can be concluded that the importance of L2 listening skills as an integral part of communication was finally recognised and established in the late 1970s (e.g. Rubin 1994: 199).

The relatively late beginning of L2 listening research is also reflected in the history of testing L2 listening comprehension. According to Spolsky (1990), the 'first-ever second language listening test' was the Barnard-Yale Aural test, developed by Brooks in the early 1950s. Field (2008: 13) asserts: '…it is sobering to reflect that it was only from 1970 that a listening component featured in the Cambridge First Certificate exam, and that until 1984 its listening texts consisted of passages of written prose which were read aloud.'

At the beginning, listening research and instruction were based mainly on parallels found in *reading research* (e.g. Lund 1991: 196), which was already established in the 1920s (Stern 1983: 101). As a result, authors who mention pre-listening often draw on authors who comment on pre-reading (e.g. Berne 1995 draws on Hudson 1982 and on Taglieber *et al* 1988; Field 1998; 2008 draws on Stanovich 1980, see Chapter 1.4). Therefore, it is not surprising that the early *listening session format* was very similar to the reading session format of that time and it reflected the 'structuralist' thinking of the time (Field 2008: 14).

Since the advent of CLT the listening session has consisted of three distinct stages or phases: *pre-listening*, *while-listening* and *post-listening* (e.g. Field 1998: 245 cited in Richards 2005: 87, see also Chapter 4.3). The pre-listening stage was supposed to prepare students for the listening passage by *pre-teaching the 'unknown' or 'new' vocabulary items* that students were about to encounter in the while-listening stage 'to ensure maximum understanding' (see also Chapter 1.4). In the while-listening stage, extensive listening was followed by general questions on context and intensive listening was followed by detailed comprehension questions (see also Chapters 4.3.1 and 4.3.2). In post-listening, teachers usually checked the answers to comprehension questions and focused on the language of the passage (see also Chapter 4.3.3). The purpose of the post-listening stage was to analyse language structures and practise the new vocabulary. In the so called 'paused play' (a type of listening for perception), students listened to individual sentences and repeated them (for more details on listening for perception, see Chapters 1.3, 4.3.2 and 5.4). (Field 2008: 13-14)

4.2 Published listening comprehension materials and principles of listening instruction

Next, let us clarify how the paradigm shift (see Chapter 4.1) was reflected in listening comprehension materials. In the 1960s, L2 listening was mainly used to introduce new grammar and lexis through model dialogues (Field 2008: 13). One of the most popular and successful teaching materials of the 1960s was a series of general English textbooks called

New Concept English by L.G. Alexander (see also Chapters 3.1 and 3.3.5), which presented materials and asked students to follow the listening text in their textbooks (Alexander 1967: xviii). Even though Alexander's approach was extremely popular in Europe, including Czechoslovakia under the communist regime, the skills were, nevertheless, viewed 'as sources of new language, rather than as processes to be developed in their own right' (Field 2008: 74).

New types of listening materials started to appear in the 1970s, however, their features still differed in several important aspects from current listening materials. The listening texts were quite long, fully scripted by the materials writers and read from the script. The listening sessions often tested students on their memory capacity (rather than comprehension), by applying a battery of *post-listening comprehension questions* (e.g. Richards 1983: 238; Scrivener 2011: 250). Students were not prepared for the listening passage prior to hearing it. Thanks to the influence of cognitive psychology, namely schema theory (see Chapter 5.1), the situation was about to improve quite soon (e.g. Richards 1983; Dunkel 1986).

The late 1970s and early 1980s finally saw a new generation of listening comprehension materials written by the most enlightened authors, mainly Underwood (e.g. 1975; 1976; 1979), Blundell and Stokes (e.g. 1981), and Lynch (1983; second ed. 2004). The textbooks were definitely ahead of their time because they were already very similar to listening materials we use at present in that they exposed students to recordings of people speaking in a number of everyday situations and at a normal speed, even though they still focused on form more than similar materials do today. Whitney (1999: 641-642) comments:

> 'The impetus provided by the shift from structurally based pedagogy toward functionally based pedagogy gave listening a tremendous boost. Within a very short time, listening materials were freed from the constraints of having to be closely tied to the language forms of general language courses. Materials specifically devoted to listening began to appear (e.g. Underwood 1975; 1976; 1979). A listening component was felt to be an essential ingredient of any general language course, and in the 1980s, publishers began to produce 'skills series,' which typically consisted of separate materials for each of the four language skills, at four levels. Although many of the exercises in listening materials were still essentially traditional in design, the listening texts themselves were often fresh, original, interesting in their own right, and not spoken by professional actors. The situations depicted in materials resembled those of real life, and learners could identify with them.'

Furthermore, very useful listening comprehension guide books for teachers started to appear, namely Ur 1984, Anderson and Lynch 1988 and Underwood 1989. The goal of listening

instruction started to be associated with *fluency* (e.g. Underwood 1989: 17; Doff and Becket 1991), not just with accuracy (see also Chapter 2.6), and comprehending the main message was considered vitally important for effective listening in communicative situations. In contrast to the previous ALM practice in sound discrimination and repetition of individual sentences (see Chapter 3.3.4), students were now encouraged to listen *selectively*, i.e. to ignore redundant language and not to attempt to catch every word (Chastain 1976: 284; Blundell and Stokes 1981: viii; Ur 1984: 15). This was a shift of paradigm as students were taught to understand the overall message rather than listen for every detail.

Generally, the principles of listening instruction which were established in the 1980s are still followed today and are reflected in standard general textbook titles such as *New English File* (see also Chapter 5.5). The listening texts are not very long, not fully scripted and not always fully read from the script. The listening practice does not overload students' memory capacity because students are being prepared by pre-listening which often includes *question preview*, i.e. the listening comprehension questions are asked not after but before the listening is heard (see Chapters 1.4 and 4.3.1). Last but not least, testing listening is only a small part of listening instruction, which is otherwise focused on *process* rather than on product (e.g. Richards 1983; Anderson and Lynch 1988; Field 2008; Lynch 2009).

4.3 Three stages of the listening session and their development

Since the late 1970s the listening session has been divided into three stages, pre-listening, while-listening and post-listening, and this division still holds (e.g. Richards 1983: 237; Rixon 1986: 64; Dunkel 1986: 100; Field 2002: 245), even though now the division is not so rigid and it can be varied (Field 2008: 14). The following three sections briefly summarise the main functions of the three stages and their form at the early CLT era and compare it with what we consider the currently prevailing approach, while the pre-listening factors are further analysed in Chapter 4.4.

4.3.1 The pre-listening stage

The **pre-listening stage** is a preliminary stage which prepares students to achieve the most from the listening passage. It activates the learners' schemata (see Chapter 5.1) and sets a purpose for listening (e.g. Richards 1983: 234, see Chapter 4.4.3). The early CLT textbooks on listening, mentioned above (see Chapter 4.2), used this stage to set the scene, e.g. 'Phoning a garage', and to *pre-teach new lexis*: teachers presented 'unknown' or less familiar

vocabulary items, usually as many as 15-20, e.g. ‘exhaust system, headlights, radiator’ etc (Blundell and Stokes 1981: 88-89). This pre-listening technique is now used less often -- it has been substituted by *pre-teaching key words* (see also Chapters 1.4, 2.6 and 4.1), but it still exists (see Chapter 6.1.3 for teacher observations). For example, on the internet the following activity (appropriate for B1+ level) can be found, which introduces a listening passage called ‘The Vein of Love’ (*English Club webpage* 2012), see Tab. 2.

- *vein*: a tube that carries blood to the heart
- *disprove*: to find to be scientifically false
- *matrimony*: marriage, the state of being married
- *digit*: a single finger or toe
- *pinkie*: the littlest finger on the hand
- *index finger*: the finger beside the thumb
- *engagement*: a promise to get married
- *rocky*: unstable; full of conflict

Tab. 2: Pre-teaching vocabulary.
http://edition.englishclub.com/podcasts/interesting-facts/the-vein-of-love/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+englishclub+%28EnglishClub%29

As noted in Chapter 1.4, it is not ideal to pre-teach all the unknown vocabulary in the recording, regardless of their importance, because it takes a lot of time and leaves students unprepared for real-life listening, in which vocabulary is not pre-taught and listeners have to work out the meanings of unknown words for themselves from the context and co-text. However, in real-life listening we are often aware of the topic and ‘key words’ prior to the listening, so it makes sense to pre-teach the critical key words in advance. Another consideration is the rather negative effect on the listening process, in which students may listen out for the pre-taught ‘unknown words’ (i.e. their forms) and thus miss important messages in the listening text (i.e. the meaning). That is why the current policy is to pre-teach only critical words. (Field 2008: 17)

Another major change was introducing the comprehension questions before the recording was played, i.e. so called *question preview* (e.g. Berne 1995; Sherman 1997, see also Chapters 1.4

and 4.2), which started to be considered more useful than the battery of post-listening exercises checking students' memory (e.g. Scrivener 2011: 251). This gave students the opportunity to listen with a clear aim in mind (see also Chapter 4.4.3). Nowadays, opinions differ as to the timing and position of the comprehension questions, i.e. when students should be shown the comprehension questions regarding listening for details. Furthermore, the situations also differ in testing as opposed to teaching. For example, Sherman (1997) suggests using the so called '*sandwich method*', in which the comprehension questions are set between the 1st and 2nd listening, which in fact differs from the 1970s-1980s (see Chapter 4.2). This suggestion has been already applied for some time by materials writers in the natural order of proceeding from a *general* question on the listening passage to more *detailed* questions (e.g. Field 2008: 259). Firstly, we set a *global listening* task (i.e. listening for gist / general information, see also Chapter 2.6), and secondly, after the 1st listening, we set the 'listening for details' comprehension questions, as recommended in current teacher's guides (e.g. Spratt *et al*. 2005: 31; Scrivener 2011: 254: *the task-feedback cycle*) and applied in the teaching practice. In this writer's teaching experience, teachers often use the global listening task before the 1st listening and let their students see the particular question preview before the 2nd listening.

Furthermore, the introduction to the listening is often prompted by *visuals* (maps, diagrams etc), which have been very popular in CLT (e.g. Ur 1984: 29; Mothejzíková 1988: 285; Field 2008: 15) and which support so called top-down processing (see Chapter 4.4.4 and 5.4).

4.3.2 The while-listening stage

In the *while-listening stage*, students listen to the listening passage once or several times (see also Chapter 4.6.7). For example, at the advent of CLT, teachers were advised to play the recording as many times as necessary for the successful completion of the task. This stage challenges the students and guides them through several steps to handle the information and messages in the listening passage.

In the early CLT materials, while-listening tasks often included filling in missing information, labelling diagrams and compiling lists. As a result, students were still supposed to focus on decoding language forms, but this was accompanied by meaning-building work.

In the 1980s, some authors started to make a useful distinction between '*perception* listening exercises' that focus on decoding the speech sounds (e.g. Swan and Walter 1984: x, Machová 2012) and '*interpretation* listening exercises' that focus on meaning-building (e.g. Ur 1984:

33-35, see also Chapters 1.3 and 5.4). Similarly, Field (2008: 85-86) distinguishes two main components of the listening process which teachers may focus upon in listening instruction: (1) decoding and (2) meaning-building, while Rost (2007: 102) distinguishes three 'intervention phases' of the listening comprehension process: (1) decoding, (2) comprehension, and (3) interpretation.

Another new aspect was the focus on 'teacher talk'. Teachers were advised to 're-improvise' their own texts (Ur 1984: 47) in order to make their speech closer to real-life spontaneous speech. This would ensure variety in adding the visual support and applying interactive listening (see Chapter 4.6.4 and also Chapters 4.4.4 and 4.5.1).

4.3.3 The post-listening stage

In the **post-listening stage**, teachers ask students to reflect on the listening passage. In the 1970s-80s this stage focused on exploring the language of the recording (sound, grammar or vocabulary). The discussion on checking comprehension was sometimes followed by a reading or writing task (e.g. Blundell and Stokes 1981).

Only later, communicative language functions, such as apologising, asking for information, offering help, refusing, etc (see Chapters 2.1.1, 2.6 and 3.5.1) used in the listening passage started to be exploited via speaking, e.g. in the form of a free dialogue, role-play, sketch, or problem-solving tasks (e.g. Swan and Walter 1984: xi; Ur 1984: 148; Underwood 1989: 79; Mothejzíková 1991: 9), which is in agreement with our position on integrating speaking and listening skills (see Chapter 2.10). In addition, these functions are relatively difficult to teach in isolation and listening passages often provide useful and well-contextualised language material (Field 2008: 21).

To sum up, in the early days of CLT there were many listening activities that tested rather than taught the listening skill, and sometimes students were overloaded with reading or writing the answers instead of concentrating entirely on listening (Richards 1983: 233-234). However, most ELT authors (e.g. Dunkel 1986: 100; Rubin 1994: 199) agree that during the 1980s the situation started to settle down and appropriate listening activities became a substantial segment of the L2 curriculum. Students were finally taught 'to listen and understand' instead of 'to listen and repeat'.

4.4 Reasons for the inclusion of the pre-listening stage

The rationale behind the inclusion of the pre-listening stage is that we need to make the classroom listening instruction closer to real life (see also Chapter 2.11). L2 listening as well as the whole language classroom is *artificial* (e.g. Field 2008: 15), i.e. students do not have their own purpose for listening and listening input is not 'completely' their choice. In addition, the listener is required to focus on points selected by the teacher or materials writer (Field 2008: 59). By including pre-listening we actually bring the L2 classroom listening closer to L1 listening in everyday situations (or to L2 listening outside the classroom).

4.4.1 Characteristics of real-life listening

Therefore, we should take into account what *real-life listening* entails. In her classic teacher's guide on listening instruction Penny Ur states that most of our real-life listening is 'characterised by the following features (Ur 1984: 9): (1) we listen for a purpose and with certain expectations (see Chapter 4.4.3), (2) we make an immediate response to what we hear (see Chapter 4.5.1), (3) we see the person we are listening to, (4) there are some visual or environmental clues as to the meaning of what is heard (see Chapter 4.4.4), (5) stretches of heard discourse come in short chunks, and (6) most heard discourse is spontaneous and therefore differs from formal spoken prose...'. In addition, the speaker often directs his or her speech at the listener, so we can consider the speech tailor-made for the listener (Ur 1996: 107).

However, some listening situations may not include all the aforementioned features, and the classroom situation, in particular, often lacks more than one of these characteristics.

In the language classroom, the most typical type of listening is listening to an *audiorecording* of an unknown L2 speaker (often native, see also Chapter 2.5), which usually lacks at least half of the aforementioned characteristics. In addition, some authors warn us against the danger of overusing this type of input in listening instruction (see Chapters 4.6.3 and 7.3.3). Therefore, before playing such input in the classroom we should compensate for its limitations by providing the students-listeners with a purpose for listening and with some listening context, i.e. topic, visuals etc, because in real-life situations the listeners would already be aware of the context, i.e. of who the speakers were, where they were and so on (Field 2008: 18). This preparation for listening is realised in the pre-listening stage.

4.4.2 Goals of pre-listening

The best description of our goals of pre-listening can be found in Field (2008: 18-19), who states that the pre-listening stage may fulfil at least three concrete goals: 1) to give students a *purpose* for listening (see Chapter 4.4.3), 2) to establish the *context* of the listening text (see Chapter 5.4), and 3) to create *motivation* in learners. According to Field, good pre-listening should also introduce 'critical vocabulary' (see Chapters 1.4 and 4.3.1) and mention the speakers' names so that the listener can 'label' the speakers.

The most popular authors of listening materials of the 1980s already stated that apart from motivating our students and giving them a purpose for listening, we also have to familiarize learners appropriately with the while-listening tasks by giving them clear and explicit instructions (e.g. Ur 1984: 26-27; Underwood 1989: 30-31, see also Chapter 2.9). This will help the listener to know when and how to listen (e.g. Richards 1983: 228; Ur 1984: 3; Hedge 2000: 236). In testing listening comprehension, at least this rule should be followed.

In my experience, there is yet another goal of pre-listening in the language classroom and that is boosting students' confidence and reducing their anxiety, especially at lower-proficiency levels (e.g. Lynch 1996: 102; Ždímalová 2009b, see Chapters 2.5, 2.11 and 7.3.8).

4.4.3 Giving students a purpose for listening

In most situations in real life, we have *a purpose for listening specific to the listening situation* (e.g. Richards 1983: 234; Ur 1984; Anderson and Lynch 1988; Underwood 1989; Mothejzíková 1991: 6; Ur 1996: 107). For example, listening to a conference presentation will have a different purpose from listening to a song for enjoyment. Sometimes we listen for details, other times we listen for pleasure, and so on. The listening processes involved in any listening situation will thus depend on the precise purpose for listening.

In discourse analysis, Brown and Yule (1983: 1) distinguish two main types of communication: (1) '*interactional*' used for the social purpose of communication (e.g. small talk at a party), and (2) '*transactional*' used for the purpose of exchanging information (e.g. listening to follow directions). Underwood (1989: 4) distinguishes five main categories of reasons for listening, namely (1) to engage in social rituals, (2) to exchange information, (3) to exert control, (4) to share feelings, and (5) to enjoy oneself. However, it cannot be assumed that all listening can be divided into these neat categories. The reasons for listening frequently overlap.

Although we accept the fact that the classroom teaching is *artificial* we can provide our learners with activities which give a range of purposes for listening (Hedge 2000: 236, see Chapter 2.11).

4.4.4 The role of visual support

According to Ur (1996: 107), most of our listening is not done 'blind'. Usually, the speaker and/or other visual stimuli are present. The very few exceptions include listening to the radio or telephone for example.

The benefits of visual support for providing learners with context in FLT have been known for a very long time (e.g. Komenský 1658; 2012). In the recent history of FLT, the role of visuals started to be exploited in teaching listening in the AVM (see Chapter 3.3.5).

At the advent of CLT, the aspects of face-to-face communication were studied with a focus on non-linguistic cues, such as facial expressions and body language (e.g. Lynch 2009: 19, see also Chapter 4.5.1). The role of the visual element in listening comprehension while viewing video was analysed by Riley (1981; 1985). He distinguishes five types of visual cues according to their function: (1) deictic, (2) interactional, (3) modal, (4) indexical, and (5) linguistic (1981: 147-154). Some current experts state that in teaching practice the role of the visual tends to be underestimated even though some recent research shows that video versions of the same listening passage are better understood than the audio only, at both lower and higher levels of proficiency (Lynch 2009: 111). In agreement with Lynch, our students seem to value the visual element a lot and would welcome more extensive use of it within listening instruction (see Chapter 7.3.4).

4.5 Real-life listening situations: interactive versus non-interactive listening

In real life we encounter a lot of different types of listening situations and various factors determine how well we are actually prepared for listening (see also Rubin's framework in Chapter 1.4). Therefore, the pre-listening stage should of course take into account the particular listening situation of the listening passage.

It would be useful to have a taxonomy of all the kinds of listening situations and their relative frequencies. However, because of the immense variety of individuals and societies, such a classification is impossible (Ur 1984: 2). Nevertheless, many ELT authors attempt to list some kinds of listening situations which people are exposed to in everyday communication, both in L1 and L2 (e.g. Underwood 1989: 5-7).

The majority of current authors make a distinction between two basic types of listening, *interactive* and *non-interactive* (e.g. Rost 2002: 143; Field 2008: 69), *reciprocal* and *non-reciprocal* (e.g. Cook 1989: 60-61), *participatory* and *non-participatory* (e.g. Hedge 2000: 235-236), *collaborative* and *non-collaborative* (e.g. Buck 2001: 12), or *two-way* and *one-way* listening (e.g. Lynch 2009: 60). (See also Chapters 1.3, 2.7, 2.8 and 3.3.3). Examples of both interactive and non-interactive listening situations (based on Underwood 1989) are listed in Appendix 4.

4.5.1 Interactive listening

Most listening we do in real life is *interactive* rather than non-interactive. In interactive listening, the listener has opportunities to respond, affect the course of conversation, and ask for repetition or further explanation (e.g. Anderson and Lynch 1988: 16-17; Cook 1989: 60; Rost 2002: 143). This ongoing, purposeful listener response often lacks in listening instruction (Ur 1996: 107, see also Chapters 4.5.2 and 4.6.3).

For the purposes of our research, we should distinguish interactive listening situations *with* and *without visual support* because generally, the inclusion of visual support often makes the pre-listening stage more efficient and can save time. In real life, the majority of situations are face-to-face encounters, in which the listener can see the speaker and 'read' the visual cues, e.g. gestures, facial expressions, etc, and students prefer such situations (see also Chapters 4.3.1, 4.4.4, 7.3.4 and Appendix 2: Q18 and Q21). In some situations, however, the listener cannot see the speaker and this makes the comprehension more difficult, e.g. in a telephone conversation.

4.5.2 Non-interactive listening

In *non-interactive* listening, on the other hand, the listener cannot interrupt the speaker in order to ask for repetition or further explanation. In most situations, the speaker does not know the listener at all because the listener is only a part of the public.

For our purposes, we can again distinguish non-interactive listening situations *with* and *without visual support* (see also Chapters 4.3.1, 4.4.4, 7.3.3, 7.3.4 and Appendix 2: Q21). When the listener can see the speaker, especially from a short distance, e.g. when listening to the teacher or watching a video, the visual support makes the comprehension easier; otherwise the comprehension is more difficult. Usually, the visibility of the speaker coincides with the necessity of listener-response (see Chapter 4.5.1), but not always (Ur 1984; 1996: 107).

Some listening situations can be interactive or non-interactive, e.g. following instructions during a sports practice is interactive, whereas following cooking instructions on TV is non-interactive. During the sports practice, the listener usually responds to the instructions immediately by carrying out a given task. In the case of recorded instructions, the listener can often replay them. When this is not possible, e.g. instructions given on a TV or radio programme, the listener might be able to look up the information online or wait for repetition. (Underwood 1989: 7)

As noted in Chapter 2.11, in L2 listening instruction we should look for ways of combining non-interactive listening activities (i.e. listening to audiorecordings, listening while viewing a DVD) with interactive listening activities (such as conversations in pairs in the pre-listening stage), as proposed by Anderson and Lynch (1988: 16-17).

4.6 Conceptual framework: methodology for listening instruction

Bearing in mind the goal of the dissertation (see Chapter 1.5), I have been searching for a current coherent conceptual framework for listening instruction that would include a relevant discussion on the phenomenon of *pre-listening*. As noted in Chapter 1.4, there is a dearth of research and literature on pre-listening. Nevertheless, one of the most useful available resources is a proposal for *listening instruction methodology* by Field (2008; with its main ideas presented already in Richards and Renandya 2002) that involves some suggestions on pre-listening. The proposal has inspired me and I have accepted it as the conceptual framework. In this chapter, it is examined in more detail.

John Field is a researcher at University of Bedfordshire, Centre for Research in English Language Learning and Assessment (CRELLA), UK, and a Visiting Lecturer at the Faculty of Education, Cambridge University, where he teaches cognitive approaches to second language acquisition and supervises students as part of the MPhil degree in second language research. He has published widely on second language listening since the 1990s. His most recent book, *Listening in the Language Classroom* (Cambridge University Press, 2008), is a bestseller[7] and it is believed to be able to 'reshape thinking on the teaching of the skill'. (http://www.beds.ac.uk/crella).

[7] The book won the international Ben Warren Prize for its contribution to second language studies.

Field's framework has served as a point of departure for the dissertation research project, especially for creating the main research instrument -- the questionnaire (see Appendix 2). In the following sections of Chapter 4.6, the most important research questions are identified and built upon. Out of the five research areas outlined in Chapter 1.5, Field's proposal mainly includes recommendations regarding areas III and IV, see below.

I. Students' self-evaluation in the main language skills and language systems (see Chapter 1.4 and the results in Chapter 7.1).
II. Needs analysis regarding the main language skills and systems, and the main purpose of students' L2 study (see Chapters 1.4, 3.7, Chapter 6.1.1 and the results in Chapter 7.2).
III. **Listening instruction** and learning listening in the general language classroom (see Appendix 2: Part IV).
IV. **The pre-listening stage** in the listening session (see Appendix 2: Part V).
V. Pre-listening techniques (see Chapters 5.5, 7.5 and Appendix 2: Part V).

In general, Field (2002; 2008) is highly critical of the current form of L2 listening instruction practice and of many ideas that underlie our current thinking. He asserts that 'our present *comprehension-based methodology* is flawed' (2008: 25). Although he admits that listening instruction has changed a great deal since the 1970s, he states that 'many of the changes have been cosmetic, and that what is really needed is a rethinking of the aims and structure of the listening lesson' (i.e. listening session, 2002: 245). Field (2008: 3) argues that in current teaching practice there is a prevailing tendency to 'provide practice and more practice without clearly defined goals', which reminds him of the Comprehension Approach (see Chapter 3.4.2). He concludes his criticism of the current state of affairs:

> 'Part of the neglect of second language listening must be attributable to the rather sterile methodology that teachers have to rely upon. For many years, teachers have based their teaching and testing upon an approach which measures achievement in terms of the ability to provide answers to comprehension questions. No matter that those answers might be derived by a variety of means, including intelligent guesswork. No matter that they tend to be supplied by the more able listeners, while those who most need help simulate an understanding they have not achieved. The format is a well-established one and, though it may not lead demonstrably to better listening, it is easy to apply. Teachers and teacher trainers tend not to ask why this particular approach has become attached to the teaching of second language

> listening or to question whether it is the most effective way of developing the skills in learners.' (2008: 5)

At the same time it needs to be acknowledged that most of Field's teaching principles, e.g. prominence, variety, authenticity, pair work etc, are in agreement with other current experts (e.g. Rost 2002; Vandergrift 2003; 2004; Vandergrift and Goh 2009; Lynch 2009, see Chapters 4.6.1 to 4.6.5) and should be followed in our teaching practice in order to improve the learners' listening skills; plus these principles are confirmed by this research too (see Chapter 7).

However, there are a few issues that cannot be easily accepted and agreed with. The problem of L1 versus L2 use is debatable (see Chapter 4.6.6), the 5-6 multiple exposures to the same listening passage within one listening session seem excessive (see Chapter 4.6.7), and the most problematic of all, in my opinion, are Field's recommendations concerning the length and usefulness of the pre-listening stage (see Chapter 4.6.8). In particular, Field's suggestion that the pre-listening stage should be cut down (because it is 'overused') has not been supported by any classroom research yet and is not reflected in any other current guides on the teaching of L2 listening (Rost 2002; Lynch 2009; Vandergrift and Goh 2009), so it can be assumed that the other L2 listening experts do not share Field's opinions on the matters in question. Indeed, Field and this author have totally opposing views on the usefulness of pre-listening for lower proficiency levels and on the average length of the pre-listening stage in our teaching practice. This is clearly based on different experience from teacher observations in the L2 classroom, with Field drawing on his 'many visits to language schools as a listening researcher and as an inspector' (2008: 3). Ultimately, this issue, i.e. the length and usefulness of the pre-listening stage, has become the *main research problem* (see Chapter 4.6.8), which inspired the present author to do the dissertation project.

Based on a critical analysis of Field's proposal, the main concepts and potential factors were identified that may influence the effectiveness of listening instruction and pre-listening in particular, and which could be approachable by research. The factors were operationalized (see the research questions addressed at the beginning of each of the following sections and Appendix 2), the questionnaire designed and the survey carried out (see Chapter 6.2).

The questionnaire consists of eight parts and includes important definitions of 'listening instruction', 'pre-listening stage' and 'communicative language functions' in lay terms (see Appendix 2). As noted in Chapter 1.4, the research areas and factors identified cannot be studied in isolation because they are *interconnected* (see e.g. Chapter 4.6.5). At the end of the

project we should be able to evaluate (accept or reject), from the perspective of the student, the teaching principles suggested in the conceptual framework.

4.6.1 L2 listening instruction: the question of prominence

RESEARCH QUESTION: How do students perceive listening instruction in their EFL courses in general? How do students perceive the quality of teaching listening? (see Appendix 2: Q10). The research results are presented mainly in Chapter 7.3 and reflected also in Chapters 7.1 and 7.2.

The first and the most important issue Field discusses is the question of *prominence*. According to Field (2008: 5), we should change our priorities and give L2 listening more prominence than we currently do in the general language classroom. Field argues that we need to recognise that 'successful L2 communication demands listening in equal measure with speaking' (see also Chapters 2.9, 2.10, 2.11, 7.1 and 7.3.2). As a result, the exposure to the spoken word through listening instruction will, in fact, enrich the student's spoken competence (which is our students' main aim, see Chapters 6.1.1 and 7.2 and also Appendix 1).

Listening was taken for granted for a long time (see Chapter 3.1) and it follows that some teachers may still assume that listening will develop by itself and not much instruction is needed. Also, some teachers I spoke to believe that teaching listening is easy because the audiorecording 'speaks' instead of the teacher and enables the teacher to 'have an easy lesson'[8].

According to Field, a further indication that listening instruction has not been given the attention it deserves is the lack of 'reliable background information about the skill'. Field argues that, in order to teach listening effectively, teachers should have a clear idea about what the listening comprehension process entails and about the desired end behaviour of the L2 learner. He asserts:

> 'Yet teachers' manuals tend to be vague or sometimes inaccurate about the processes that make up listening, about the problems it poses for those acquiring a second language and about the precise nature of the input which novice listeners have to learn to handle. If teachers are to raise the profile of listening in the language classroom, they need to know considerably more about the skill and about how it operates. The information will help them to define their

[8] This problem in approach to teaching listening is also mentioned by Harding (2012).

goals more clearly and to identify more closely with the challenges that learners face.' (2008:6)

The preliminary research has already identified listening skills as the area in which adult students have difficulties and crave improvement (see Chapters 1.1 and 6.1.2 and also Appendix 1). In the questionnaire survey, the students' preferences in terms of the prominence of listening instruction are obvious also from the first two research areas, self-evaluation and needs analysis (see the results in Chapters 7.1 and 7.2 and Appendix 2: Q4, Q5, Q6, Q7, and Q46).

The position of listening instruction in both the curriculum and the particular general language course influences all the other research questions, especially how students perceive the quality of teaching listening (see the results in Chapter 7.3.1 and Appendix 2: Q10) and the time allocated for listening instruction in the course (see Chapter 4.6.2). Similarly, the prominence of listening instruction is determined by the teachers' approaches to teaching listening in their particular courses (see Chapter 6.1.3).

In general, the quality of listening instruction depends on both the length and the effectiveness of the listening session, including the pre-listening stage. We should, of course, aim at increasing the overall quality of teaching listening, which does not necessarily mean increasing the time allocated to a maximum.

4.6.2 Time allocated for listening instruction

RESEARCH QUESTION: Approximately how much time is devoted to listening instruction? Do students consider the amount of time sufficient or not? (The research results are presented in Chapters 6.1.3 and 7.3.2 and Appendix 2: Q14, Q15 and Q16.)

The second most important factor is the time allocated for listening instruction in the course, i.e. the *length of the listening session* in the L2 lesson and the *frequency of listening instruction*.

According to Field, we simply *need to spend more time* on the teaching of listening, definitely *more than 20 minutes* continuously (2008: 74), which we can take as the basic measure for the variable. Otherwise, there is no information on the proportion of the class time or frequency of listening instruction. Logically, the overall length of the L2 lesson makes a difference. (In the Czech Republic, lessons are usually 45, 60 or 90 minutes long.) In this respect, the research approach applied here and the data collected at ASCR may be considered original and may be used in any future research for comparison (see Chapter 8.4).

At the Department of Language Studies, ASCR, we teach 90-minute lessons and so, in the extreme, the listening session may occupy as much as e.g. 60 minutes, i.e. two thirds of our lesson time (as recommended in Doff and Becket 1991), or a relatively small amount, e.g. only 10-15 minutes, i.e. 9-17% of our lesson time. In the teacher observations the time allocated for listening instruction has been measured and the results compared to the students' opinions on the matter in question.

Field also criticises the 'integrated skills approach'[9] (see Chapter 2.10), claiming that it:

> 'does not allow for extended attention to be given to any of the skills. Focusing upon a single skill for (say) 15 or 20 minutes gives the learner a little more than a taster. It gives no opportunity to explore the skill in depth…' (2008: 74)

Even though the integrated skills approach is deemed appropriate by the present author and is in fact used in our general language courses (see also Chapter 7.2.3), we thoroughly approve of Field's idea that we should devote considerably more time to listening instruction than we do.

In agreement with Field, our research confirmed the assumption that the teaching of listening is not given enough space, from both the students' and our perspectives. Based on the teacher observations, when our teachers decide to teach listening, they devote to listening instruction on average *only* 16.9 minutes out of the 90-minute lesson (i.e. 18.8% of the class time, see Chapter 6.1.3 and Appendix 3). Although listening is taught relatively frequently (see Appendix 2: Q14), i.e. every lesson (stated by 40% of the students) or every other lesson (stated by 43% of the students), the time allocated does not suffice our students, especially at lower proficiency levels, and this was confirmed by the 2012 survey (see Chapter 7.3.2 and Appendix 2: Q15 and Q16).

4.6.3 Overusing audiorecordings in the classroom

RESEARCH QUESTION: Which types of listening input are used in the classroom and what is their percentage (estimated by the students)?

The students were asked to choose the types of listening comprehension input they practise in class and to estimate their percentage so that the total forms 100% (e.g. 50% listening to the

[9] A detailed discussion on the conditions for an L2 course to fall under the category of 'integrated skills course' is beyond the scope of this work (for details see e.g. Hinkel 2010b).

radio, 30% listening while viewing a course DVD, and 20% listening to songs, Bahbouh 2011). (The research results are presented in Chapter 7.3.3 and Appendix 2: Q18.)

Most L2 listening instruction in the language classroom is still based on listening to course/textbook audiorecordings, which are sometimes overused at the expense of other listening input types (e.g. Ur 1984: 24-25), and therefore many authors make a case for greater variety (e.g. Underwood 1989: 7; Rost 2002: 105; Field 2008: 58-59). Overusing audiorecordings makes listening comprehension practice unnatural (i.e. far from real-life conditions, e.g. Ur 1984: 9) and extremely difficult for L2 learners, especially at lower proficiency levels.

What is the role of the L2 learner when listening to audiorecordings of unknown L2 speakers? Bell (1984: 159) originally distinguished four listener roles based on the distance from the speaker and the listener's rights: (1) participant in speaking, (2) addressee, (3) auditor, and (4) overhearer or eavesdropper. A student listening to an audiorecording of unknown L2 speakers is in a position of an 'overhearer' or 'eavesdropper', i.e. a person who is not being spoken to and has no right to speak (e.g. Rost 1990: 5; Bell 1984: 159 cited in Lynch 2009: 61, see also Chapter 4.5 and Appendix 4). The situation is further complicated if no visual support is given (see also Chapters 4.3.2, 4.4.4 and 4.5).

Field (2008: 58-59) explains that the non-participatory nature of the learner's role means that the goal is to *extract meaning rather than to respond* in any way (see also Chapters 4.4.1 and 4.5.2). He argues that there is no reason why such 'auditory scanning' should remain the major type of listening practised in the L2 classroom. The research results suggest that our students, too, value the variety principle (see Chapters 7.3.3 and 7.3.4). In addition, teachers who overuse audiorecordings are evaluated worse than teachers who do not.

Apart from providing greater variety the situation can be improved by including effective pre-listening and by dividing the recording into shorter subsections for more intensive listening (e.g. Field 2008: 58, see also Chapter 4.6.4) and requiring listeners' response more often (e.g. Ur 1996: 107), which is a step towards making the listening more interactive (see Chapters 4.5.1 and 4.6.5).

4.6.4 Types of listening input: variety and authenticity

RESEARCH QUESTION: Students' preferences in types of listening input.

The students were asked to choose the types of listening input they would like to practise more often in class. (The research results are presented in Chapter 7.3.4 and Appendix 2: Q21.)

The issue of *variety* of listening input in the classroom is discussed by most current experts (e.g. Ur 1984; 1996; Anderson and Lynch 1988; Rost 2002; Field 2008; Lynch 2009). It is generally accepted that a large range of listening input types enhances the development of students' listening skills because, as Field states (2008: 59), 'outside the classroom, a much greater range of listening types occurs, and much greater flexibility is demanded of the listener' (see also Chapter 2.11).

On the inclusion of *authentic* listening materials opinions traditionally differ, especially concerning the extent to which classroom listening passages should be authentic and whether to start with authentic listening materials from the very beginning of the L2 instruction or later (e.g. Field 2002: 244, see Chapter 7.3.4). The definition of 'authenticity' seems to pose a problem (e.g. Besse 1981: 20; Rost 2002: 123). According to Field (2008: 270), authentic recordings are 'recordings of people speaking naturally and without the purposes of language learning in mind'. Field further explains that authentic materials contain a real purpose for speaking, they are 'relatively' ungraded and unscripted (see Chapter 4.2). Hence, authenticity at lower levels does not mean playing long stretches of fast native speech or a complex conversation of more than two speakers. For our purposes, the best explanation how to approach this issue can be found in Rost who defines the teaching principle of authenticity:

> 'Language input should aim for user authenticity, first, by aiming to be appropriate to the current needs of the learners, and second, by reflecting real use of language in the real world.' (2002: 125)

There is agreement on the advice that teachers should not avoid *informal teacher talk* and interactive listening activities (see Chapter 4.5.1) but exploit them more often (e.g. Ur 1984: 62; 1996: 113; Chapman 2007). For example, when the teacher tells a joke or real-life anecdote, retells a well-known story, or mentions a cultural difference, it is motivating for the students and it can be considered authentic real-life listening in that the students immediately respond to it, ask questions etc (see Activity 1 called 'live listening' in Appendix 5). Also, the teacher naturally adjusts the speech to suit the proficiency level, age of the learners and so on (so called 'teacherese', see Chapter 3.5.2).

According to Field (2002: 244) and other authors (e.g. Rost 2002: 125; Vandergrift 2007: 200), authentic texts are very useful for the spontaneity/naturalness of speech, which ensures real-life listening experience. That is why the use of authentic materials has increased in the

past decades (see also Chapter 4.2). This applies even to teaching lower-proficiency levels where short authentic texts are beneficial (e.g. Field 2008: 277; Choděra 2006: 142). Field (2002: 244) claims:

> '…students are not daunted or discouraged by authentic materials – provided they are told in advance not to expect to understand everything.' (2002: 125)

Instead of simplifying the language, teachers are advised to attempt to simplify the task. Based on Nunan (1999), Rost (2002: 125) asserts that, in case of authentic materials, pre-listening techniques should 'preview key vocabulary and discourse structures in the input' (see also Chapter 5.5) and then the input should be 'chunked' into manageable segments (see also Chapter 4.6.3).

The survey results confirm that our students would like both variety (see Chapter 4.6.3) and authenticity of listening input to be increased in listening instruction, together with a third aspect: the visual support (see Chapters 4.4.4 and 7.3.4).

4.6.5 Interaction mode

RESEARCH QUESTION: Which type of interaction mode prevails in the listening session? Is a discussion of students' answers to comprehension questions used more often than the teacher supplying the 'correct' answers? Are teachers who use pair work evaluated higher than teachers who ask students to work individually? (The research results are presented in Chapter 7.3.5 and Appendix 2: Q20.)

As noted in Chapter 1.1, L2 listeners differ widely within one class and therefore we can speak about *mixed-level classes*. Furthermore, listening is a hidden skill (see Chapter 2.3) and teachers often do not know which students are stronger and which are weaker. Field (2008: 37) states that as listening is an individual activity, 'personal and internalised', there is potentially a tension between the isolating nature of the skill and 'the whole-class teaching situation'.

In addition, even though CLT is rightfully the mainstream approach in FLT which has influenced most areas of L2 teaching and learning since the 1980s (see Chapters 3.5.1 and 3.7), listening instruction practice still seems to lack patterns of natural communication. Moreover, in listening instruction the teacher often dominates the classroom (i.e. applies the so called *teacher-centred approach*), students work individually and cooperation is not facilitated. This may contribute to learner anxiety (see also Chapters 2.5, 4.4.2 and 7.3.8). (Field 2008: 38-39)

The solution Field offers is twofold. Firstly, teachers should attempt to *lower their own intervention*, and secondly, they should do their best to *increase learner interaction* within the listening class. On the 'policy of non-intervention' Field asserts:

> 'Instead of assuming that their role is to explain/paraphrase/target, teachers should ensure that the learners do much more of the listening work for themselves. It is by listening and re-listening and by testing hypotheses for themselves that learners progress; not by having the answers handed to them.' (2008: 41)

Secondly, as many other experts mention, *pair/group work* is beneficial in the listening session because it not only facilitates learner interaction but also helps learners to overcome their lack of confidence (e.g. Anderson and Lynch 1988: 16-17; Underwood 1989; Lynch 1996; 2009; Rost 2007; Vandergrift 2004; Scrivener 2011). Pair/group work also assists mainly the weaker listeners in the class, who may have understood very little during the first hearing, but the answers given by their colleagues will prepare them for the subsequent hearings (Field 2008: 15). For the while- and post-listening stages Field specifically recommends:

> 'Even within larger classes, learners can be encouraged to share their interpretations of a listening passage with those next to them. The teacher no longer starts off by eliciting answers from the class as a whole to the questions that have been set, but instead gets students to work in pairs and small groups, discussing and comparing their versions of what they have heard. They try to achieve agreement on the correct answers, then listen again to check their decisions before the matter is settled.' (2008: 44)

Tab. 3 shows Field's idea of the reshaped 'intensive listening phase'.

- **Pre-set questions**
- **First play**

  Learners note down what they understand.
- **Second play**

  Learners check their understanding. They discuss it in pairs.

  Where pairs disagree, they try to reach agreement.

  Teacher: no comment except where widespread and serious misunderstanding.
- **Third play**

  Pairs check to see who is right.

  Pairs present their understanding to the whole class.

  Teacher summarises without commenting on the correctness.

- **Fourth play**

  Class checks to see who is right.

  Teacher comments.
- **Fifth play**

  Class listens with a transcript.

  Teacher answers any questions.

Tab. 3: Non-interventionist format for a listening lesson (intensive listening phase)[10] (Field 2008: 45).

As we can see, the interaction mode and the number of multiple exposures are interrelated (see also Chapter 4.6.7). Field suggests that the two factors 'should be treated as continua and adjusted according to the needs of the class'. Only after several exposures (e.g. five, see Tab. 3), when the students cannot decipher part of the listening text, the teacher's assistance should be called upon' as a last resort. (Field 2008: 43-44)

Even though our findings indicate that teachers still have a tendency to favour individual work over pair work and group work (see Appendix 2: Q20), our students' perceptions, on the other hand, seem to be in agreement with the two major teaching principles of lower teacher engagement and higher learner interaction (see Chapter 7.3.5). In my opinion, these two principles are the key to revised methodology of listening instruction at lower proficiency levels (also in agreement with Scrivener 2012) and should be focused on in the future listening instruction research.

4.6.6 Use of L1 versus L2

RESEARCH QUESTION: How much is the students' mother tongue (L1) used as a means of interaction and communication in the classroom? What are the students' perceptions of the L1 versus L2 use? (The research results are presented in Chapter 7.3.6 and Appendix 2: Q12 and Q13)

---

[10] Note that the five exposures concern the 'intensive listening phase' of the listening session (see Chapters 2.6, 4.1 and 4.3), hence, it can be assumed that including the 'global listening phase' (e.g. Field 2008: 259) the students would hear the same passage six times (see Chapter 4.6.7).

In the 2012 survey, the students firstly estimated the percentage in which Czech is used as the means of instruction and communication, and secondly expressed their preferences regarding the matter in question.

The issue of which language (whether L2 or L1) should be used, especially at lower proficiency levels, is discussed by most ELT authors (e.g. Stern 1992; Field 2008). In general, some of them are for maximising the L2 use in the classroom (e.g. Choděra 2006: 142), whereas others state that the L1 can be justified if used reasonably in small doses in *monolingual classes* (e.g. Atkinson 1993).

Stern assigns a very important role to this dimension of teaching in his proposal for the 'post-method' paradigm in FLT (see Chapter 3.6); he calls it 'the intralingual-crosslingual dimension' (1992: 279). In his opinion, we should describe any L2 course in terms of whether and to which extent the students' L1 is used. In addition, some L2 listening experts point out that, in listening instruction to lower proficiency students, the L1 should be used to clarify the meanings in the listening passage (e.g. Vandergrift 2003; Field 2008).

At the ASCR, most classes are monolingual. It is obvious that the extent to which the L1 is used depends on the proficiency level. At lower levels, the L1 is usually used for some specific purposes, e.g. for grammatical explanations or clarification of lexis (see also Chapter 3.3.3), but should serve only as an exceptional tool. However, the more the teacher uses the L1, the less time is left for the L2 use in the classroom. In monolingual classes such as ours, there is always a danger that 'regular' L1 use develops into a habit, which may become difficult to get rid of.

4.6.7 Multiple exposures

RESEARCH QUESTION: How many times is one listening passage played in the classroom? Is it sufficient for the students to hear the passage twice? (The research results are presented in Chapter 7.3.7, see also Appendix 2: Q19 and Q33k.)

Another factor of major importance is how many times one listening text is played in the classroom, i.e. so called '*multiple exposures*', '*multiple-play*' or '*multiple replays*' (e.g. Underwood 1989: 17). It is now recognised that multiple exposures enable the listener to build increasingly on the information extracted within the previous exposure(s). (Field 2008: 15)

In the 1970s-80s, teachers were advised to play the recording as many times as necessary for the successful completion of the task. Nowadays recommendations differ. The issue has not

been resolved even for exam situations, e.g. in Cambridge exams (KET, PET, FCE, CAE and CPE), the listening is played twice, while in TOEFL the listening is played just once based on the argument that in real life we often hear the message just once and cannot replay it (e.g. Ur 1996: 112).

Most current authors of listening instruction guides and articles propose that one listening text is played twice, the main argument being that research has shown that students' second exposure to the same passage ensures a large increase in listening comprehension performance (e.g. Berne 1995; Elkhafaifi 2005: 505), or three times, as in the pedagogical steps proposed by Vandergrift (2003: 433; 2004: 11; 2007: 199; Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari 2010: 475, see Appendix 6). This is also reflected in current general coursebook titles (e.g. *New English File*).

On the other hand, Field suggests playing the text as many times as necessary for the successful completion of the task, by which he means playing the same text usually *five* or even *six* times (2008: 45, see Chapter 4.6.5: Tab. 3). Logically, the number of exposures should correlate with the task difficulty. Scrivener (2011: 255) states that students should be given more demanding tasks in order for them to 'stretch' their powers of listening to a limit, and then it makes sense to play the passage several times before the students themselves arrive at the 'correct' answer.

At the ASCR, most of our EFL courses use standard general textbook titles (*New English File*, *Straightforward*, and PET/FCE/CAE titles), whose listening tasks are adequately difficult for the given level. In the preliminary research (see Chapter 6.1.3) I observed that the ASCR teachers play one listening passage most frequently twice (and maximum three times) and I considered the number of replays appropriate. Is it likely that our students would prefer to hear a new listening text (in the classroom) more than twice or do they consider the two exposures sufficient? Is not Field's suggestion similar to the early CLT listening instruction practice (e.g. Blundell and Stokes 1981), which still focused quite a lot on language forms and 'listening for perception' (see Chapters 1.3, 4.2 and 4.3.2)? My current research results lead me to believe that most students are satisfied with two exposures (see the results in Chapter 7.3.7 and Appendix 2: Q19, Q33k). It may be assumed that our students would be bored if they listened to one text 5-6 times, let alone without any new challenges or new 'information gap' tasks. (However, this issue should be investigated into depth in the future.)

In addition, one of the best ways of ensuring that the learner has control over the amount of multiple exposures is *setting listening homework* on a regular basis, which is much easier to

do today than in the 1970s, exactly as Hendrich (1970) predicted. This will automatically increase the amount of time which learners give to this critical skill (Field 2008: 47).

4.6.8 Cutting down the pre-listening stage?

RESEARCH QUESTION: How do students perceive *the pre-listening stage* in the listening session? (The research results are presented in Chapter 7.4 and Appendix 2: Part V.)

The study deals with several factors that characterise the pre-listening stage, and then specifically looks at Field's main suggestion concerning the length of the stage. Overall, the following questions are addressed:

- How do students perceive the *usefulness* (or otherwise) of pre-listening for listening comprehension? (See Chapters 1.4, 7.4.1 and Appendix 2: Q28).
- How well can teachers use the pre-listening techniques? (see Chapter 7.4.2 and Appendix 2: Q24)
- How many pre-listening techniques are usually used before one listening text? (see Appendix 2: Q25)
- *Frequency* of pre-listening techniques in listening instruction, i.e. in how many percent of all listening texts any pre-listening techniques are used. Do students want to use pre-listening more often or not? (see Chapter 7.4.3, Appendix 2: Q26 and Q27)
- Are there any differences in students' perceptions of the pre-listening stage as a function of *proficiency level*? (This factor concerns all previous questions, see Chapter 7.4.)

Additional issues studied in the 2011-12 teacher observations (see Chapter 6.1.3 and Appendix 3) are: How do teachers use the pre-listening stage? Do they overuse it (i.e. spend more than 5 minutes on it)?

In the questionnaire (see Appendix 2: Parts IV and V), both the pre-listening stage and pre-listening techniques are defined for the students appropriately (see also Chapter 5.5).

In general, it is recognised that activation of students' prior knowledge in the pre-listening stage has positive effects on the listening performance (see also Chapters 1.4, 4.4 and Chapter 5). Pre-listening activities/techniques help to contextualise students before they start to listen (e.g. Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari 2010: 471).

Even though Field considers pre-listening *useful* for many reasons mentioned earlier (see Chapter 4.4.1), he asserts that there is 'a considerable danger in expounding too much on the context of the listening passage' (2008: 18). He argues that the more we tell the learners in

advance, the less attentively they will have to listen to extract the answers they need. He continues his argument (2008: 85):

> '… the point remains that there is little justification for spending too much time on pre-listening activities, which often involve skills other than the target one and which may distort the listening experience by giving away too much information in advance.'

As a result, Field suggests *cutting down the pre-listening stage* which would have an additional desired effect in saving more time for the while-listening and post-listening stages, i.e. for 'the possibility of multiple replays or of investigating learner responses' (Field 2008: 83, see Chapters 4.6.5 and 4.6.7).

The problem is that there are no guidelines about the relative proportions of the listening session stages: pre-listening, while-listening and post-listening. We are concerned here especially with the ratio between the pre-listening and the while-listening stage. Of course, very different ratios would most probably have consequences for the effectiveness of listening instruction, particularly at lower-proficiency levels. It means that for one concrete group of learners at a particular level (e.g. A2 general language course with the frequency of 90 minutes per week) we can imagine two opposite scenarios: (1) overusing the pre-listening stage at the expense of the other stages, or (2) dealing with pre-listening swiftly and devoting most of the time to the other stages.

According to Field (2008: 84), in the current conventional format teachers spend about 44% of the listening session on pre-listening (i.e. about 9 out of 20 minutes), then they rush through while-listening in 46% of the time, and leave only 10% of the time for post-listening. For the revised format Field proposes that teachers should spend 10% of the time on pre-listening, devote 55% of the time to while-listening (with more exposures, see Chapters 4.6.7), and leave 35% of the time for post-listening.

Vandergrift (2013), on the other hand, states that it would be hard to generalise on the time spent on pre-listening because the proportion of the stages varies considerably and will depend on many aspects, mainly 'the text, goals of the task, knowledge of the topic and overall goals for listening development in a language course'.

Furthermore, Field (2008) makes no distinction either between *lower* versus *higher proficiency levels*, or between the listening input *with* versus *without the visual element* (see Chapter 4.5). It can be hypothesised that the cutting down the pre-listening stage would not be easily accepted by lower-proficiency students, whereas higher-proficiency students may not have any problem with it. A slight difference in perceptions may be found in the 'usefulness' issue.

Also, it is possible that this aspect of teaching practice may be different in the two formal classroom settings, in the UK and the Czech Republic. Similarly, whether a teacher overuses the pre-listening stage or not may simply depend on the teacher's background, qualifications, and experience.

To conclude, Field states that pre-listening is overestimated and overused in the language classroom but our findings indicate that it is not true. While we can agree that enough time should be devoted to investigating learner responses in the while-listening stage (see Chapters 4.6.2 and 4.6.5), we cannot agree with the statement that pre-listening is frequently overused because the teacher observation results indicate that our teachers use on average only *3.6 minutes out of the 16.9 minutes* allocated for listening instruction (see Appendix 3 and also Chapter 4.6.2). It means that the pre-listening stage, as observed in this study, occupies 21.3% of the listening session (i.e. more than twice less than Field estimates). In addition, the majority of students at lower levels perceive that pre-listening should be used more often (see Chapter 7.4.3).

5 SCHEMA THEORY AND PRE-LISTENING TECHNIQUES

This chapter discusses the **important role of background knowledge in comprehension** as originally recognized by Bartlett (1932) and later developed in schema theory (Rumelhart and Ortony 1977; Rumelhart 1980, see Chapter 5.1). The research findings from cognitive psychology were later applied to the teaching of both receptive language skills, i.e. reading and listening comprehension. For our purposes, the focus here is mainly on listening comprehension, even though L2 reading research in many aspects preceded L2 listening research (see Chapter 5.2 and Chapter 5.3 and also Chapter 4.1).

First we examine the 'schema' concept and schema theory and demonstrate the relevance of schema-theoretic views of listening to listening instruction for adult EFL students (see Chapter 5.1 and Chapter 5.2). Schema theory explains how knowledge is structured in human memory and how comprehension is affected by people's existing knowledge. According to schema theory, listening comprehension is an interactive process between the listening passage itself and the listener's acquired background knowledge, which is organized in abstract structures or 'schemata' (e.g. Rumelhart 1980; Rumelhart *et al*. 1986; Dunkel 1986; Long 1989; Cook 1989: 69).

In teaching listening, we have to acknowledge the fact that L2 listening comprehension involves the L2 student's knowledge of the world. This general knowledge is sometimes termed 'background knowledge', 'prior knowledge' (e.g. Celce-Murcia 2001: 88), 'non-linguistic knowledge' (e.g. Lynch 2009: 47) or 'schematic knowledge' (e.g. Anderson and Lynch 1988: 13; Hedge 2000: 411).

Secondly, we focus on the current theory of Information Processing in listening comprehension (see Chapter 5.3), including the distinction between bottom-up and top-down processing (see Chapter 5.4). Classroom implications of the schema-theoretic view of listening for L2 listening instruction are discussed, with pre-listening techniques suggested for bringing about listener-centred L2 listening (see Chapters 5.3 to 5.5).

5.1 Schema theory and the 'schema' concept

Schema theory is a psychological theory of the mental representation of complex knowledge. It was originally formed in cognitive psychology in the 1970s (Rumelhart 1980; Rumelhart *et*

al. 1986; Sternberg 2009) and later it influenced education including FLT and particularly listening instruction (e.g. Dunkel 1986: 101; Long 1989: 33). Schema theory describes how knowledge is stored in memory and exploited in comprehension. It focuses our attention on the role that prior knowledge plays in acquiring new knowledge; it emphasizes the role of so called top-down processing based on students' schemata (see Chapter 5.4).

The most important concept is the concept of the *schema* (plural: *schemata*). The term 'schema' originates in the work of the British cognitive psychologist Sir Frederic Charles Bartlett (1886–1969), who is often considered the founder of cognitive psychology (e.g. Sternberg 2009). Bartlett carried out a series of studies on the recall of Native American folktales and noticed that many of the recalls were not accurate but were unconsciously modified in that they involved the replacement of unfamiliar information with more familiar information. In order to account for these findings, Bartlett (1932) proposed that every individual person has unconscious mental structures, i.e. 'schemata', which represent his or her stored knowledge about the world.

Nowadays it is generally accepted that the interpretation of any new information, in our case in the form of listening input, is thus constructed through the old type of information. In other words, in the listening comprehension process the information we hear is in fact being constructed in our head in a form that is consistent with our schemata (Lynch 2009: 47-48). To demonstrate how schemata work Brown and Yule (1983: 236) give a classic example of the 'restaurant schema'. This particular schema helps us understand sentences spoken by the waiter, even in a less familiar foreign language, because we know what to expect in such stereotyped situations.

Related to the 'schema' concept are the concepts of 'frames' and 'scripts' as frame theory and script theory preceded the present form of schema theory (e.g. Brown and Yule 1983; Long 1989: 33; Betáková 2010: 37-38). Interestingly, the 1st half of the 20th century was in fact not ready for Bartlett's theory because it was not in agreement with the behaviourist approach of that time (see Chapter 3.3.4). As a result, the 'schema' construct faded from view for some time. However, the construct was reintroduced in psychology in the 1970s through the so called *frame theory* in research into artificial intelligence in computer science (e.g. Cook 1989: 69). The computer scientist Marvin Minsky was attempting to develop machines that would perceive and understand the world on a similar basis as humans do (i.e. key words activate a knowledge schema in the mind that is further used to interpret the discourse). He proposed that fixed generic information should be represented as a 'frame' (Minsky 1975,

cited in Brown and Yule 1983: 239). Furthermore, Roger Schank and Robert Abelson (1977, cited in Brown and Yule 1983: 241; Richards 1983: 222) developed the 'script' construct to deal with generic knowledge of sequences of actions. So the 'restaurant script' mentioned above would include actions like finding a table, ordering the food and drinks from the waiter, consuming what has been ordered and paying for it.

Schema theory, as presently developed, was elaborated in the late 1970s by the cognitive psychologist David Rumelhart and his colleagues. They elaborated on the 'schema construct' originally introduced by Bartlett (1932). Rumelhart (1980: 34) defines a schema as 'a data structure for representing the generic concepts stored in memory'. The roles of schemata are summarised in Rumelhart *et al*. (1986: 7):

> 'These large scale data structures (schemata) play critical roles in the interpretation of input data, the guiding of action, and the storage of knowledge in memory.'

In the late 1970s schema theory was introduced to education. In his classic 1977 paper, the educational psychologist Richard Anderson pointed out that schema theory can finally 'explain how people cope with novelty'. Anderson states that schemata provide a form of representation for complex knowledge and that the 'schema' construct provides a principled account of how old knowledge might influence the acquisition of new knowledge. (Anderson *et al*. 1977: 421)

A number of authors have derived instructional proposals from schema theory. In FLT, schema theory was soon applied to understanding the *reading process* (e.g. Hudson 1982; Carrell and Eisterhold 1983; Carrell 1984) and afterwards extended to the listening comprehension process as well (e.g. Dunkel 1986: 10; Long 1989: 33; Celce-Murcia 2001: 88), however, research into the effects of person's schemata on L2 comprehension has 'predominantly focused on reading, rather than on listening (Lynch 2009: 48). For example, it was confirmed that comprehension in reading can be improved by providing appropriate *pre-reading techniques* (Hudson 1982), that texts on more familiar topics are easier for students to comprehend than texts on less familiar topics (e.g. Grellet 1981), and that stories that match a formal schema are easier to read than stories with totally new narrative structures (e.g. Carrell 1984). Nevertheless, as noted in Chapter 2.8, L2 listeners face other difficulties in interpreting messages compared with L2 readers, especially at lower proficiency levels.

5.2 Types of schemata that influence listening comprehension

Two main types of schemata have been traditionally distinguished, formal (or textual) and content schemata (e.g. Anderson *et al*. 1977, cited in Long 1989: 33). According to Lynch (2009: 48), formal schemata reflect knowledge of different text types or genres, whereas content schemata consist of knowledge of the relevant subject matter. Combining these two types allows listeners to exploit what they know in order to interpret what they heard.

In ELT literature, the most comprehensive typology of schemata can be found in Hedge, who defines schemata as 'knowledge, gained from experience, of the way the world is organised which is held as mental representations in the mind' (2000: 411). Discussing the importance of schemata for comprehension, she adds (2000: 233): 'The prior knowledge which listeners bring to the process of listening will greatly affect what they are able to get out of it'. Hedge distinguishes the following types of schemata (2000: 233):

5.2.1 Formal schemata

Formal schemata have to do with people's knowledge of the overall structure of particular discourse forms, e.g. if we play the beginning sentence of a listening text: '*Once upon a time...*', the students can make a prediction that the listening is going to be a fairy tale. As we can see, formal schemata involve especially the knowledge of lexis, grammar, and discourse.

5.2.2 Content schemata

Content schemata include: a) general world knowledge, e.g. knowledge of geography; b) socio-cultural knowledge, e.g. driving in Britain; c) topic familiarity, e.g. pop-music, sports, etc. Students with better knowledge of these are more likely to be successful in listening to 'familiar' texts.

5.2.3 Scripts in standardized language situations

Many listening situations are predictable as they follow certain routines. We store in our memory information about situations that we have often experienced, e.g. at the doctor's surgery, at an airport check-in desk, etc.

Tab. 4 illustrates the moves that a typical script for visiting a doctor would involve.

- Doctor and patient greet each other;
- Doctor asks what the matter is;

- Patient describes his or her symptoms/problems;
- Doctor gives advice / prescribes a medicine / gives instructions;
- Doctor and patient say goodbye to each other.

Tab. 4: Script: 'At the doctor's surgery' (based on Ždímalová 2009b).

5.2.4 Are lower-proficiency students overusing schemata?

Considering the complexity of the listening process (see Chapter 2.4) and the interaction of the mind, language and the world, the description above is highly simplified. In reality the mind activates many schemata at once, each interacting with the other. (Cook 1989: 72)

Logically, because of their problems with linguistic knowledge (word recognition etc., see Chapter 2.5) lower level students sometimes seem to depend excessively on scripts or other background knowledge. For example, a beginner in English may experience the following situation when shopping in Britain:

- Shop assistant (about price): '*2.50 please*.'
- The student: '*Yes'* and hands in the money.
- Shop assistant asks: '.....?'
- The student does not understand a word but replies: '*No, thank you*.' (assuming the shop assistant asked: '*Would you like a receipt*?', but it might have been just the student's expectation).

Field (2008: 134) even asserts that lower level students 'fall back on their schemata' to the extent that they stop noticing the actual language (see also Chapter 1.4). He concludes that lower-proficiency learners 'overuse' their schemata. This is a misleading statement, though.

A counter claim could argue that this situation is perfectly understandable given the students' limited linguistic knowledge. The same happens to us even in our L1 when we cannot hear the message clearly, e.g. because of outside noise. Then we have to 'overuse' our schemata because the linguistic code source is not available. Recently, I was watching two politicians announcing important news about their party's elections on TV, and suddenly very loud drilling coming from my neighbour's flat severely impaired my comprehension for several minutes. I could hardly hear one in ten words. What do you think I did? I started to concentrate on the politician's facial expressions and body language and my mind was putting together all the possible background knowledge I possessed. Was I 'overusing' the schemata?

Field (2008) (perhaps unfortunately) takes his argument further and concludes that teachers should not overestimate and 'overuse' the pre-listening stage and suggests cutting the time allocated for the stage, even without any research findings how long the stage normally takes etc. (see Chapters 1.4 and 4.6.8). We should at least consider that the contrary is true, and that by not activating the students' schemata in the pre-listening stage, we risk our students' becoming overloaded and perplexed at the beginning of listening as they are searching for appropriate schemata (see also the following chapter).

5.3 Current theory of listening: Information Processing model of comprehension

One of the most recent theories of listening is based on the Information Processing (IP) model, originally developed during research into artificial intelligence in the 1980s. The IP model draws on schema theory (see Chapter 5.1) and uses the concepts of 'input', 'processing', and 'output'. Human beings are viewed as limited processors of the incoming messages.

One of the main proponents of IP, the American cognitive psychologist John Anderson, elaborated a three-stage model of listening that consists of: (1) *perception*, (2) *parsing* and (3) *utilization* (Anderson 1985, cited in Lynch 2009: 11). In the first stage, listeners have to identify what is being said, in the second stage listeners interpret what is being meant, and in the last stage listeners respond in an appropriate manner. (Lynch 2009: 10-11).

L2 listening comprehension experts have taken Anderson's model further and currently identify four interdependent and overlapping cognitive operations in the listening comprehension research: (1) *phonological perception*, (2) *word recognition*, (3) *grammatical parsing*, and (4) *contextual inferencing*. These processes are assumed to happen simultaneously within the listening comprehension process. (Rost 1999: 290)

As a result, in such a complex mental process (see also Chapter 2.4) we often have to allocate more attention to one aspect of the task and less to another. It implies that when students are not familiarized with the listening topic in the pre-listening stage (see also Chapters 4.4 and 5.2.4), they focus most of their attention on identifying the topic in while-listening and have less capacity left for decoding the linguistic form of the message.

5.4 Bottom-up versus top-down processing in listening instruction

Since the early 1980s two views have been distinguished in the information processing of listening texts: top-down and bottom-up processing (e.g. Brown and Yule 1983; Cook 1989; Richards 1990; Hedge 2000; Celce-Murcia 2001; Hinkel 2006).

Top-down processing involves the knowledge that a listener brings to a text. In L2 listening instruction, students use *prior knowledge* of the *context* and *situation* within which the listening takes place to reconstruct (or interpret) the meaning of the listening text (see also Chapters 4.3.2 and 4.4.2). Context and situation include factors such as knowledge of the topic, the speaker(s), their relationship to each other, their relationship to the situation, the setting, the purpose of the spoken text, and the knowledge of what has been said earlier (Brown and Yule 1983: 234; Nunan 2002: 239; Hinkel 2006: 117). We can see that in top-down processing students in fact use their schemata, i.e. background knowledge (see Chapters 5.1 and 5.2). A pre-listening technique that is based on top-down processing is for example story prediction based on pictures (e.g. Ždímalová 2009b, see Chapter 5.5).

In *bottom-up processing*, on the other hand, listeners use their linguistic knowledge – they decode the meaning from the smallest meaningful units (morphemes), to words, phrases, utterances, and the whole texts (e.g. Cook 1989: 79-80; Scrivener 2011: 257-259). This type of processing in fact corresponds with the pre-listening techniques of pre-teaching key words and brainstorming lexis on the listening topic (see Chapter 5.5 and also Appendix 2: Q23b and 23c).

Based on the textbooks of the 1960s-1970s we have mentioned in the previous chapters (e.g. Alexander 1967, see Chapter 3.1 and Chapter 4.2), we can see that until the early 1980s listening exercises were based mainly on bottom-up processing. Historically, this type of processing was represented by the training of pronunciation or 'listening for perception' of individual sounds (Ur 1984: 33, see also Chapters 1.3 and 4.3.2), which started to be the primary goal of FLT during the Reform Movement (Chapter 3.3.2) and continued during the ALM (Chapter 3.3.4). A good example of the assumptions about L2 learning held then is Carroll's definition of L2 learning (Carroll 1965, cited in Stern 1983: 470):

> 'Learning a language is a process of acquiring conscious control of the phonological, grammatical, and lexical patterns of the L2, largely through study and analysis of these patterns as a body of knowledge.'

These views of L2 learning and listening instruction soon started to change due to the influence of communicative approaches in FLT in general (see Chapter 3.5) and secondly due

to the influence of schema theory (see Chapter 5.1). Anderson and Lynch (1988: 139) define 'schema' in the context of listening as 'a mental structure consisting of relevant individual knowledge, memory, and experience, which allows us to incorporate what we hear into what we know'.

The pre-listening stage started to change, similarly to the pre-reading stage in the reading instruction (Hudson 1982, see Chapter 4.1), and *pre-listening techniques* started to focus more on top-down processing, i.e. introducing students to the context of the listening passage, activating their schemata prior to the listening (e.g. Anderson and Lynch 1988: 13; Long 1989: 33).

However, since the 1990s we have seen an ongoing discussion on the importance of bottom-up versus top-down processing and the research results seem to be inconclusive (see also Chapter 1.4). Some authors argue for a primary focus on bottom-up processing (e.g. Tsui and Fullilove 1998; Field 2008), others favour a focus on top-down processing (e.g. Carrell 1984; Tyler 2001). Consequently, there is not much agreement on which type of processing should be given priority in listening instruction (e.g. Lynch 2009: 53-54). Tsui and Fullilove (1998) comment: 'While it is generally agreed that listening requires a combination of both forms of processing, their respective contribution to effective listening is still not clearly understood'.

The result of the discussion seems to be that both types of processing are equally important and support each other. Both top-down and bottom-up strategies function simultaneously and are mutually dependent. Therefore teachers should provide students with practice in both kinds of processing (Celce-Murcia 2001: 74; Nunan 2002: 239).

Listeners understand the listening passage provided that the incoming input that the conceptual predictions made through top-down processing are compatible with the incoming input recognized through bottom-up processing. In case of a mismatch, the listener has to revise his/her interpretation in order to make the two compatible once again.

Consequently, learners should be instructed not to rely on their background schemata too much. While it is generally accepted that providing a relevant schema improves comprehension and recall of listening passages, Bartlett (1932) showed in his early experiments that *strong schemata* may also distort listening comprehension and memory because they 'force' us to understand the input 'our way'. In such situations we fill in some details (on the basis of our schema) which are not actually given to us (Cook 1989: 70). Some experts point out that strong schemata were shown to lead to high rates of inferential errors in recall (Lynch 2009: 48).

To conclude, the approach we have adopted in our research suggests that relevant knowledge should be activated before listening. This has pedagogical implications in that teachers should try to elicit prerequisite knowledge from their students or provide the knowledge whenever students cannot supply it themselves. Many of these teaching principles are not novel because some experienced teachers were already carrying out similar practices in the L2 classroom (e.g. Ur 1984; Underwood 1989), but schema theory appears to provide a theoretical and empirical basis for our current listening methodology (e.g. Rost 2002; Lynch 2009).

5.5 Typology of pre-listening techniques

Generally, there is no current repertoire of pre-listening techniques that could be easily applied in the research project. To our knowledge, the only typology of pre-listening techniques is presented in Underwood (1989: 112). It is illustrated in Tab. 5.

- Looking at pictures and talking about them
- Looking at a list of items / thoughts / etc
- Making lists of possibilities / ideas / suggestions / etc
- Reading a text
- Reading through questions (to be answered while listening)
- Labelling
- Completing part of a chart
- Predicting / speculating
- Pre-viewing language
- Informal teacher talk and class discussion.

Tab. 5: Typology: Pre-listening activities (Underwood 1989: 112).

Because of further development in listening instruction and pre-listening techniques since the 1980s (see Chapter 4), there is a need to update Underwood's typology. For example, 'reading a text' before listening is not recommended as part of the listening session and for the purposes of listening instruction the technique of inferring the listening topic/expectations from reading a short text is now preferred (see the typology below). 'Reading through questions' is now termed 'question preview' or 'pre-set questions' (see Chapters 1.4 and 4.2) and is deemed an integral part of any intensive listening phase (see Tab. 3 in Chapter 4.6.5),

so it is not necessary to consider it a separate pre-listening technique as such. Last but not least, 'pre-viewing language' is a shelter term that may entail e.g. pre-teaching lexis, brainstorming lexis, or revising grammatical structures.

Based on my teaching experience and on current standard general textbook titles, namely the *New English File* series (2007), I have been able to identify the following distinct pre-listening techniques illustrated in Tab. 6:

a) Brainstorming students' ideas / suggestions for the given listening topic.
b) Brainstorming students' suggestions of lexis for the given listening topic.
c) Teacher familiarizes students with the 'less familiar' key words in the text.
d) A picture description and discussion introducing the given context of the listening text.
e) A story prediction based on pictures.
f) Students' predictions / guesses of the answers to the given listening comprehension questions.
g) Students' filling information into a table / graph / map, e.g. geographical data.
h) Inferring the listening topic from a short list of lexis included in the listening text.
i) Inferring the listening topic from reading a short text (connected with the listening topic).
j) Inferring the listening topic from listening to the first few opening sentences.
k) Students' narration on the given topic, e.g. 'a disastrous holiday'.
l) Grammar revision in the context, e.g. the Past Simple for a narrative in the past.
m) Revision of a communicative language function in the context, e.g. 'asking for/giving directions'.
n) Free conversation on the given listening topic.

Tab. 6: Typology of pre-listening techniques (Ždímalová 2013).

Based on Chapter 5.4, it may be possible to attempt to distinguish bottom-up and top-down characteristics among the identified techniques. While brainstorming lexis, pre-teaching lexis and revising grammar should belong to preparation for bottom-up processing, free conversation would be characterised mainly by top-down processing. However, given the interactive nature of the two types of processing and the fact that our research question 'Which techniques do our students deem most effective?' was a general one (see Appendix 2:

Q29), it is possible to base the survey just on the typology of pre-listening techniques presented here.

In the survey, students' perceptions of the concrete *pre-listening techniques* are studied regarding the following questions (see also Chapter 7.5):

- Which common pre-listening techniques are used most frequently in the classroom? (Appendix 2: Q23).
- Which pre-listening techniques are perceived as the most effective for listening comprehension from the students' perspectives? (Appendix 2: Q29).
- Are there any differences as a function of proficiency level?

Answers to these questions will be useful both for future research and for teaching practice. Every teacher should have a wide repertoire of the techniques to be able to apply them when appropriate; some of them are frequently included in textbooks, but some of them are not and teachers may include these in their everyday teaching practice provided that they are familiar with them.

EMPIRICAL PART

The main aim of the empirical part of the dissertation is to investigate adult students' perceptions of listening instruction and in particular of the pre-listening stage in listening instruction (see Chapters 1.5, 4.6 and 5.5).

6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research project investigated perceptions and perspectives of the target learner population (adult EFL learners of face-to-face language courses at A1-B1 proficiency levels) which relate to learners' language needs, listening skills, listening instruction in general and the pre-listening stage in particular.

The research design included three preliminary phases and the dissertation research proper. All parts of the research project were conducted in Prague, the Czech Republic, between 2006 and 2012. They were approved by the Czech Technical University (CTU) and the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic (ASCR). The course of the research can be summarised as follows:

- Two large-scale questionnaire surveys (the preliminary survey in 2006 and the dissertation survey in 2012);
- Semi-structured interviews (2008);
- Teacher observations (2011-2012).

Both questionnaires were originally devised by the present author and combined quantitative and qualitative components (Graham 2006, see Chapter 6.2.1 for details). With respect to the respondents' variation in L2 proficiency level and the research focus on lower-proficiency learners, the questionnaires (as well as the interviews) were devised in Czech. Both questionnaires were anonymous and voluntary.

The 2006 survey was paper-based and served as a preliminary investigation into A1-A2 adult student needs. The research sample consisted of one hundred EFL learners from lifelong learning courses at CTU. Based on the 2006 survey findings that the learners' main needs reside in learning speaking and the development of lexical knowledge (see Chapter 6.1.1), a *follow-up qualitative investigation* into A2 learner needs and perspectives focused more closely on learning speaking. This was carried out in the form of nine semi-structured interviews (with one class of learners studying in the same project, see Chapter 6.1.2). The

results of the qualitative inquiry were surprising because a new research topic emerged from the qualitative data, i.e. the teaching and learning of L2 listening in the EFL classroom (see Chapters 1.1 and 6.1.2).

These first two phases of the preliminary research (outlined above) were carried out with students of the *JARO Project*[11] at Jaspex Language Department at CTU. The project was funded by the EU and organised by the Prague magistrate. Unfortunately, due to external reasons, the project was interrupted (ultimately for a period of three years), and hence the present author had no opportunity to continue investigating exactly the same population of learners. However, a similar and even larger target population was found at ASCR, where the Department of Language Studies, fortunately, supported the plan to carry out the dissertation study on its premises (see Chapter 6.2.2).

Since September 2011, alongside my teaching role at ASCR, I have been honoured to work as the methodologist of face-to-face courses and thus had to carry out fifteen teacher observations within a year. Based on the records of the observed lessons, it was possible to deepen the investigation via the research questions related to the current format of the listening session and the proportion of the listening session stages (see the theoretical assumptions in Chapters 4.6.1, 4.6.2, 4.6.8 and the results in Chapter 6.1.3).

The dissertation survey conducted at ASCR in 2012 already aimed at investigating the main research topic, which had emerged from the 2008 qualitative data. The actual questionnaire format can be viewed in Appendix 2 and the original online version in Czech is available at: http://langdpt.avcr.cz/dotaznik

The survey was carried out with adult students of face-to-face courses in order to learn about their opinions, attitudes, needs, and preferences regarding listening instruction and pre-listening techniques. Altogether, data were collected from 473 foreign language learners (at varying levels of proficiency). The sample focused on 374 EFL learners.

In Chapter 7 data obtained from the 374 EFL respondents of the 2012 survey are analysed in detail according to the dissertation research questions (outlined in Chapters 1.5 and 4.6). The results are presented in a series of bar charts and summarising tables. The remaining additional data which were collected in the 2012 survey will be subject to future research projects at the Department of Language Studies, ASCR.

[11] JARO = Jazykový rozvoj pedagogických pracovníků

Between 2006-2012, a total number of 573 EFL students participated in the surveys and nine students participated in the semi-structured interviews. This number of participants provides a large enough sample to be representative of the target population (e.g. Brown 2001), even though we acknowledge that the research sample falls under the category of census (Ryšavý 2011: 89) and has to be approached as such (see Chapter 6.2.1).

6.1 Preliminary research

6.1.1 Preliminary research: Part 1: Needs analysis of A1-A2 learners based on questionnaire survey (2006)

In the 2006 preliminary survey, one hundred A1-A2 adult learners from the JARO courses at CTU were asked to identify their main needs in learning EFL and, among other things, to characterise their previous language study.

The JARO project at Jaspex Language Department, CTU, aimed at increasing the language proficiency of primary and secondary school teachers in Prague who taught subjects other than English. In the project, they attended two 90-minute English lessons per week for one and half years in 2005-2006 (before the project was interrupted).

Lower-proficiency levels prevailed in the project. In the survey sample, A2 learners comprised 67% and A1 learners 33% of the sample. As regards length of their previous study, 55% of the learners had studied English for more than four years some time before, with 25% stating that the total time of their previous study exceeded ten years. Despite the relatively long previous study, a lot of students had stayed at the same level for many years. In the Czech Republic, this situation is typical of adult EFL learners at lower proficiency levels, most of whom still have only a limited exposure to the target language (see Chapter 1.2).

The respondents included 85% females and 15% males. The majority of participants were between 30-60 years of age (37% were 41-50 years old; 27% were 31-40 years old; 24% were 51-60 years old). (For comparison with the ASCR sample, see Chapter 6.2.2.)

When asked about their language development needs, 82% of the participants stated that they deemed *speaking* the main language skill they want to improve. As for language knowledge, 61% identified *lexis* as the most important area for their language development. The published findings (Ždímalová 2009a) largely confirm the findings of other authors' research into adult student needs (e.g. Graham 2006; Field 2008: 2). In addition, they are also consistent with the 2012 survey in which 91% of the learners stated that they craved improvement in their

speaking skills and 54% in their lexical knowledge (see Chapters 7.2 and Appendix 2: Q6D and 7B).

6.1.2 Preliminary research: Part 2: Semi-structured interviews with A2 learners (2008)

For better understanding of the population's needs, the 2006 quantitative investigation was followed by semi-structured interviews with a class of nine A2 learners who had originally studied in the JARO Project and continued with Jaspex public language courses for just one 90-minute lesson a week when the project was interrupted.

The interviews were conducted at Jaspex, CTU, between April 2 and June 4, 2008. From a methodological point of view, qualitative research principles were followed (e.g. Gavora 1996; 2010; Švaříček and Šeďová 2007). At the beginning of each interview, I obtained the agreement of the interviewee. The interviews took 40-45 minutes each. All of the data were audio-taped and manually transcribed on the computer in Word (see the selected student quotes in Appendix 1).

After transcribing the nine interviews, I realised that the transcript data provided further evidence of the students' craving to improve their *speaking and knowledge of lexis*. However, I was surprised to find out that the interviewees frequently talked about their difficulties in L2 listening and the resulting anxiety (see Appendix 1 for selected portions of the transcribed text). Three students stated that they are hardly able to sustain a conversation with foreigners, especially English native speakers, because of their limited listening skills. '*I can read and write well, but listening is a real disaster*', said one interviewee. Another respondent described her encounter with a foreign tourist when travelling: '*Despite her enormous patience, I felt really handicapped in my conversation with the Dutch woman, because I could not follow what she was talking about and I could barely understand her questions*.'

Even though the interviewer's questions focused on learning L2 speaking, three interviewees suggested devoting more time to listening in the classroom. One learner shared her feelings: '*Sometimes, I'd say, I need more listening practice because I am really a weak listener…*' Another student presented the following view: '*The main problem is the fluency of the speakers and their linking… and this makes me really anxious at times*.'

According to the accounts of three interviewees, their ability to interpret the listening text from an *audiorecording* in the classroom lagged behind the level of the language they were capable of producing in speech. In addition, two interviewees expressed their desire to use video more often, instead of audiorecordings. The following excerpt from an interview

illustrates this point: '*I need the combination of hearing and seeing. Listening to the radio is a big problem for me, but viewing the video or TV is better, and talking to a real person is even easier because I can slow the conversation down, ask for repetition and so on*.' This is in agreement with the principle of visual support (see Chapter 7.3.4). Space does not permit a detailed discussion of the other findings.

The analysis of the interviews revealed that, for most of the A2 learners I have interviewed, L2 listening poses a huge problem, especially when listening to audiorecordings in the classroom and to L2 speakers in oral communication when travelling. The learners' assertions regarding their weak listening skills and lack of understanding when listening to audiorecordings in class appeared salient because they pointed to problems that were not apparent from the 2006 survey. Listening instruction thus became the most important theme in the study.

In conclusion, for the purposes of this study, the interviews were used mainly as a starting point. The findings made it clear that learners' long-term needs in fact reside in interacting orally with other speakers of the target language. The findings also suggest that A2 students often seem to be anxious about listening to audiorecordings in the classroom. These results are consistent with the assumptions of current L2 listening experts (e.g. Field 2008: 27, see also Chapters 2.5, 2.11, 4.4.2) and also with the 2012 dissertation research (see Chapters 7.3.3, 7.3.4 and 7.3.8).

6.1.3 Preliminary research: Part 3: Teacher observations (2011-2012)

In the period of September 2011 to December 2012, I observed fifteen teachers teaching their 90-minute EFL lessons at the Department of Language Studies, ASCR, as part of my work duties as the methodologist of face-to-face courses (see Appendix 3 for the teacher observation form). In most cases, the teachers gave me a detailed lesson plan and I stayed nearly until the end of their 90-min lessons (in two cases I had to leave earlier, approximately after 60 minutes of the observation, because of my job requirements, but no listening instruction had been planned in the lesson plans for these periods of my absence). In total, I observed 1245 minutes of teaching time.

The observations are done regularly on a yearly basis. Their primary purpose is teacher development and reflective teaching, and the main principles are based on Richards and Lockhart (1999) and Chapman (2007). The observations were scheduled by the Head of the department so I did not have any influence on the order of the groups observed, the time of

the lesson, or the level of students' proficiency. An integral part of each observation is recording the timing of all activities observed, including their stages (in case of the listening session i.e. the proportion of pre-listening, while-listening and post-listening), and a short description of the teacher's moves and class activities (see Appendix 3).

For the purposes of this research, the observation records were analysed in March 2013 and the specific factors related to timing (see Chapters 4.6.2 and 4.6.8) were studied. Based on the analysis, two useful conclusions can be drawn.

The first finding concerns the time devoted to listening instruction in a general language course. Out of the fifteen teachers, eleven decided to teach listening at some point in the observed lesson. Including the four teachers who devoted no time to listening instruction, on average, the teachers devoted 12.4 minutes out of the 90-minute lesson to listening instruction, which accounts for 14% of the teaching time. However, when we consider only the eleven teachers who decided to teach listening in the observed lesson, the average time allocated for listening instruction amounts to 16.9 minutes out of the 90-minute lesson, which accounts for 18.8% of the class time. Nevertheless, as hypothesised, teachers do not spend enough time on listening instruction. According to both experts and our students considerably more time needs to be allocated, at least 20 minutes continuously and according to the 2012 inquiry even 30% of the class time, as indicated by the respondents (see Chapters 4.6.2, 7.2.1 and 7.3.2).

The second finding is an answer to the argument with Field (2002; 2008) and supports our assumption that teachers do not overuse pre-listening (see Chapters 4.6.8). The eleven teachers who taught listening, spent between 0 - 8 minutes on pre-listening, with an average amount of 3.6 minutes spent on pre-listening. This forms 21.3% of the length of the listening session, whereas Field (2008: 84) estimates that, in the current conventional format, teachers spend on pre-listening about 44% of the listening session (i.e. about 9 out of 20 minutes). Furthermore, the length of the pre-listening observed reached 40% of the listening session only in one case. The teacher who spent the longest time on pre-listening (8 minutes) in fact decided to pre-teach unknown lexis (see Chapter 1.4), and then spent an additional 12 minutes on listening (see Appendix 3). On the other hand, two teachers did not spend any time on pre-listening and just told their students to listen and tick the multiple-choice questions in their books. Even though we can agree with Field (2002: 243; 2008: 85) that teachers should not spend more than five minutes on pre-listening, our results suggest that our teachers do not overuse the pre-listening stage because they spend less than four minutes on it.

In addition, I observed that in seven out of the eleven listening sessions students were supposed to work individually and cooperation was thus restricted (see Chapter 4.6.5). As noted in the previous chapters, this may contribute to learner anxiety (see Chapters 2.5, 4.4.2 and 7.3.8). I also observed that after eliciting the answers from the strongest listeners in class the teachers usually moved on with the lesson, sometimes leaving the weaker listeners puzzled. In the extreme, it may be hard for some teachers to resist the temptation to reveal some answers instead of eliciting them from the students. These observations are in agreement with the warnings of Field (2008) and Scrivener (2012).

As far as multiple replays are concerned, the ASCR teachers played one listening passage most frequently twice and the number of replays mostly seemed appropriate given the learners' level and the complexity of the listening task and listening materials chosen (see Chapter 4.6.7).

Furthermore, comparatively little post-listening seemed to be included in the observed lessons; it was definitely allocated less time than pre-listening. The majority of teachers closed the listening session by a discussion of students' answers and did not take the listening input study further; three teachers did provide their students with the listening transcript but spent relatively little time on language work. Ultimately, Field (2008: 83-84) may be correct in his call for extending the post-listening stage (see Chapter 4.6.8). However, this issue is beyond the scope of this study.

Just from this short account of the fifteen observed lessons, we can see that teachers' approaches to both listening instruction and the inclusion of the pre-listening stage vary considerably, but overall it can be concluded that teachers usually do not allocate enough time for listening (only 19% of the class time on average). Secondly, the pre-listening stage is not overused because it takes approximately four minutes. I acknowledge that this is definitely true of the teachers I have observed but may not be necessarily true of all teachers everywhere (see Chapter 4.6.8).

6.2 Dissertation research

6.2.1 Methods of data collection and analysis

The purpose of the research project was to learn more about our adult student needs, preferences, and opinions concerning L2 listening and to find out how the students perceive

listening instruction in the adult language classroom, with a specific focus on the pre-listening stage. The character of the quantitative research was mainly descriptive.

The survey was carried out at the Department of Language Studies, ASCR, where we teach mainly the ASCR employees, PhD students and the public (age: 21-73, mean age: 39). We teach six foreign languages, among which English dominates with approx. 72% of our students, French covers approx. 13%, German approx. 12%, and Spanish approx. 3%. We offer courses at all proficiency levels (CEFR A1-C2, see Tab. 7 below). Approximately one third of our courses are taught by native speaker teachers (see Appendix 2: Q8). As far as English is concerned, in the summer term 2012, there were 42 courses of general English, 19 exam preparation courses and 12 conversation courses.

In the period between October 2011 and April 2012, a questionnaire was developed in order to collect data from our students on how they perceive the listening instruction they get at our department and their learning of listening. The questionnaire construction followed the current research principles for social sciences (Pelikán 1998; Ferjenčík 2000; Brown 2001; Gillham 2007; Chráska 2007; Rabušic and Soukup 2007; Bryman 2008; Krejčí 2008; Vinopal 2009; Gavora 1996; 2010; Bahbouh 2011) and was consulted with several professionals from ELT (e.g. PhDr. Libuše Sýkorová and Kamila Etchegoyen Rosolová, PhD) and from the departments of sociology at the Academy of Sciences (PhDr. Jiří Vinopal, PhD) and at Charles University in Prague (Mgr. Petra Anýžová). The paper version of the questionnaire went through two pilot stages in March and April 2012, in which a different group of students completed the questionnaire with the researcher, commented on its clarity and their understanding of the wording used.

The fieldwork was carried out at the Department of Language Studies, ASCR, in the period of three weeks between May 9 and June 1, 2012. In cooperation with the IT department at the ASCR, an online version of the questionnaire was prepared and piloted. As regards research design, the pilot stages confirmed that the plan leads to usable results and could be used in the study proper.

We used a complete coverage of the wide-ranging census according to Ryšavý (2011: 89) who states:

> 'If there are good reasons to suppose that the investigated population uses the Internet and communication via email frequently, then nothing prevents the researchers from approaching the whole target population via the Internet.'

The purpose of the survey was explained to the students in advance, firstly by the department teachers in their courses and secondly in the introduction to the online questionnaire (see

Appendix 2). The link to the online questionnaire (http://langdpt.avcr.cz/dotaznik) was sent to all our students of face-to-face courses (1,012 students) via email. In the cover letter, the academic affiliation was mentioned and it was stressed that the questionnaires would be kept completely anonymous. At the same time, the potential respondents were encouraged to write any suggestions or complaints to the author of the questionnaire via email[12].

The participation in the survey was completely voluntary and anonymous; the students received two more reminders via email. In order to ensure a response rate as high as possible (Baruch 1999: 421), a proactive contact strategy was adopted (Vicente and Reis 2010).

The 2012 questionnaire combined the quantitative approach with a qualitative component (Brown 2001: 35-44; Graham 2006). The respondents were asked to answer a total of 48 questions, out of which five were open-ended (see Appendix 2). In addition, in the previous academic year, some of the closed questions, e.g. on L2 listening problems (Q30-34), purpose of L2 study (Q46) and so on, had been asked as open-ended questions in the present author's classes, thus ensuring that the students themselves would come up with some options for the final version of the questionnaire. Such an open-ended elicitation approach ensured that the participants' responses were not severely restricted. The analysis of the students' responses on open-ended items, which gave them an opportunity to enlarge the list of options, verified the correctness of the approach because no new options were indicated by the respondents.

In the questionnaire, two major types of items were used and then, in the analysis, juxtaposed to each other as they are obviously interconnected and cannot be studied without reference to each other:

(1) Asking about the reality in the classroom: e.g. How often is pre-listening used (in %)?
(2) Asking about the student needs and preferences: e.g. How often should pre-listening be used (in the student's opinion)?

The respondents were asked to answer the questions with their FL course in mind. Most of the courses have just one teacher. The students attending courses shared by two teachers (Cambridge exam preparation for PET/FCE/CAE/CPE) were given the instruction to choose just one of their teachers and answer the questionnaire with that particular teacher and course

[12] A total of 19 emails were received and answered. They consisted of nine emails stating reasons why the person would rather not answer the questionnaire (e.g. time constrains, complexity of the questionnaire and obligatory questions), five positive emails appreciating the opportunity to respond, and five neutral responses apologising for not responding because of some objective reasons (not attending the course, illness etc).

in mind. Nevertheless, there was also an option to fill in the questionnaire twice, separately for each teacher.

The ensuing statistical analyses were carried out on the SPSS software at the Department of Sociology, Charles University in Prague, with the support from Charles University Grant Agency (GAUK, grant No. 521912). The present author managed the grant and the research team included two other professionals: Petra Anýžová and Jiří Vinopal (mentioned above).

The statistical analyses were carried out for two samples, firstly for the whole sample (the students of all the foreign languages studied) and secondly for the English as a foreign language (EFL) students (sub)sample. The response rate was 47% for the whole sample and 51% for the EFL students sample, which can be considered very high, given the fact that it was an online survey (Gavora 2010: 134). In total, we received 473 replies[13] , out of which 374 (i.e. 79%) participants were EFL students and the rest were students of the other languages (French: 10%, German: 8%, and Spanish: 3%).

When we compared the statistical analyses of the two samples, no significant differences were found. For the purposes of this research, we will concentrate solely on the results from the EFL sample (N=374, see Tab. 7 for the sample description).

6.2.2 Research sample description

Tab. 7 describes the characteristics of the research sample that consists of 374 EFL students. Traditionally, three quarters of our adult students are females. As far as age is concerned, the sample is dispersed across all adult age categories from 21 to 73 years of age, with nearly half of the population (47%) younger than 35, which means that they were 10 years old or younger at the time of the Velvet Revolution of 1989 (see Chapters 1.2 and 3.3.1), and the youngest students under 23 were born after. The majority of respondents have tertiary level as their highest finishing level of education, with 21% of respondents who obtained a PhD in the past and an additional 24% in the process of their PhD studies. The ASCR is a huge institution and our students work in various professions; apart from researchers there are, for example, accountants, secretaries, technicians and so on (see Appendix 2: Q44 and Q45).

[13] Unfortunately, in our case it was not possible to describe *non-response rate* in more detail and to distinguish contact rate from cooperation rate, mainly because of financial and organizational reasons. Therefore, in the analysis our group of respondents was worked with appropriately as with a countable population which has its own statistical limitation as for statistical induction.

	Men				Women		
Gender	27%				73%		
	21 - 27	28 - 34	35 - 41	42 - 48	49 - 55	56 - 62	63 - 73
Age group	27%	21%	13%	11%	14%	10%	4%
	Secondary school	Higher Education	B.A./BSc.	M.A./MSc.	Ph.D.		
Education	15%	2%	5%	57%	21%		
	A1	A2	B1	B2	C		
Proficiency level *	4%	22%	18%	37%	19%		

Tab. 7: EFL Sample Description.

* Using the scale of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

The original plan was to collect data from students of all proficiency levels and then, in the analyses, to focus primarily on lower proficiency levels, A1-B1, as compared to B2-C2 levels. However, as noted in Tab. 7, A1 students form only 4% (N=14) of the EFL sample and therefore we cannot make relevant conclusions based on the analysis of the A1 proficiency level (see also Chapter 8.2). On the other hand, A2, B1, and B2 proficiency levels are represented by relatively large amounts of students[14] (minimal N=69, see the B1 level in Tab. 7). As for C1-C2 proficiency level, it is represented mainly by C1 students (N=61), to whom very few C2 students (N=10) have been added, and the group of students is labelled 'C' level. Consequently, when drawing conclusions from this study, the most reliable results will be obtained for A2-B2 proficiency levels, and the most important implications for our purposes will concern mainly teaching EFL students at A2-B1 proficiency levels.

[14] Brown (2001: 73) states that 'a large sample is generally more representative of the population than a small one'.

7 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Statistical analyses of the data collected from the EFL students sample revealed a number of notable results. The most interesting findings are presented and discussed in the following five subchapters: (1) Students' self-evaluation in the main language skills and language systems, (2) Needs analysis, (3) Teaching and learning listening in the language classroom in general, (4) The pre-listening stage in the listening session, and (5) Pre-listening techniques.
The research results will help us juxtapose the students' perspectives and perceptions with the *teaching principles for effective L2 listening instruction* outlined in Chapter 4.6 (based mainly on Field 2008), and/or to formulate our own teaching principles for teaching lower-proficiency levels acceptable and relevant for both learners and teachers.

7.1 Students' self-evaluation in the main language skills and language systems

This section of the questionnaire examined how students assess themselves in the four language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) and their knowledge of language systems (grammar, lexis, spelling, pronunciation, and communicative language functions). (See Appendix 2: Q4 and Q5 and also Chapter 2.1.1).

7.1.1 Students' self-evaluation of their language skills

The learners graded their own language skills on the scale from 1 to 5, as if in school (Czech grading system: 1 = the best grade, 5 = the worst grade). *Speaking* and *listening*, the skills of oral communication, obtained the worst grades (mean 2.78 in speaking and 2.77 in listening), whereas the students' reading skill obtained the best grades (mean: 1.92). Fig. 1 summarises the results from Chapters 7.1.1 and 7.2.1, see below.
As far as *proficiency levels* are concerned, at first sight it may seem that the higher the level, the higher the students' self-assessment of their listening skills because the best grade was given at A1 level in 0% cases, at A2 level in 4%, at B1 level in 7%, at B2 level in 8%, and at C level in 16%. However, the detailed analysis of the relationship between proficiency level

and the students' self-evaluation of their listening skill did not show a strong relationship (Kendall's tau-b: 0.18)[15]. When we look closer at the students' grades, we can see that the worst grades surprisingly reach their peak at B1 level and this is in fact in agreement with Graham (2006). One reason might be that B1 students, some of whom are preparing for the PET exam, are more self-critical and realise better than at the lowest proficiency levels (A1-A2) the key role of listening in communication (affecting both the Listening and Speaking parts of the Cambridge English exams).

7.1.2 Students' self-evaluation of their language systems

On the other hand, in the students' assessment of their language systems (knowledge), there were only slight differences, with lexical knowledge scoring the worst (mean: 2.60) and pronunciation scoring the best (mean: 2.38). Overall, however, the students assessed all their language systems (knowledge) higher than their speaking and listening skills.
Fig. 2 summarises the results from Chapters 7.1.2 and 7.2.2, see below.

7.1.3 Conclusion to Chapter 7.1

Given the fact, that both skills of oral communication obtained the worst results in the learners' self-evaluation, (together with the fact that the majority of the learners stated that one of their primary purposes of language study is 'oral communication when travelling' stated by 63% of the respondents (see Chapter 7.2.3 and Appendix 2: Q46j), we can conclude, that listening is as important as speaking and deserves our attention, especially at lower proficiency levels. These results are in agreement with the current research findings (e.g. Graham 2006; Field 2008, see Chapter 4.6 and also Chapters 1.4 and 2).

7.2 Needs analysis

As noted in Chapters 1.4 and 3.6, adult learners bring *different needs, preferences* and *learning styles* to the learning process (e.g. Mareš 1998; McKay and Tom 1999; Ross 2007) and our teaching methods and principles should be flexible and *adaptive to student needs, preferences, learning styles and interests* (e.g. Richards and Rodgers 2001: 247).

[15] The Kendall's tau-b correlation coefficient, τb, is a nonparametric measure of association based on the number of concordances and discordances in paired observations (i.e. rank correlation). Concordance occurs when paired observations vary together, and discordance occurs when paired observations vary differently.

This section examined which language skill(s) and knowledge students need to improve most according to their opinions (see Appendix 2: Q6 and Q7). The respondents could choose a maximum of two language skills and two language systems they want to improve most from the given language skills/systems.

7.2.1 Student needs in the area of language skills

In agreement with the students' self-evaluation (see Chapter 7.1), the learners state that they want to improve mainly speaking (91%) and listening (55%), i.e. the skills they view as their worst. Nearly half of the students chose as their priority in learning the combination of 'speaking and listening' (49%). Fig. 1 demonstrates the correlation between the students' self-evaluation and student needs in the area of language skills.

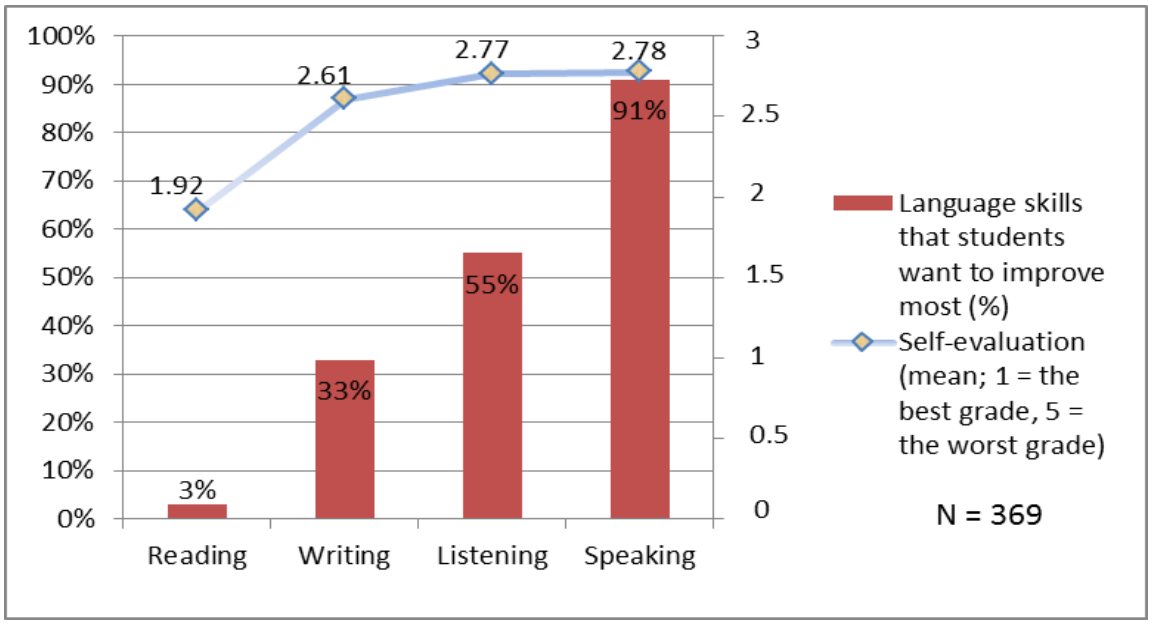

Fig. 1: Language skills: students' self-evaluation and which skills students want to improve most.

These results confirm our preliminary research results (Ždímalová 2009a: 9, see Chapter 6.1.1), where the students identified speaking and listening skills and knowledge of lexis as their priorities for improvement. The fact that adolescent and adult students crave improvement mainly in speaking and listening is also consistent with other researchers' findings (e.g. Graham 2006; Richards 2009) and with the Comprehensible Output Hypothesis, which states that students best improve their communicative competence in the

foreign/second language via using the language in oral communication, in particular in speaking (Swain 2000: 97-114; Rost 2002: 94, see Chapter 3.5.3).

7.2.2 Student needs in the area of language systems

Concerning the language systems, the learners would like to improve mainly *communicative language functions* (69%) and *lexis* (54%), which they in fact also assess as their worst language systems. The importance of communicative language functions for both speaking and listening is obvious (see Chapters 2.6, 3.5.1 and 7.3.4). In addition, when doing accuracy-based work within the listening session (see Chapter 2.6), it is beneficial to focus on lexis and communicative language functions.

The relationship between the students' self-evaluation and student needs in the area of language systems is shown in Fig. 2.

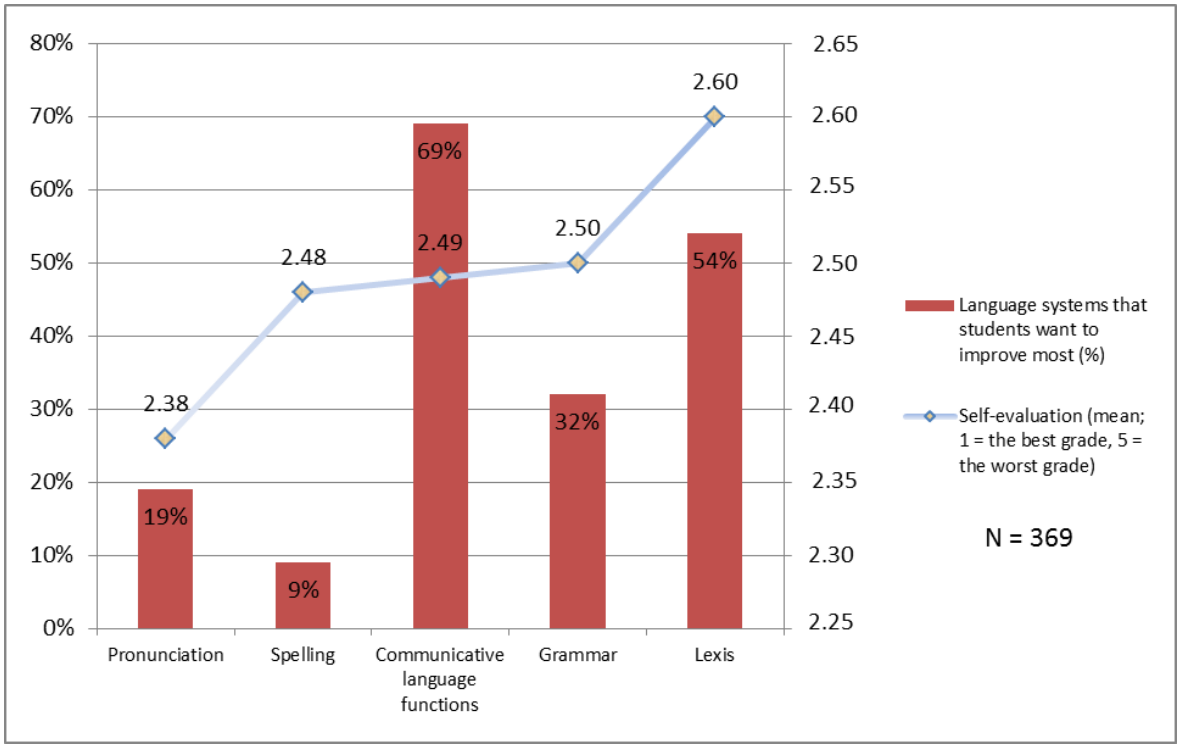

Fig. 2: Language systems: students' self-evaluation and which systems students want to improve most.

7.2.3 The primary purpose of students' foreign language study

The respondents had a choice from 16 options (based on previously collected suggestions from my students) plus an open-ended option (see Appendix 2: Q46). They could specify maximally five top choices. The most frequently indicated are:

1. Reading academic literature (64% of the students).
2. Oral communication when travelling (63% of the students).
3. Writing emails and letters (54% of the students).
4. Taking part at conferences (41% of the students).
5. Writing academic articles (40% of the students).
6. Oral communication with native speakers at work (32% of the students).
7. Reading for pleasure (32% of the students).

The two previous results noted in Chapters 7.1.1 and 7.2.1, the students' reading evaluated as their best skill and their need to improve mainly speaking and listening, lead us to believe that the main goal resides in their 'oral communication when travelling' (see also Chapter 6.1.2). Interestingly, the first top options indicate that students need to use all four language skills in their everyday situations, so our previously mentioned 'integrated skills approach' is perfectly justifiable (see Chapters 2.2, 2.10, 4.6.2 and 4.6.8)

7.2.4 Conclusion to Chapter 7.2

The students' perception that they need to improve firstly speaking and secondly listening is most probably based on the students' lack of communicative competence in the two oral communication skills (see also Chapter 7.1), and on the students' beliefs that they can best improve their communicative competence by practising speaking and listening. For the above mentioned reasons it is vital to integrate speaking and listening in the listening session, as sometimes mentioned elsewhere (e.g. Hinkel 2006; Lynch 2009: 110; Vandergrift 2007: 205, see Chapter 2.10), provided that the listening session is prolonged (see Chapter 4.6.2). This will automatically result in an additional desired effect of maximizing the Students' Talking Time (STT) in the classroom (e.g. Scrivener 1994: 14; Betáková 2010: 74, see Chapter 3.5.1). The additional desire of the students to improve their knowledge of lexis and communicative language functions comes as no surprise in the light of the research into the role of lexis and language functions in L2 learning and comprehension (see Chapters 3.5.1 and 3.5.3).

7.3 Teaching and learning listening in the language classroom in general

This section examined several important issues outlined in the conceptual framework in Chapter 4.6.

7.3.1 Students' evaluation of the quality of teaching listening

The learners evaluated the quality of their teachers' teaching in the course in three areas (see Appendix 2), (1) teaching in general (Q9), (2) teaching listening (Q10), and (3) teaching speaking (Q11), by assigning grades on the scale from 1 to 5 (as if in school, where 1 = the best grade, 5 = the worst grade). *Teaching listening* obtained the worst evaluation (mean: 1.82), closely followed by teaching speaking (mean: 1.77), whereas the quality of the teachers' teaching in general obtained the best grade (mean: 1.53).

In the evaluation of the quality of teaching listening (see Appendix 2: Q10) the respondents used all the grades on the scale and, according to the results, three distinct groups can be identified: excellent teachers of listening (grade "1": 41%), very good teachers of listening (grade "2": 41%), and teachers that may need to improve their teaching of listening (grades "3/4/5": 18%; this negative evaluation is dispersed across all proficiency levels).

This issue was analysed further in our research project and important predictors were identified for the successful (high-quality) teaching of listening from the students' perspectives. Hence, in the following sections of Chapters 7.3 and 7.4 we attempt to draw additional conclusions based on the students' perceptions of the quality of listening instruction they are getting in the current EFL courses.

Conclusion: Based on the students' evaluation of their teachers' teaching of listening, there are definitely things we can improve, namely allocating more time for listening instruction, expanding the range of listening input types, lowering teacher intervention and increasing learner interaction (see Chapters 7.3.2, 7.3.4 and 7.3.5).

7.3.2 Time allocated for listening instruction: the reality in the classroom versus students' preferences

One of the most important predictors is obviously the time which teachers devote to teaching listening in the EFL course (see Chapter 4.6.2). The learners in answer to this issue stated that, on average, 23% of the class time is spent on the teaching of listening, whereas they think that 30% of the time should be devoted to it (see Appendix 2: Q15 and Q16).

Given the fact that, in our case, one lesson is 90 minutes long, the 23% of the class time represents 20.7 minutes and the 30% of the class time equals 27 minutes out of the 90-minute lesson. The students' preference to devote to learning listening on average 7% more of the class time (i.e. 6.3 additional minutes) may not seem very significant at first sight. However, the detailed comparison of levels shows that the main dissatisfaction is at levels *A2 and B1* where the learners wish to increase the percentage by 7% and 9% respectively. Concretely, A2 learners would prefer an increase from 27% to 35% and B1 learners from 22% to 31% of the class time.

Furthermore, there is a significant correlation between the students' amount of dissatisfaction with the time allocated for listening (Q 15-16) and the perceived quality of teaching listening (Q10) (Kendall's tau-b = - 0.29; Spearman's rho = - 0.35). The correlation is depicted in Fig. 3. We can conclude that the more the students are dissatisfied with the relatively little time allocated for teaching/learning listening in the classroom, the worse they evaluate their teachers' teaching of listening.

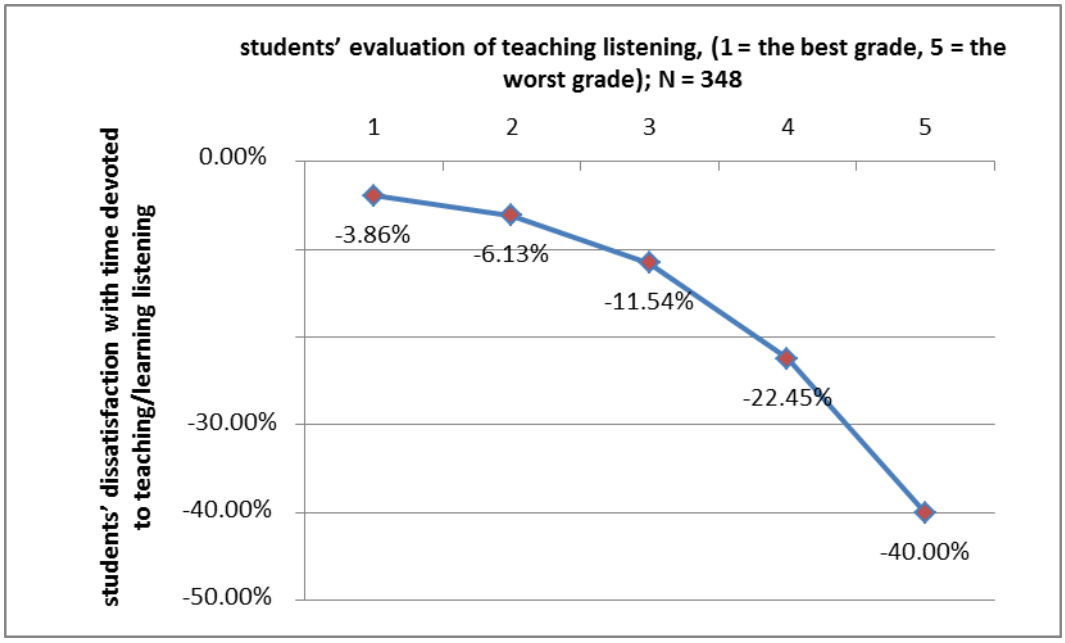

Fig. 3: Students' evaluation of teaching listening as a function of students' dissatisfaction with the time allocated for listening instruction.

Tab. 8 shows the situation in more detail and according to the dispersion across proficiency levels. The students who evaluated their teachers the best for teaching listening (grade 1, given by 41% of the students) were only a little dissatisfied with the amount of time allocated

for listening instruction (they would prefer to have only 3.86% more time allocated for it), whereas the students who evaluated their teachers the grades worse than grade 2 (grade 3 given by 15%, grade 4 given by 3% and grade 5 given by 0.5% of students) were very dissatisfied and would prefer to devote 12%, 22%, and 40% respectively, more time to the listening instruction than is currently done in their courses.

Evaluation	The whole sample	A1	A2	B1	B2	C
Grade 1	-3.86%	4.00%	-3.94%	-5.40%	-4.17%	-3.59%
Grade 2	-6.13%	-10.00%	-7.76%	-7.40%	-4.22%	-5.96%
Grade 3	-11.54%	-4.00%	-14.09%	-12.63%	-9.38%	-11.67%
Grade 4	-22.45%		-35.00%	-15.00%	-26.67%	-11.00%
Grade 5	-40.00%	-35.00%		-45.00%		

Tab. 8: Students' (dis)satisfaction with time devoted to listening instruction.

Conclusion: The results confirm that, from the students' point of view, listening instruction in the classroom deserves more attention and teachers should allocate more time for it especially at lower-proficiency levels, which is in agreement with the current literature (e.g. Rost 2002; Field 2008; Lynch 2009; Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari 2010, see Chapter 4.6.2). Our findings indicate that EFL students would prefer to devote at least 30% of the class time to listening instruction, i.e. definitely more than 20 minutes in the L2 lesson, as stated by Field (2008: 74).

7.3.3 Types of listening input used in the classroom and percentage of time devoted to them

The learners had to choose the types of listening input they practise in class and estimate their percentage so that in total it forms 100% (e.g. 50% radio, 30% course DVD, and 20% songs). There was a choice from 10 options and an open-ended one (based on Bahbouh 2011, see Appendix 2: Q18).

The results are demonstrated in Fig. 4. On average, learners indicate that the teaching of listening in our courses consists mainly of the following types of listening input:

1. Listening to audiorecordings (on CD/tape/computer) from the course textbook or supplementary textbooks: 65% of the time.
2. Listening to songs with a focus on their lyrics: 7% of the time.
3. Listening to authentic recordings of native speakers (e.g. from You Tube): 7% of the time.
4. Listening while viewing the course DVD/video: 6% of the time.
5. Listening to the teacher reading a text: 5% of the time.
6. Listening while viewing original films/DVDs/videos: 4% of the time.

The remaining 6% are distributed among the other four types, each of which received a mean figure only between 0–3% of the time.

Most of the learners answered that their teachers use several different types of listening input. However, 26% stated that their teachers use listening to course/textbook audiorecordings 100% of the time. In those cases, such listening to audiorecordings is probably overused at the expense of other types (e.g. viewing DVD/video), as described in literature (see Chapter 4.6.3). The analysis of the quality of teaching listening (Q10) shows that the more listening to course/textbook audiorecordings prevails, the worse evaluation of teaching listening the teachers get.

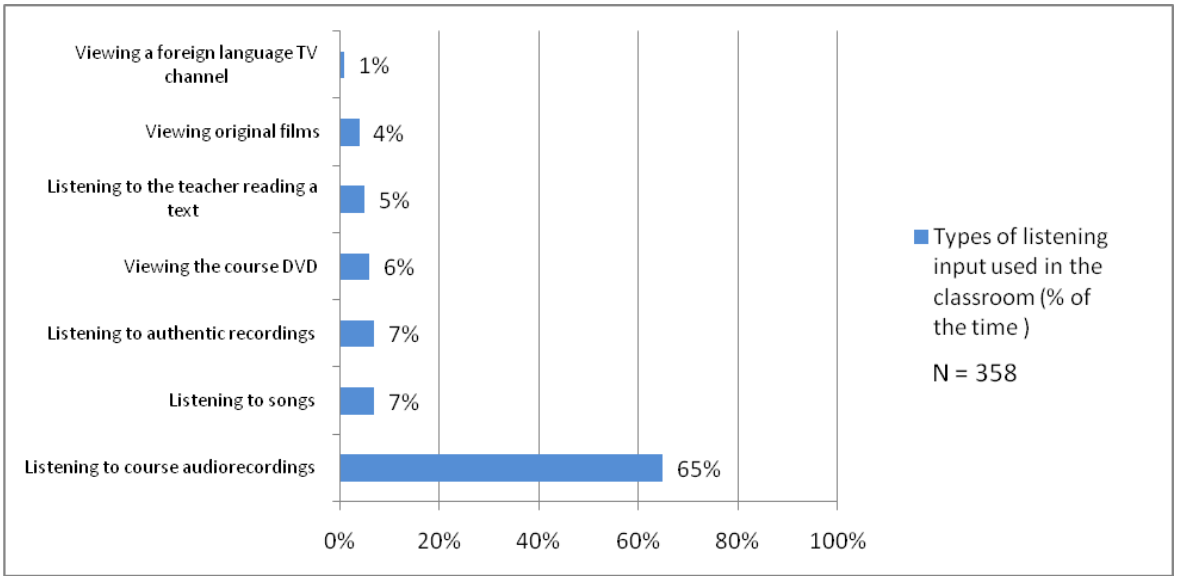

Fig. 4: Types of listening input used in the classroom and students' perceptions of the percentage of the time the types are used in the classroom.

Conclusion: The results confirm that listening to course/textbook audiorecordings forms the largest proportion in the teaching of listening, and at the same time that there are considerable differences among the teachers. The students evaluate better the teachers who use a variety of listening input types and media in the classroom (see the following chapter).

7.3.4 Types of listening input that students would like to practise more often in the classroom

The format of this question (based on Chapter 4.6.4) is different from the previous question in that the students did not assign any percentage to the chosen options here, but just indicated which type of listening input they would like to practise more; they could choose maximally three top options and a suggest an extra one (see Appendix 2: Q21 and 22).

The students lack the following types of listening input, with the percentage meaning how many students would prefer more frequent class use of the particular types:

- 1. Listening to authentic recordings of native speakers (e.g. from You Tube): 42% of the learners.
- 2. Listening while viewing original films/DVDs/videos: 34% of the learners.
- 3. Listening while viewing the course DVD/video: 27% of the learners.
- 4. Listening to songs with a focus on their lyrics: 26% of the learners.
- 5.-6. Listening to audiorecordings (on CD/tape/computer) from the course textbook or supplementary textbooks: 24% of the learners.
- 5.-6. Listening while viewing a foreign language TV channel: 24% of the learners.
- 7. Listening to the teacher reading a text: 6% of the learners.

Fig. 5 shows the comparison between the percentages of the two aforementioned questions. The blue colour depicts how many students (%) said that the particular type is used in their course, e.g. 26% students indicated that ‘listening to authentic recordings of native speakers’ is sometimes practised in their course. The red colour, on the other hand, shows how many students (%) would like to practise the particular type more often than they do now; in case of ‘listening to authentic recordings of native speakers’ it is 42% of all students, and so on.

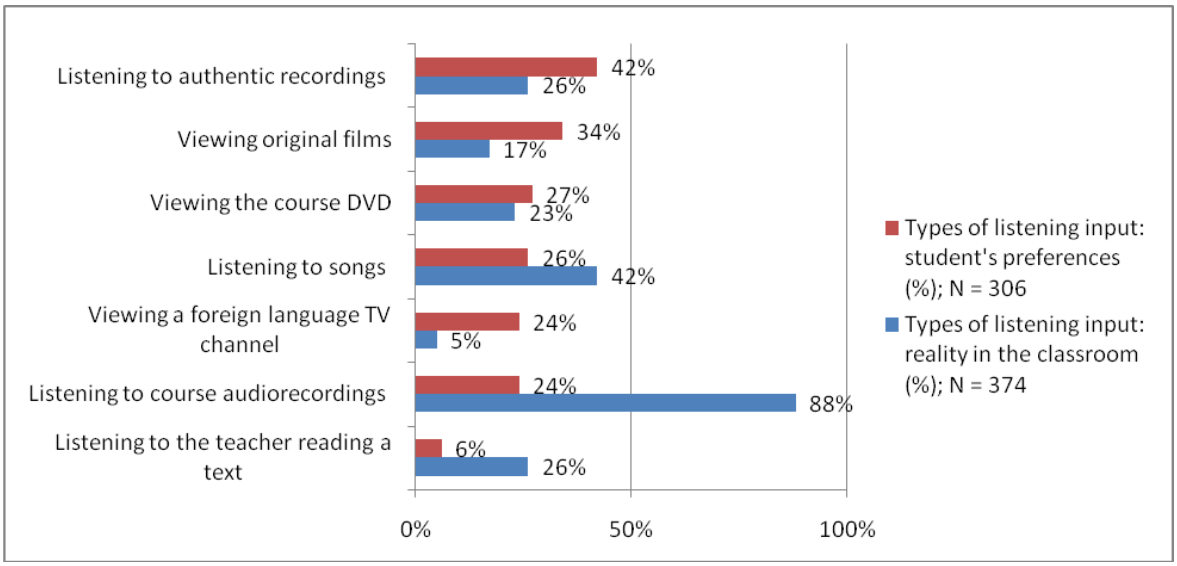

Fig. 5: Types of listening input: reality in the classroom versus students' preferences.

The results from the analysis of the aforementioned question indicate that it is possible to draw the following conclusions that apply to all proficiency levels.

The variety principle:

It is obvious that the students' preferences and tastes vary because the range of the listening input types they lack is much wider than the range of types used most often in the classroom (see Appendix 2: Q21 versus Q18 and also Chapter 7.3.3). This may have many reasons; mainly that variety is the spice of the classroom (Field 2008: 58; Ždímalová 2009a, see Chapter 4.6.4) and that students differ not only in their personalities but also in their learning styles (e.g. Reid 1997; Mareš 1998, see the 'visual support principle' below).

The authenticity principle:

The students would like their teachers to use authentic listening texts (mainly authentic recordings of native speakers, original films/DVDs/videos, and listening to songs) more often. Authentic texts are very useful (e.g. Rost 2002: 125; Vandergrift 2007: 200) and this applies even to the lower-proficiency levels (Field 2008: 277; Choděra 2006: 142, see Chapter 4.6.4).

The visual support principle:

The learners prefer those types of listening input which involve visual support, e.g. viewing films/DVDs/videos or a TV channel (see also Chapter 4.4.4). It is much better if listeners can connect with the speaker by seeing him or her (e.g. Riley 1981: 145; Field 2008: 15; Lynch

2009: 19; Keddie 2012), not only for 'lip-reading' and following the speaker's facial expressions and gestures, but also for understanding the context of the whole situation and the nature of the communicative language functions involved in the encounter (e.g. Mothejzíková 1991: 20-21). The results also correspond to the distribution of learning styles (visual/auditory/kinaesthetic) among learners, where the visual learning style is usually the most predominant. In our sample 59% of the learners prefer the visual learning style (Q41). Instruction based on preferred learning styles of learners is likely to be more effective (e.g. Gardner 1993; Reid 1997; Rost 2002: 105).

7.3.5 Mode of interaction

Another predictor is the mode of interaction in the classroom that prevails during the listening session (see Chapter 4.6.5 and Appendix 2: Q20). The respondents chose one from six options which distinguished whether students work individually, in pairs, or in groups of 3-4, and whether the answers are directly supplied by the teacher or whether the students' answers are discussed. The results are summarised in Fig. 6 in relation to the students' evaluation of teaching listening (see Appendix 2: Q10).

According to the students, the most frequently used variants of mode of interaction are:

1. 'Students work individually, the teacher asks for the answers and then the whole class discusses them.' – 54% of the learners. (Q10: mean: 1.83).
2. 'Students work in pairs: they discuss possible answers. The teacher asks the pairs for their solutions and then the whole class discusses whose answer/solution is the best.' – 22% of the learners. (Q10: mean: 1.70).
3. 'Students work in pairs: they discuss possible answers. The teacher asks the pairs for their solutions and then the teacher supplies the answers.' – 17% of the learners. (Q10: mean: 1.98).

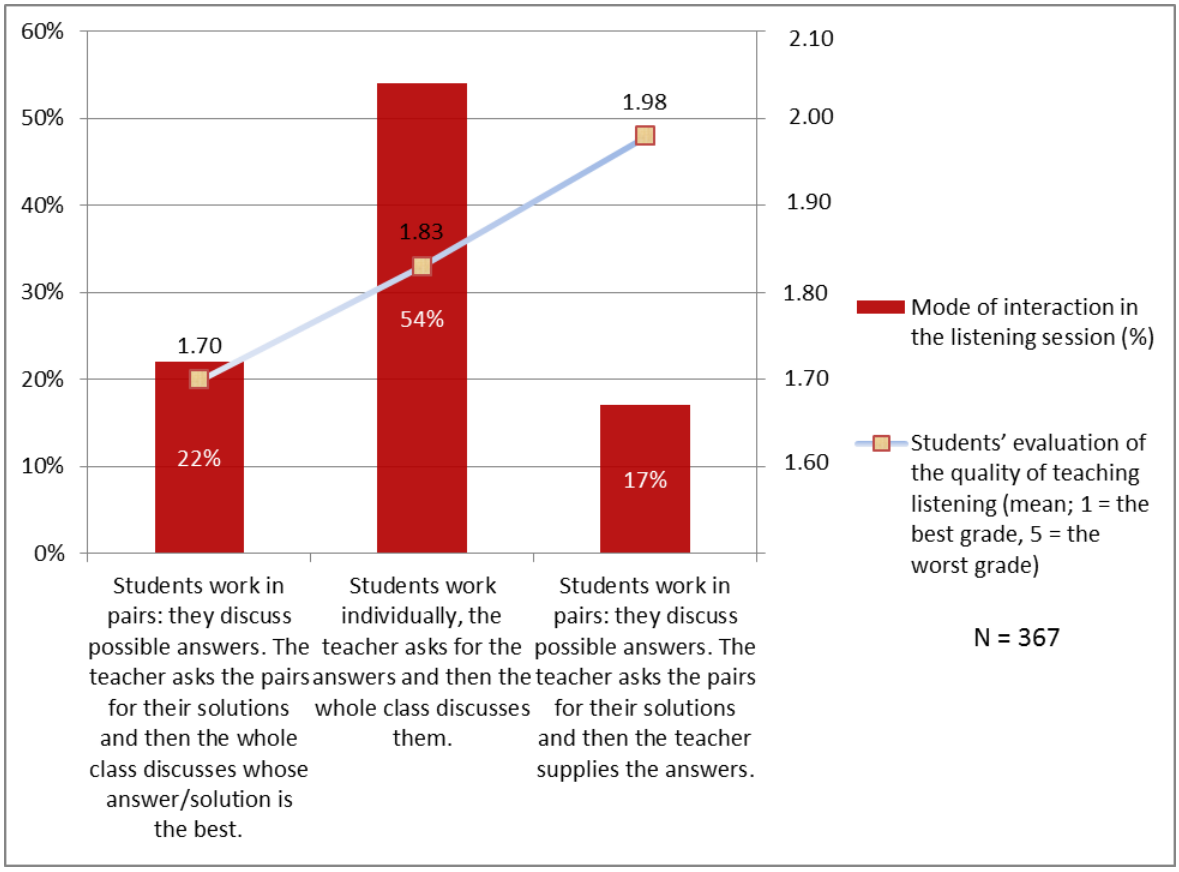

Fig. 6: Students' evaluation of teaching listening in relation to the mode of interaction in the listening session.

We can quantitatively compare only the three variants depicted in Fig. 6 because the other ones were chosen very rarely (N<10). Out of the three variants, the teachers were evaluated best when using the following mode of interaction:

'Students work in pairs: they discuss possible answers. The teacher asks the pairs for their solutions and then the whole class discusses whose answer/solution is the best.'

This applies to all levels, and teachers who use mainly the aforementioned mode of interaction received the best evaluation (an average grade of 1.70). On the other hand, interaction that includes groups of 3-4 students seems to be considered less effective by students as the average grade in teaching listening (Q10) is 2.00. These results confirm that students of all levels would welcome Field's proposal of 'higher learner interaction' and 'lower teacher engagement' in the listening session (Field 2008: 44, see Chapter 4.6.5), which is also consistent with Vandergrift (2007: 199) and Scrivener (2012).

As far as *proficiency levels* are concerned, the average grade was between 1.65 (given by C level students) and 2.08 (given by A1 students). At first sight the 0.43 difference in the evaluation given by A1 students as opposed to C level students seems significant and one can be tempted to conclude that the teachers at lower levels are perceived as worse in teaching listening than the teachers of higher levels. However, the results are inconclusive because the evaluation by students of the other levels varies, with the average grades of 1.79 (given by B2 students), 2.07 (given by B1 students), and 1.75 (given by A2 students).

When the relationship between students' proficiency level and students' evaluation of the teaching of listening was analysed in detail, ANOVA (ordinal) coefficients did not show any significant differences because p value > 0.05 (Kendall's tau-b = - 0.074, Gamma = -0.106, Spearman Correlation = - 0.087).

Otherwise, the Post Hoc ANOVA Test showed that the only significant difference may be found between C and B1 levels of proficiency. This is influenced by two facts; first, A1 level is represented by very few students (4% of the sample), and second, the teachers who teach A2 students got the second best evaluation for teaching listening.

In addition, C level students are said to have the listening skills automatised (e.g. Godfrey 1977; Rost 2002: 110; Field 2008: 213, see Chapter 1.4 and Chapter 2.4), and so they do not need to focus on practising listening as much as the lower levels (see also Chapter 7.1).

Conclusion: Among other things, teachers can improve listening instruction by facilitating pair work and discussion of students' answers, thus ensuring lower teacher intervention and higher learner interaction (e.g. Field 2008: 44, see Chapter 4.6.5).

7.3.6 Use of students' mother tongue (L1) as a means of communication in the classroom versus how much students want to use L1

In the whole sample, L1 is perceived as being used on average 18% of the class time and the students would like it to be used only 11% of the time (see Appendix 2: Q12 and Q13). Obviously the percentage in answers to both questions strongly correlates with the students' proficiency level, as shown in Fig. 7, but in general we can say that the students want to use L1 in the classroom less than it is currently being used.

The learners' answers vary a lot even within the same proficiency level, especially concerning the *reality in the classroom*. This means that the teachers' approaches to this issue vary too and this has consequences for the use of L1 in the classrooms of the same proficiency level.

The highest-proficiency students (at C level) seem to be very satisfied; they have 7% and they want 5%; and it is fair to mention that they often have native-speaker teachers. However, the

lower the proficiency level the more dissatisfied the students, e.g. the B1 students have on average 22% and would like only 11%, the A2 students get 30% but want only 20%, and the A1 students have 47% and want 29%. Based on the differences between the mean figures, we can see that mainly the lowest-proficiency students would like L1 to be used in the classroom less than it is in fact used (Kendall's tau-b = - 0.44).

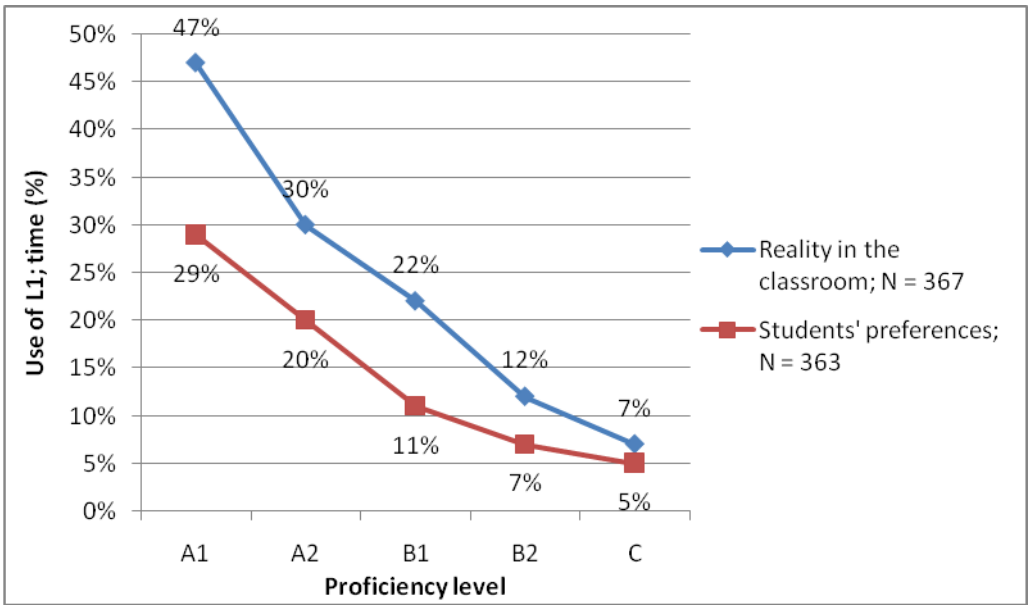

Fig. 7: Use of L1 (means of communication in the classroom) as a function of proficiency level: reality in the classroom versus students' preferences.

As far as age is concerned, the younger the students, the less time they want their L1 to be used in the classroom. The main reason is that younger students have been exposed to English much more intensively than the previous generations because of the focus on oral communication in CLT (e.g. Richards and Rodgers 2001) and globalisation in general, including opportunities for travelling and other effects of the post-revolution era in the Czech Republic since 1989 (Betáková 2010: 51, see Chapters 1.2 and 3.5.1). In addition, the relationship between the age variable and Q13 has been checked for a possible influence of the proficiency level variable but no significant correlation has been found (Partial Correlation: 0.15).

Conclusion: It is not surprising that the higher the level the less L1 is used as a means of communication in the classroom and the less the students want L1 to be used (see also Chapter 4.6.6). In general, higher-level students are satisfied. However, from the students'

perspectives, the teachers of lower levels should attempt to use L1 as a means of communication in the classroom less often than they do.

7.3.7 Multiple exposures to listening passages

In the FLT literature, recommendations vary as to whether the listening text should be repeated or not and how many exposures/replays there should be (see Chapters 4.3.2 and 4.6.7). Most authors usually suggest two (e.g. Elkhafaifi 2005: 505) or three replays (e.g. Vandergrift 2003: 433; 2004: 11; 2007: 199), but Field (2008: 45) proposes even five or six replays of the same text (see Tab. 3 in Chapter 4.6.5 and Chapter 4.6.7). We have to acknowledge that the number of replays depends on the task difficulty, so some authors simply suggest making the listening task relatively difficult and playing the recording as many times as necessary to fulfil the task (e.g. Scrivener 2011: 251, see Chapters 4.3 and 4.6.7).

As for the survey results (see Appendix 2: Q19), it is no wonder that the students' answers range from 1 to 5 replays because the teachers' approach to this issue naturally varies too. On average, one listening text is played 2.3 times (median: 2 times), with 62% of the 'twice' answer and 31% of the 'three times' answer.

Interestingly, in another question on students' problems with listening to audiorecordings (see Appendix 2: Q30-34), 74 students (20% of the sample) stated that one of their major problems is that it is '*not sufficient for them to listen to the text twice*' (Q33k). As this problem is in the 14th place out of the 36 problems listed, we cannot assume that the listening passage should be played on average more than three times.

These results are in agreement with the 'listening instruction stages' suggested by Vandergrift (see Chapter 4.6.7), in which the 'pre-listening: planning/prediction stage' is followed by three 'verification stages' and the 'reflection stage' (Vandergrift 2004: 11; Vandergrift 2007: 199; Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari 2010: 475, see Appendix 6).

Conclusion: Generally, the findings indicate that one listening text is played two or three times and the majority of the students (80%) consider it sufficient. One fifth of the students would prefer to listen to one text more than two times. Ideally, we can provide such students with listening for homework in order for them to listen to it as many times as they need (Hendrich 1970; Field 2008: 47, see Chapter 4.6.7). In fact, only 14% of our learners stated that they listen to '*listening homework set by their teachers*' (see Appendix 2: Q36b).

7.3.8 Learner problems in listening to audiorecordings

As noted in Chapter 2.5, the survey results (see Appendix 2: Q30-34) confirmed that our students view 'fast speech rate' as the problem number 1 (Q31h: 60% of the learners) in listening to audiorecordings in the classroom. This problem is closely followed by the 'word recognition' problem (Q31a: 57% of the learners) and the problem of 'outside noise' (Q30b: 44% of the learners), which is specific because our facilities are in a very busy part of the city centre. In addition, as one of the teacher's objectives in listening instruction is to prevent anxiety in learners (e.g. Lynch 1996: 102; Ždímalová 2009b, see Chapter 2.11 and also Chapter 4.4.2), in the future we should try to limit the outside noise in the department classrooms as much as possible.

The problems of *fast speech rate* and *word recognition* (e.g. Rost 2002: 20, see also Chapter 2.8) are connected with the students' range of vocabulary and are often indicated as the most frequent problems by L2 listeners around the world (Graham 2006, see also Chapters 1.4, 3.5.4, 7.1.2 and 7.2.2).

7.4 The pre-listening stage in the listening session

Most experts and teachers consider the pre-listening stage very useful for many reasons, the main being activating the students' schemata (e.g. Dunkel 1986; Underwood 1989; Berne 1995; Hedge 2000; Vandergrift 2004; Elkhafaifi 2005; Lynch 2009; Ždímalová 2009b). However, a few writers warn us against overusing the pre-listening stage (e.g. Rixon 1986: 68; Sherman 1997, see Chapter 1.4). Field (2008: 83-85) even suggests cutting down the pre-listening stage in order to save time for multiple replays in the while-listening stage, and this suggestion he applies to all proficiency levels (see Chapter 4.6.8). Also, there is not much agreement on which pre-listening techniques are the most effective for different proficiency levels. Therefore, we asked our students more specific questions about the pre-listening stage and pre-listening techniques.

7.4.1 Usefulness of the inclusion of pre-listening techniques in the pre-listening stage

A large majority (89%) of the learners approve of the inclusion of pre-listening techniques, with 58% considering the pre-listening techniques 'definitely useful', 31% 'rather useful', 4% 'rather useless', 1% 'definitely useless', and 6% stating that they 'do not know' (see Appendix 2: Q28). Not surprisingly, among the few learners (5%) who do not find pre-

listening techniques useful were mainly young adults (age 20-27) from high-proficiency levels (B2-C) who are generally better at listening and do not consider it their priority for improvement (their priority being mainly 'speaking' or a combination of 'speaking and writing', see Appendix 2: Q6).

This is in agreement with Berne (1995) and Sherman (1997) who concluded that students had strong beliefs and expectations about the inclusion of the pre-listening stage.

Conclusion: Based on the data, the inclusion of pre-listening techniques proved to be highly relevant to our students at all proficiency levels.

7.4.2 Students' evaluation of how well their teachers can use pre-listening techniques (in the classroom)

This evaluation (see Appendix 2: Q24) strongly correlates (Kendall's tau-b = 0.5) with the students' evaluation of their teachers' teaching of listening (see Appendix 2: Q10, see Chapter 7.3.1). Most students think that their teachers are able to use the pre-listening techniques very well (mean: 1.76). Only 3% of the students gave the worst two grades (grades "4" or "5" in the Czech grading system). This negative evaluation is dispersed across all proficiency levels.

Conclusion: Teachers who can use pre-listening techniques effectively are in most cases also considered very good teachers of listening. The less successfully the teachers use the pre-listening techniques, the less positively they are evaluated in the quality of teaching listening. Of course, the question remains whether and how accurately students can judge such features of our teaching.

7.4.3 Frequency of pre-listening techniques in listening instruction: students' perceptions of the reality in the classroom versus students' preferences

The results show that pre-listening techniques are applied before the majority of listening texts (see Appendix 2: Q26); on average in 70% of all listening texts (median 80%). Surprisingly, at higher levels the pre-listening techniques seem to be used more often (e.g. in 87% at C level) than at lower levels (or at least the higher-proficiency students perceive higher frequency of use than the lower-level students), the poorest result being at A2 level: in 63% of all listening texts (see the blue values in Fig. 8). We expected this to be just the other way round; given the automaticity of listening skill at higher levels (e.g. Rost 2002: 110; Field 2008: 213) we hypothesised that at higher levels there would be less need for pre-listening techniques than at lower levels.

Do our research results mean that pre-listening techniques are really used more often at higher levels or may the results mean that students just interpret the reality in the classroom this way? If pre-listening techniques are really used more often at higher levels, why is it so? One reason might be that at higher levels students are more experienced language learners and demand pre-listening techniques as effective tools for preparation; a completely different reason might be that higher levels usually have better qualified teachers, who may tend to use pre-listening techniques more often. Perhaps a further reason for the higher prevalence of pre-listening activities at higher levels might be exam classes and the importance of listening exam paper strategies.

Nevertheless, in the 2012 summer semester the present author was teaching three A2 level classes at the Department of Language Studies and especially with this proficiency level she attempted to use pre-listening techniques in 90-100% of cases. Based on my teaching experience, I am inclined to believe that the differences between lower and higher levels are mainly caused by the fact that lower-proficiency students (A1-B1) underestimate the reality in the classroom (the amount of per cent) because they do not feel adequately prepared for listening and do not succeed in listening the way they would wish to.

Therefore, it is more useful to compare students' perceptions of how often pre-listening techniques are included in reality in the classroom with students' preferences about how often pre-listening techniques should ideally be included (i.e. to compare answers in Q26 with answers in Q27, see Appendix 2), and study whether and how much the learners wish to increase the use of pre-listening techniques at different levels. The results illustrated in Fig. 8 show that lower-level students want to increase the frequency of using pre-listening techniques more than higher-level students, e.g. A2 and B1 students by 8%, and C level students, on the other hand, seem to be satisfied with what they are getting (mean: 80%) and want slightly less (-1%).

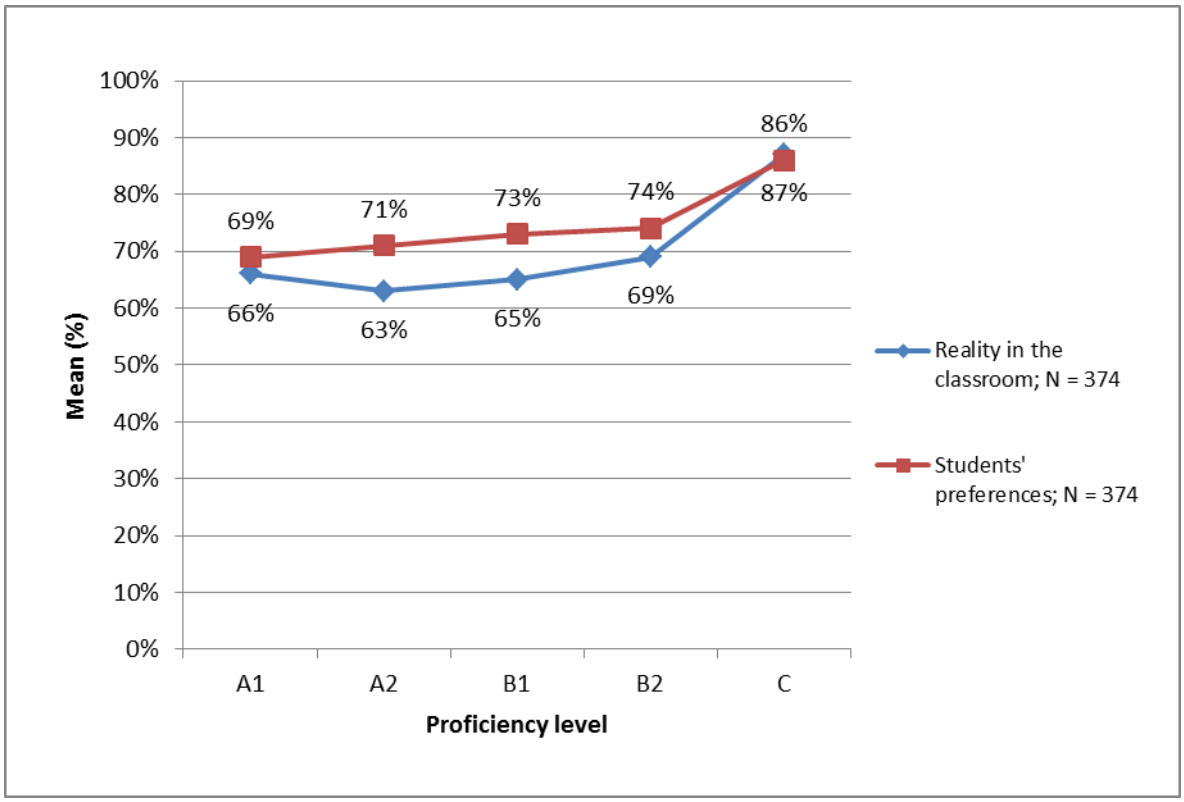

Fig. 8: The inclusion of pre-listening techniques in the listening session (% out of all listening texts) as a function of proficiency level: reality in the classroom versus students' preferences.

Conclusion: In general, pre-listening techniques are used quite often, on average in 70% of all listening texts. Lower-proficiency learners are less satisfied with the frequency of use of pre-listening techniques than higher-proficiency learners; A2-B1 students want to increase it by 8% and B2 students by 5%, whereas C learners want the same frequency as they are getting (mean: 80%) or slightly lower (-1%). This means that we should not generalise about 'cutting down the pre-listening stage under 5 minutes' at all levels, as proposed by Field (2008: 83-85 , see Chapter 4.6.8). On the one hand, students at higher-proficiency levels would welcome a shorter pre-listening stage, on the other hand, with lower levels, we should be more cautious. This also corresponds with our teacher observations (see Chapter 6.1.3) which indicated that the average length of the pre-listening stage does not exceed 5 minutes.

7.5 Pre-listening techniques used most often and pre-listening techniques deemed most effective

The learners had a choice of 14 pre-listening activities/techniques (see Chapter 5.5) and one option stating that the teacher uses no pre-listening techniques. They were asked to indicate which techniques are used by their teachers in the classroom and which techniques, on the

other hand, the learners deem the most effective for their listening comprehension (see Appendix 2: Q23 versus Q29 and Fig. 9 below). In the former question the number of options was not limited, whereas in the latter question the choice was limited to five top options.
Based on Chapter 1.4 and Chapter 5, it may be hypothesised that teachers may have a strong tendency to pre-teach lexis in the pre-listening stage. On the other hand, it is not clear whether students deem such lexical 'bottom-up' preparation effective, or prefer other pre-listening techniques that would fall under the top-down processing category (see Chapter 5.4).
According to our learners, the most frequently used techniques are:

1. pre-teaching key words (66% of the learners);
2. free conversation on the topic of the listening text (55% of the learners);
3. picture description and discussion on the topic (42% of the learners);
4. story prediction based on the pictures (38% of the learners);
5. brainstorming topical lexis (35% of the learners);
6. grammar revision in the context (33% of the learners).

In comparison, in the students' evaluation of the most effective techniques (see Fig. 9), 'pre-teaching key lexis' keeps the first position (75% of the learners), whereas the second position is occupied by 'brainstorming topical lexis' (58% of the learners), which obtained the highest value gain across all proficiency levels.
According to the learners, the most effective techniques are:

1. pre-teaching key words (75% of the learners);
2. brainstorming topical lexis (58% of the learners);
3. free conversation on the topic of the listening text (43% of the learners);
4. picture description and discussion on the topic (29% of the learners);
5. grammar revision in the context (26% of the learners);
6. brainstorming students' ideas on the topic (25% of the learners).

Fig. 9 illustrates the comparison of the two aforementioned questions and summarises the overall results.

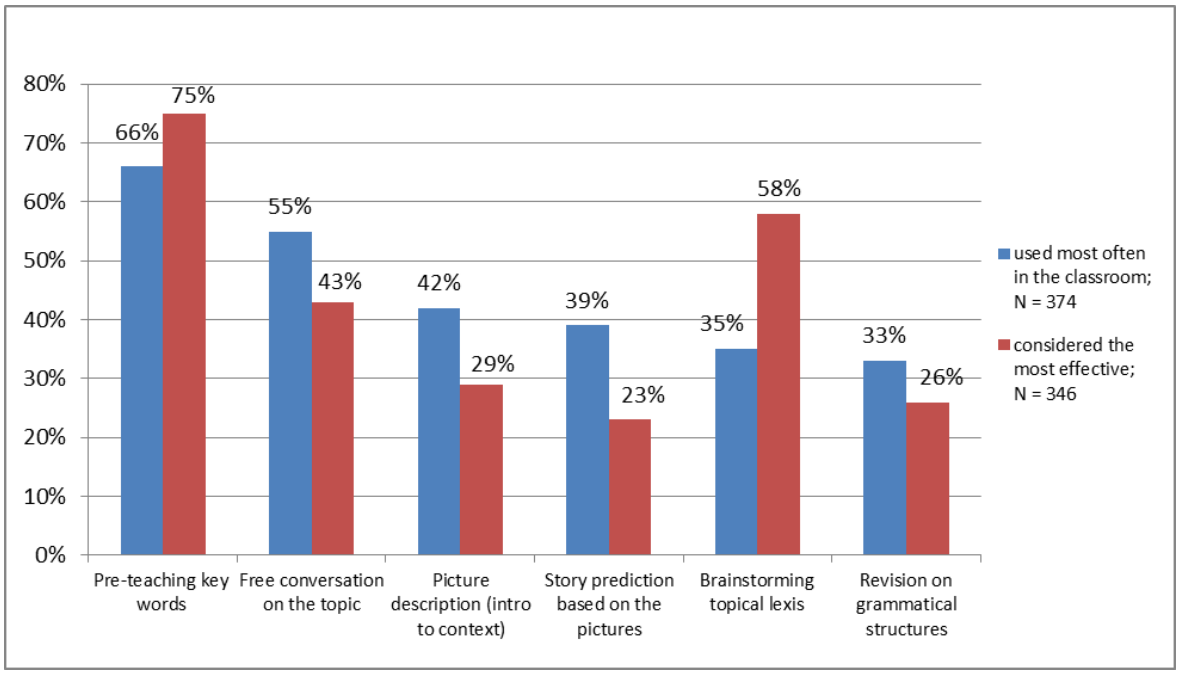

Fig. 9: Pre-listening techniques perceived as 'used most often in the classroom' versus pre-listening techniques considered 'the most effective' for listening comprehension.

Conclusion: The students across all proficiency levels definitely deem most effective those pre-listening techniques that focus on the development of lexis, which is in agreement with the needs analysis results (see Chapter 7.2.2) and also with some previous research on the importance of lexical knowledge for listening (e.g. Nichols 1948; Kelly 1991, see Chapters 1.4 and 4.1). Teachers should turn attention especially to the technique of 'brainstorming topical lexis', which also conforms with the lower teacher intervention and higher student interaction principle (see Chapters 4.6.5 and 7.3.5).

8 CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter, the results of the 2012 online survey are presented, followed by more concrete implications for the teaching of listening at A2-B1 levels (see Chapter 8.1).

The present study sought to explore a range of questions on the perceptions and perspectives of adult EFL learners (aged 20–74) in the Czech Republic regarding L2 listening instruction in general and the pre-listening stage in particular. It addressed the following aspects: prominence of L2 listening, time allocated for listening instruction, types of listening input, mode of interaction, multiple exposures, use of L1 versus L2, length and usefulness of pre-listening, and frequency and effectiveness of pre-listening techniques. I recognise that these themes are broad and that each would likely deserve its own study but the purpose of this dissertation was to map the students' perceptions of L2 listening instruction and pre-listening as a whole and to juxtapose them with the teaching principles proposed by current L2 listening experts, especially by Field, who offers a new *conceptual framework* for listening instruction (2008).

Based on the results of the 2012 online survey, it can be concluded that teaching listening is as important as teaching speaking and deserves our attention. The learners stated that their priority is to improve mainly speaking and listening and that listening instruction should be allocated more time.

Concerning types of listening input, the students would prefer more frequent class use of authentic listening texts and 'visual' types of listening input (e.g. films, coursebook DVDs, etc), which would ensure more variety in the listening sessions. In general, learners would also like to limit the use of L1 as a means of communication in the classroom, especially at lower-proficiency levels where L1 is sometimes overused. As for the number of 'multiple replays' of one listening text, the learners are satisfied with two to three replays.

As far as pre-listening techniques are concerned, their inclusion is considered 'definitely useful' by the majority of learners across all levels. In the evaluation of the quality of teaching listening, the students evaluate higher the teachers who are able to use pre-listening techniques more effectively. On average, pre-listening techniques are used in 70% of all listening texts. Lower-proficiency students would like pre-listening techniques to be used more often (see Chapter 8.1), whereas at higher levels students are satisfied. The learners across all levels view those pre-listening techniques that focus on lexis, namely 'brainstorming topical lexis' and 'pre-teaching less familiar key words', as the most effective,

which is in agreement with their stated language needs and the importance of *lexis* for listening.

In order to paint a more complete picture of listening instruction and the pre-listening stage, the data obtained from the 2012 survey have been supplemented by the data from the 2011-2012 teacher observations (see Chapters 6.1.3), allowing implications for teaching to be drawn (see Chapter 8.1).

8.1 Implications for listening instruction to A2-B1 adult students

The implications noted in this chapter are presented in order of importance and apply to all proficiency levels unless stated otherwise. However, due to the fact that the study focused primarily on lower-proficiency levels and due to the limited amount of A1 respondents (see Chapters 6.2.2 and 8.2), implications from this research are drawn specifically for the teaching of L2 listening to A2-B1 adult students, for whom the patterns revealed proved to be the most significant.

As hypothesized, more class time should be devoted to *listening instruction* because not only current experts (Field, Rost, Vandergrift, Lynch, Graham, etc) but students themselves feel that way. The students felt that listening instruction in general should be allocated 30% of class time as opposed to the current 23% (median 20%), with the greatest need felt by A2-B1 students (who want 35% and 31% respectively). In addition, the teacher observations data support the students' perceptions because in the observed lessons listening instruction occupied only about 19% of the teaching time (see Chapter 6.1.3). It can be concluded that teachers should give listening instruction more prominence in current general language courses, especially at A2-B1 levels.

Pre-listening techniques are deemed 'definitely useful' by the majority of learners across all levels (see Appendix 2: Q28) but as regards *frequency of pre-listening techniques* (Q26 and Q27), our findings confirm that *proficiency level* should be taken into account. (Students at lower levels have obviously different perspectives from those of higher level students.) The majority of the students at lower levels state that they would like to increase the frequency (at A2-B1 by 8%), whereas at C level there is a tendency to prefer the same frequency or slightly lower than the students are getting. Therefore, Field's proposal to cut down the pre-listening stage would be definitely appropriate for B2 and C levels but not so appropriate for A1-B1 levels because a lack of preparation for listening at these levels may lead to an increased level of learners' anxiety (see Chapters 2.11, 4.4.2 and 7.3.8).

Furthermore, our hypothesis about *the relative proportion of the pre-listening and while-listening stages* has been verified by the teacher observations. In contrast to Field, who states that, in the current conventional format of the listening session, pre-listening is overestimated and overused to the extent that it forms approximately 44% of the listening session (2008: 84, see Chapter 4.6.8), our results show that this is not true in the present study. It was observed that, on average, our teachers devoted only 3.6 minutes to pre-listening out of the total 16.9 minutes which they allocated for listening instruction in their 90-minute lessons (see Chapter 6.1.3).

The above mentioned implications are also important in the context of student needs and purpose of L2 study (see Chapter 7.2). As students crave improvement in both speaking and listening, it is a good idea to *integrate listening and speaking in the listening session* (e.g. Oprandy 1994, see Chapter 2.10). In the pre-listening stage, when students make predictions in pairs or brainstorm topical lexis, we cannot really separate speaking and listening and that is why these two orals skills are naturally integrated. The same applies to the other stages, e.g. to the discussion of the answers to the listening comprehension questions. Such integration will also lead to a positive change in the interaction mode (see below).

I was personally surprised to find out that students across all levels indicated as the most effective the pre-listening techniques that focus on lexis: 'brainstorming topical lexis' and 'pre-teaching less familiar key words' (Q29, options B and C). Such a strong tendency seems to contradict top-down processing in schema theory (see Chapter 5) as well as Field's suspicion that lower-proficiency learners over-rely on top-down processing (see Chapter 1.4). However, the students' perspective is understandable and logical in the light of their self-evaluation and needs analysis results (see Chapters 7.1.2 and 7.2.2), namely the students' craving to improve their lexical knowledge (together with practising communicative language functions, see Chapter 7.2.2). This is also consistent with research into lexical development via listening (Kelly 1991) and with Berne's (1995) and Sherman's (1997) findings that students strongly believe in the effectiveness of lexical knowledge activation before listening (see Chapters 1.4, 3.5.4 and 7.5).

In agreement with the question on interaction mode (see Chapters 4.6.5 and 7.3.5), brainstorming topical lexis seems to have even larger potential than the more conventional technique of pre-teaching lexis, which is still used most often. When brainstorming, students feel more activated and the teacher's engagement is lowered, which fulfils the two major teaching principles of *lower teacher engagement and higher learner interaction* (Field 2008;

Scrivener 2012). In addition, the situation would probably be even more obviously in favour of the effectiveness of brainstorming lexis if pre-teaching less familiar lexis were not the most frequently used technique.

Furthermore, the aforementioned principles of lower teacher engagement and higher learner interaction may turn out to be the key to a revised methodology of listening instruction at lower proficiency levels in the future because students evaluate higher those teachers who, apart from devoting more time to listening instruction and varying listening input types, use pair work as the prevailing mode of interaction, facilitate discussions on the 'correct' answers and are able to use the pre-listening techniques very well.

As for multiple exposures at A2-B1 levels, it seems that replaying the same listening passage in the classroom more than three times is not necessary even at lower levels as most students deem it sufficient to hear the text twice (see Chapter 7.3.7).

To conclude, our findings indicate that A2-B1 students would welcome neither an absence or reduction of pre-listening, nor 5-6 exposures to the same text. The proposal elaborated by Field (2008: 83-85) is not in agreement with real-life conditions in which we are, in most cases, prepared for listening by contextual cues and we do not hear the text more than once (Ur 1984). However, more research should be done on this issue (see Chapter 8.3).

All the other students' perceptions and observed patterns are definitely in agreement with Field (2008) and other experts and come as no surprise (see the previous chapter). To name just a few of such general teaching principles, teachers should not overuse audiorecordings but make use of visual support, authentic materials and variety in listening input at all proficiency levels (see Chapter 7.3.4).

8.2 Limitations of the study

The study identified the students' responses but we have to acknowledge that they are *self-reported responses* (and students' self-reporting about their needs is not always exactly correct). I am mindful of the fact that students do not always report objective reality. However, there is consistency in the research results by having asked within a broader context, for example about the complex of language skills and language systems and not just about listening skills in isolation (see Chapters 7.1 and 7.2). Even if their answers do not correspond to objective reality, for example, if learners feel that they need much more help with listening than they objectively do, the fact that students feel that way is a valid issue and their affective filter has to be taken into account (Downing 2013).

From the statistical point of view, the research findings remain inconclusive for the A1 proficiency level because there were not enough A1 participants in the 2012 survey (N=14, i.e. 4% of the EFL sample, see Chapter 6.2.2 and Tab. 7). Therefore reliable conclusions could not be drawn for the teaching of L2 listening to A1 proficiency level and the results are to be interpreted with caution.

As for the students who did not respond to the survey (so called 'non-respondents'), it was not possible to describe non-response rate in detail and to distinguish contact rate from cooperation rate, mainly because of financial and organizational reasons (for example, no information about the students' date of birth etc. is recorded at the department). It should be acknowledged that younger people especially might have better access to the Internet and/or may be more skilled Internet users (Tuma 2012). However, because a lot of older students responded to the survey (see Chapter 6.2.2) and because only one student did not have a working email address to be able to obtain the survey, it is hoped that age did not play any important role in the response rate.

Therefore, in the analysis, the research sample was worked with appropriately as with a countable population which has its own statistical limitation as for statistical induction. In general, there was no reason to believe that the population of non-respondents differed from the population of respondents.

The students' proficiency level (Appendix 2: Q2) is an expression of a conventional placement testing which does not involve any listening component (see Chapter 1.1). The respondents placed themselves into the proficiency level categories on the basis of the current level of their L2 course into which they had been placed via the department placement testing system.

No current *typology of pre-listening techniques* has been found in literature, so the present author devised her own typology (see Chapter 5.5 and Appendix 2: Q23 and Q29) which, of course, may be subject to criticism. The plan was to identify currently used pre-listening techniques, originally on the basis of Underwood's typology (1989), and then to add the most commonly used techniques checked against the pre-intermediate (A2) and intermediate (B1) levels of the *New English File* series (2007). Consequently, it is guaranteed that all techniques identified in the present author's typology are currently used in the general English classroom. However, the typology intentionally avoided the option 'pre-teaching unknown lexis', which has been criticised since the 1990s (see Chapter 1.4). The two options, brainstorming topical lexis (Q29: option B) and pre-teaching 'less familiar key words' (Q29: option C), seemed

more explicit and adequate at the time of the questionnaire construction as it would have been very difficult for the students to distinguish the two similar concepts of 'pre-teaching less familiar key words' and 'pre-teaching less familiar / unknown words'.

Due to space limitations (particularly the length of the questionnaire and respondents' time restrictions), it was not possible to formulate some of the intended questions in a lot of detail and we had to prioritise and look for compromise. Examples of the influence of space limitations follow.

As regards multiple-play (Q19), a follow-up question might have been included, e.g. 'How many times would you prefer to hear one listening text in the classroom?' However, it made sense to include a similar question in the problem section of the questionnaire (Section VI: Q33: option K). Similarly, the results regarding interaction mode (Q20) might have been more reliable if followed by a question asking directly which interaction mode the students deem most effective.

In the section on students' problems when listening to audiorecordings (Section VI), the option 'no problem' has not been included as this was an additional section anyway and the option would likely occupy too much space to be included four times (after Q30-33). However, as many respondents did not choose any option in Q30-33, it is impossible to distinguish the respondents who would indicate that they did not have any problems from those who decided not to answer Q30-33 (and hence the amount of total respondents had to be recorded as N = 374). That is why the results regarding the students' problems in Section VI cannot be considered reliable enough and were used just for orientation (see Chapters 2.5 and 7.3.8).

It is necessary to acknowledge the fact that students might not have understood all the concepts presented in the questionnaire, even though effort has been made to explicitly explain terms like listening instruction, pre-listening techniques, etc. The term 'communicative language functions' (Q5 and Q7) might have caused some confusion because it is difficult to explain: our definition focused mainly on production (Dušková 2012) but might have been reworded in order to include reception too, for example by adding the text in italics: 'the ability to express oneself clearly and appropriately in a given situation/context, *or the ability to comprehend the purpose which is being communicated to us*, e.g. giving *or comprehending* directions'.

8.3 Further steps

As noted in Chapters 3.6 and 4.6, it is hoped that a systematic, coherent, and relevant framework for listening instruction methodology will be devised in the near future. It can be most probably based on Field's proposal (2008). In his critical evaluation of the current state of affairs, Field (2008) states that there are no clear guidelines and no clear aims in L2 listening instruction in general. His proposal for revised L2 listening methodology includes many aspects, mainly increasing prominence of L2 instruction and prolonging the time allocated, which turned out to be in agreement with our students' needs and perceptions.

All Field's principles are in agreement with our students' perceptions and perspectives, with the exception of the suggestion to cut down the pre-listening stage, which is not deemed by this writer to be a good solution at lower-proficiency levels (see Chapter 8.1), according to our findings. It may be assumed that our students would be bored if they listened to one text 5-6 times, let alone without any new challenges or new 'information gap' tasks (see Chapter 7.3.7). However, this issue could usefully be investigated in depth in the future. A future experiment with controlled conditions should shed more light on the issue in question. In the experiment at least two groups of the same proficiency level and with the same syllabus and listening tasks should be provided with two different types of listening instruction in terms of length of pre-listening and number of multiple exposures. The three factors: task difficulty, number of multiple exposures and the length of pre-listening are interrelated (see Chapter 4.6). Given the same task difficulty, the less pre-listening is applied, the more multiple exposures are likely to be needed for students' comprehension. The experimental group should have listening sessions with very limited pre-listening and 5-6 exposures to the same text, while the controlled group should have ordinary pre-listening (approximately 3-5 minutes long, see Chapter 6.1.3) and only 2-3 exposures.

In the past 35-40 years or so, listening instruction has been gaining an increasing amount of attention in both FLT and L2 learning / SLA research. However, it is evident that much more L2 listening research is needed. Important areas of current research which should remain prominent for the future are: prominence of L2 listening, time allocated for L2 listening instruction, the pre-listening stage and techniques, vocabulary development, multiple exposures, the post-listening stage, comprehension strategy training, and integration of listening and speaking.

RESUME

Předkládaná dizertační práce zkoumá názory dospělých studentů nižších jazykových úrovní na předposlechovou fázi a na výuku poslechu v prezenčních kurzech obecné angličtiny. Protože je práce první svého druhu minimálně v českém kontextu, je její charakter částečně explorativní a částečně deskriptivní.

Autorka začala v předvýzkumu v r. 2006 zjišťovat zaměření jazykových potřeb cílové populace studentů nejprve v širším kontextu základních řečových dovedností a jazykových prostředků. Dotazníkové šetření u sta studentů angličtiny na úrovni A1-A2 v projektu JARO ukázalo, že studenti chtějí nejvíce zlepšit dovednost mluvení, dovednost poslechu a znalost lexika (Ždímalová 2009a).

V navazujícím kvalitativním šetření v r. 2008 zjišťovala autorka přednostně názory studentů na rozvoj dovednosti mluvení, ale při analýze dat získaných z devíti polostrkturovaných rozhovorů se studenty jedné třídy úrovně A2 se ukázalo, že studenti překvapivě často spontánně zmiňovali své těžkosti spočívající v nedostatečně rozvinuté dovednosti poslechu. Jejich komentáře se nečastěji týkaly omezené schopnosti se dorozumět anglicky při cestování. Dále studenti uváděli, že při výuce poslechu v kurzu často nerozumí audionahrávkám s rodilými mluvčími, že by při takovém poslechu potřebovali více vizuální opory (v podobě videa) a že by se učitelé měli výuce poslechu věnovat více, než je v kurzech běžné (viz Příloha 1).

Na základě těchto zjištění byly další fáze výzkumu zaměřeny již výhradně na výuku poslechu a na předposlechovou fázi, ve které učitel studenty připravuje na poslech. Protože nebylo možné pokračovat ve zkoumání studentů téhož projektu, byla zvolena obdobná cílová skupina dospělých studentů studujících v prezenčních jazykových kurzech Kabinetu studia jazyků, ÚJČ, AV ČR, v.v.i. (KSJ), kde se vzdělávají jak zaměstnanci AV ČR, tak veřejnost.

Cílem dizertační práce bylo zmapovat názory studentů na výuku poslechu a předposlechovou fázi jako celek a porovnat je s pedagogickými principy, které navrhuje Field (2008) a další odborníci na cizojazyčný poslech.

Přestože se v posledních 35-40ti letech zájem o cizojazyčný poslech zvyšuje a výzkum poslechu se rozvíjí, což zákonitě ovlivňuje i výukovou praxi, není v současné době mezi odborníky shoda na ucelené systematické metodice výuky poslechu ani na způsobu použití

předposlechové fáze. Velkým kritikem současného stavu je John Field, který ve své knize „Listening in the Language Classroom“ (CUP, 2008) předkládá návrh na revizi metodiky výuky poslechu. Ten spočívá zejména v přerozdělení prostoru věnovaného fázi předposlechové, poslechové a poposlechové. Field navrhuje zkrátit předposlechovou fázi, a to bez ohledu na jazykovou úroveň studentů (2008: 83-85).

Autorka práce považuje předposlechovou fázi za velmi důležitou zejména pro studenty nižších úrovní (Anderson – Lynch 1988, Underwood 1989, Rost 2002, Lynch 2009, Ždímalová 2009b, 2010b, 2011b). Proto si téma užitečnosti a délky předposlechové fáze stanovila jako základní výzkumný problém, přičemž základním teoretickým východiskem je pro ni Fieldův návrh.

Přestože Field (2008: 18-19) uznává užitečnost předposlechové fáze pro určení poslechového cíle, uvedení studentů do kontextu a pro jejich motivaci, tak zároveň předpokládá, že je předposlechová fáze učiteli v současnosti často „nadužívána“ na úkor poslechové a poposlechové fáze (nicméně toto tvrzení zatím nebylo potvrzeno žádným výzkumem). Konkrétně uvádí (2008: 84), že by předposlechová fáze měla trvat jen 10 % času vyhrazeného na výuku poslechu a zároveň maximálně pět minut. To by v důsledku znamenalo, že by při ideální délce třiceti minut na výuku poslechu trvala předposlechová fáze tři minuty.

Zároveň Field doporučuje zvýšení počtu opakování poslechu v intenzivní poslechové fázi na pět poslechů (2008: 45, viz Tab. 3, Kapitola 4.6.5) tak, aby studenti mohli všemu dobře porozumět a přišli na odpovědi sami bez někdy „nadbytečné intervence“ učitele. To by dle Fielda také přineslo žádoucí zvýšení aktivity a interakce studentů ve výuce poslechu (2008: 44).

Vlastní výzkumný projekt proběhl v letech 2011-2012. Metody sběru a analýzy dat zahrnovaly observace ve třídách angličtiny v r. 2011-2012 a rozsáhlé dotazníkové šetření online (realizované v r. 2012), které zkoumalo názory, postoje, potřeby a preference u studentů prezenčních kurzů v KSJ. Data byla sebrána celkem od 473 studentů cizích jazyků (různé úrovně jazykové pokročilosti), z nichž studentů angličtiny bylo celkem 374 (věk 20-74 let), a tito tvořili základní vzorek pro podrobné analýzy.

Základními výzkumnými otázkami bylo: (1) Jak studenti vnímají čas věnovaný výuce poslechu v prezenčním kurzu? (2) Jak učitelé používají předposlechovou fázi? (3) Jak studenti vnímají užitečnost (nadbytečnost) předposlechu pro porozumění a jak vnímají frekvenci používání předposlechových technik? (4) Které předposlechové techniky považují studenti za nejefektivnější pro poslech s porozuměním?

Výsledky výzkumu potvrdily, že výuka poslechu a rozvoj dovednosti poslechu je pro studenty prioritou, stejně jako rozvoj dovednosti mluvení, a proto si výuka poslechu zaslouží zvýšenou pozornost a péči učitelů. Studenti napříč úrovněmi uvedli, že poslechu by se mělo věnovat více času, než je v současných kurzech běžné. Studenti odhadují současný podíl výuky poslechu v kurzu na 23 % (medián 20 %) a přáli by si jej zvýšit na 30 % celkového času prezenční výuky. Nejvýznamnější jsou výsledky u studentů na úrovních A2 a B1, kteří by chtěli, aby výuka poslechu trvala 35 % respektive 31 % celkového času výuky. Data z observací deficit v délce výuky poslechu potvrdila, protože výuce poslechu bylo věnováno průměrně 16,9 minut, což je méně než 19 % daného výukového času. Při délce vyučovacího bloku 90 minut to znamená, že by se oproti současnému stavu studenti chtěli poslechu věnovat zhruba 27 minut. Tyto výsledky jsou v souladu s metodikou Fielda, který uvádí, že výuka poslechu by měla trvat minimálně 20 a ideálně 30 minut kontinuálně (2008: 74).

Předposlechové techniky považuje převážná většina studentů za užitečné („rozhodně užitečné“ - 58 %, „spíše užitečné“ – 35 %), a to napříč všemi jazykovými úrovněmi. Zároveň bývá poměrně vysoká frekvence používání předposlechových technik, dle názoru studentů jsou tyto techniky používány průměrně u 70 % všech poslechových textů.

Na druhou stranu se v závislosti na jazykové úrovni preference studentů ohledně frekvence rozcházejí. Zatímco většina studentů nižších úrovní uvádí, že by chtěli frekvenci zvýšit (studenti úrovně A2-B1 nejvíce, a to průměrně o 8 %), studenti úrovně B2 jsou s frekvencí spokojeni a studenti úrovně C by ji chtěli mírně snížit. Tato zjištění potvrzují náš předpoklad, že jazyková úroveň hraje velkou roli ve vnímání předposlechu.

Analýza observací navíc potvrdila naši hypotézu, že učitelé nepoužívají předposlech nijak nadměrně, tj. nevěnují mu více než pět minut. Naši učitelé věnovali předposlechové fázi v průměru 3,6 minut (z 16,9 minut věnovaných výuce poslechu).

Na základě těchto zjištění lze návrh Fielda na zkrácení předposlechu považovat za relevantní jen pro vyšší jazykové úrovně. (Těm ovšem zároveň stačí slyšet poslechový text dvakrát.) U studentů nižších úrovní bychom se mohli obávat rizika zvýšeného stresu z poslechu, na který nebudou řádně připraveni (Lynch 1996: 102, Graham 2006, Ždímalová 2009b, 2009c, 2010a, 2010b, 2011b).

V autorkou sestavené typologii předposlechových technik studenti považují za nejefektivnější techniky zaměřené na slovní zásobu, a to napříč úrovněmi. Konkrétně jde o brainstorming slovní zásoby na dané téma a o seznámení se s méně známých klíčovými slovy

(prezentovanými učitelem), což je zřejmě odrazem jak silné potřeby studentů rozvíjet slovní zásobu, tak i důležitosti lexika pro poslech (např. Kelly 1991, Thornbury 2002).

Autorka práce nepředpokládala, že by studenti tak jednoznačně a navíc u všech jazykových úrovní vnímali tyto techniky jako nejefektivnější. Tato tendence je zdánlivě v rozporu se schematizační teorií (Rumelhart – Ortony 1977, Rumelhart 1980), podle níž mají učitelé dbát na aktivaci schémat studentů ještě před realizací poslechu (Richards 1983, Long 1989, Feyten 1991, Rubin 1994). (Studenty preferované techniky patří k procesům zpracování poslechu takzvaně „od zdola nahoru", tj. od menších jednotek jako jsou slabiky a slova k celkovému smyslu promluvy, např. Kollmannová 2003). Avšak podíváme-li se na jazykové potřeby studentů a jejich sebehodnocení, tak je výsledek logický: studenti svou znalost lexika hodnotí z jazykových prostředků nejhůře a chtěli by se v ní zlepšit. Toto je také v souladu s výsledky výzkumů Berne (1995) a Sherman (1997), ve kterých studenti projevili silnou víru v aktivaci slovní zásoby před poslechem.

Z pohledu interakce ve třídě se zdá, že by brainstorming slovní zásoby mohl mít ještě větší potenciál, kdyby se používal častěji (oproti prezentaci slovní zásoby učitelem, která je i nadále nejpoužívanější předposlechovou technikou).

Pro možná klíčovou roli dvou relativně nově vytyčených principů zvýšené interakce studentů a snížené intervence učitele (Field 2008: 44, Scrivener 2012) hovoří i skutečnost, že v hodnocení kvality výuky poslechu hodnotí studenti nejlépe ty učitele, kteří nejenže věnují výuce poslechu více času, používají různorodé poslechové materiály a dobře používají předposlechové techniky, ale také zadávají studentům převážně párovou práci a podporují diskusi o možných odpovědích na poslechové otázky.

Co se týče počtu opakování jednoho poslechového textu, jsou studenti spokojeni se dvěma až třemi poslechy, což odpovídá běžné výukové praxi. 20 % studentů uvedlo, že jim nestačí slyšet poslechový text dvakrát, tito studenti se však rekrutovali z různých jazykových úrovní. Elegantním řešením této situace je zadávání poslechu za domácí úkol, což vizionářsky předpovídal již Hendrich (1970), že taková doba s rozvojem techniky nastane.

Všechny ostatní názory a preference studentů jsou v souladu s obecnějšími principy vytyčenými Fieldem a dalšími experty (Rost 2002, Lynch 2009), např. se jedná o princip rozmanitosti poslechových materiálů, vizuální opory, autentičnosti apod., které se často ve výukové praxi již realizují.

V zastoupení jednotlivých typů poslechových textů studenti preferují častější používání vizuální opory a autentických poslechů (např. sledování autentických nahrávek rodilých

mluvčích na You Tube, originálních filmů či výukových DVD k jazykovým kurzům). Těmito kroky bude zajištěna i větší různorodost používaných typů, po které studenti volají, zatímco nadužívání výukových audionahrávek k učebnici je studenty vnímáno negativně.

Studenti by také uvítali častější používání cílového jazyka a méně časté používání mateřštiny, než tomu v kurzech je, což se logicky projevilo zejména u nižších úrovní, kde je mateřština někdy používána častěji, než je zdrávo (Choděra 2006).

Závěrem lze shrnout, že v našich podmínkách není poslech učiteli nadužíván a studenti by si nepřáli ani redukci předposlechové fáze, ani pět opakování téhož textu v intenzivní poslechové fázi. Tyto dva aspekty návrhu Fielda na revizi metodiky výuky poslechu proto nedoporučujeme uplatňovat celoplošně. Zkrácení předposlechové fáze nebo její nižší frekvence před poslechy je pravděpodobně dobrým řešením pro studenty úrovně B2-C, protože tito mají poslech již často zautomatizovaný (Anderson – Lynch 1988). Ze stejného důvodu však u nich není vhodné navyšovat počet opakování textu, což je navíc v rozporu s podmínkami poslechu v běžném životě (Ur 1984).

Nicméně na toto relativně nové a rozporuplné téma by bylo vhodné realizovat další výzkum, například experiment, který by sledoval dopad výuky poslechu u skupin studentů na téže úrovni (nejlépe buď A2 nebo B1) se stejným učitelem, sylabem kurzu i výukovými materiály, ale s odlišnou délkou předposlechové fáze a počtem opakování poslechového textu.

Dané výsledky byly naměřeny napříč jazykovými úrovněmi (A1-C), ale nastíněné tendence se nejdůrazněji projevily u nižších jazykových úrovní, zejména u úrovně A2-B1. Odvozené didaktické principy a doporučení proto platí pro výuku poslechu zejména u studentů jazykové úrovně A2-B1, kde se ukazují jako nejvíce relevantní.

INDEX

Grammar Translation Method
Grammatical parsing
Higher ability listeners
Higher-proficiency learners
Information gap
Information Processing
Input
Integrated skills course
Integrated speaking and listening
Intensive listening
Interaction
Interaction mode
Interactive listening
Interpretation
Interpretation skills
Key lexis
Language laboratory
Language skills
Language systems/components/elements
Language task
Learner-centredness
Learner problems
Learning style
Lexical Approach
Lexical ignorance
Listening comprehension
Listening expectations
Listening for comprehension
Listening for details
Listening for general information
Listening for perception
Listening homework
Listening instruction
Listening instruction methodology
Listening materials
Listening purpose

Listening research
Listening session
Listening skills and subskills
Listening strategies
Listening task
Literacy
Lower-proficiency learners
L2 listening
L2 processing
Motivation
Multiple exposures
Multiple-play
Natural Approach
Needs analysis
Non-interactive listening
Non-reciprocal listening
One-way listening
Oracy
Oral interaction
Outside noise
Pair work
Phonological perception
Picture description
Picture ordering
Post-listening stage
Post-method era
Prediction in listening
Pre-listening stage
Pre-listening techniques/activities
Pre-setting tasks
Pre-teaching key words
Pre-teaching unknown/unfamiliar words
Processing
Processing speed
Productive skills
Proficiency level

Question preview
Reading research
Real-life listening
Real-life listening situations
Reciprocal listening
Reception/production order
Receptive skills
Reform Movement
Sandwich method
Schema theory
Schema activation
Schemata
Scripts
Second Language Acquisition
Skills referring to spoken language
Skills referring to written language
Speech rate
Story prediction
Student needs
Students' perceptions
Students' self-evaluation
Task-based Learning
Task-feedback cycle
Teacher observation
Testing L2 listening comprehension
The four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing)
Top-down processing
Total Physical Response
Typology of common pre-listening techniques
Two-way listening
Unknown/unfamiliar words
Use of L1 vs. L2
Visual support
Variety in listening input types
While-listening stage

REFERENCES

Abbs, B., Underwood, M., & Cook, V. (1979). *Realistic English dialogues*. (2nd ed.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Alexander, L. (1967). *Practice and progress: an integrated course for pre-intermediate students*. London: Longmans.

Allwright, R. (1991). The death of the method (Working paper #10). In The Exploratory Practice Centre: The University of Lancaster, England.

Anderson, A., & Lynch, T. (1988). *Listening*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Anderson, J. (1985). *Cognitive psychology and its implications*. (2nd ed.) New York: W.H. Freeman.

Anderson, R., Spiro, R., & Montague, W. (1977). *Schooling and the acquisition of knowledge*. New York: distributed by the Halsted Press Division of Wiley.

Asher, J. (1969). The total physical response approach to second language learning. *The Modern Language Journal*, 53(1), pp. 3-17.

Atkinson, D. (1993). *Teaching monolingual classes*. Harlow: Longman.

Bahbouh, R. (2011). Construction of a questionnaire in social sciences. [personal communication].

Bahenská, A. (2013). Translation in teaching English for legal/academic purposes - a Czech perspective. *Law, language and professional practice. Neapole Conference: proceedings (in print)* http://www.languageandlaw.info/index.html

Bartlett, F. (1932). *Remembering: a study in experimental and social psychology*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Baruch, Y. (1999). Response rate in academic studies - A comparative analysis. *Human Relations*, 52(4), pp. 421-438.

Bauer, L. (1983). *English word-formation.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Bell, A. (1984). Language style as audience design: A study in New Zealand identity making. *Language in Society*, 13(2), pp. 145-204.

Beneš, E. *et al*. (1970). *Metodika cizích jazyků*. Praha: SPN.

Berne, J. (1995). How does varying pre-listening activities affect second language listening comprehension? *Hispania*, 78(2), pp. 316-329.

Berne, J. (1998). Examining the relationship between L2 listening research, pedagogical theory and Practice. *Foreign Language Annals*, 31(2), pp. 169-190.

Besse, H. (1981). The pedagogic authenticity of a text. In *The Teaching of listening comprehension: papers presented at the Goethe Institut Colloquium held in Paris in 1979*. (pp. 20-29). London: British Council, English Language Division, Central Information Office.

Betáková, L. (2010). *Discourse and interaction in English language teaching*. Praha: Univerzita Karlova, Pedagogická fakulta.

Birdsong, D. (2006). Age and second language acquisition and processing: A selective overview. In Gullberg, M., & Indefrey, P. *The cognitive neuroscience of second language acquisition*. (pp. 9-49). Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub.

Blanchet, P. (2000). *Une méthode audio-visuelle*. Retrieved from: http://www.canal-u.tv/video/les_amphis_de_france_5/une_methode_audio_visuelle.3013

Blundell, L., & Stokes, J. (1981). *Task listening: Student's Book*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Blundell, L., & Stokes, J. (1981). *Task listening: Teacher's Book*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Boers, F., Eyckmans, J., Kappel, J., Stengers, H., & Demecheleer, M. (2006). Formulaic sequences and perceived oral proficiency: putting a Lexical Approach to the test. *Language Teaching Research*, 10(3), pp. 245-261.

Bonk, W. (2000). Second language lexical knowledge and listening comprehension. *International Journal of Listening*, 14(1), pp. 14-31.

Bostrom, R. (ed.). (1990). *Listening behavior: measurement and application*. New York: Guilford Press.

Bowen, T., & Marks, J. (1994). *Inside teaching: options for English language teachers*. Oxford: Macmillan.

Brett, P. (1997). A comparative study of the effects of the use of multimedia on listening comprehension. *System*, 25(1), pp. 39-53.

Brown, G. (1985). *Listening to spoken English*. Harlow: Longman.

Brown, G., & Yule, G. (1983). *Discourse analysis*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Brown, H. (2006). English Language Teaching and the 'Post-Method' Era: toward better diagnosis, treatment, and assessment. In Richards, J., & Renandya, W. (eds.), *Methodology in language teaching: an anthology of current practice*. (8th print., pp. 9-18). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Brown, J. (2001). *Using surveys in language programs*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Brumfit, C. (1984). *Communicative methodology in language teaching: the roles of fluency and accuracy*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Brumfit, C., & Johnson, K. (1979). *The communicative approach to language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bryman, A. (2008). *Social research methods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Buck, G. (2001). *Assessing listening*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Butzkamm, W., & Caldwell, J. (2009). *The bilingual reform: a paradigm shift in foreign language teaching*. Tübingen: Narr.

Bygate, M. (1987). *Speaking*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Byrne, D. (1986). *Teaching oral English*. (2nd ed.) Harlow: Longman.

Carrell, P. (1984). Schema theory and ESL reading: classroom implications and applications. *The Modern Language Journal*, 68(4), pp. 332-343.

Carrell, P., & Eisterhold, J. (1983). Schema theory and ESL reading pedagogy. *TESOL Quarterly*, 17(4), pp. 553-573.

Carroll, J. (1965). The contributions of psychological theory and educational research to the teaching of foreign languages. *The Modern Language Journal*, 49(5), pp. 273-281.

Celce-Murcia, M. (2001). *Teaching English as a second or foreign language*. (3rd ed.) Boston: Heinle.

Celce-Murcia, M., & McIntosh, L. (1979). *Teaching English as a second or foreign language*. Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House Publishers.

Centre for Research in English Language Learning and Assessment (CRELLA), webpage (2013). http://www.beds.ac.uk/crella/staff/john_field

Chapman, J. (2007). Cambridge DELTA course: teacher observations. [personal communication].

Chastain, K. (1976). *Developing second-language skills: theory and practice*. (2nd ed.). Chicago: Rand McNally College Pub. Co.

Choděra, R. (2006). *Didaktika cizích jazyků: úvod do vědního oboru*. Praha: Academia.

Chomsky, N. (1999). *Language and problems of knowledge: the Managua lectures*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Chomsky, N. (2002). *Syntactic structures*. (2nd ed.) New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Chráska, M. (2007). *Metody pedagogického výzkumu: základy kvantitativního výzkumu*. Praha: Grada Publishing.

Cook, G. (2010). *Translation in language teaching: an argument for reassessment*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cook, G. (1989). *Discourse*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Corder, S. (1981). *Error analysis and interlanguage*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Council of Europe. (2001). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: learning, teaching, assessment*. [online]. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from: http://www.coe.int/T/DG4/Linguistic/Source/Framework_EN.pdf

Craven, M. (2004) *Listening Extra*. A resource book of multi-level skills activities. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Craven, M. (2008). *Real listening and speaking 1*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Crystal, D. (1997). *The Cambridge encyclopedia of language*. (2nd ed.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Crystal, D. (2013). The world in which we live in: Beatles, blends and blogs. [online]. *Liverpool Online: The 47th Annual International IATEFL Conference*. Retrieved from: http://iatefl.britishcouncil.org/2013/sessions/2013-04-09/plenary-session-david-crystal

Crystal, D., & Davy, D. (1973). *Investigating English style*. Harlow: Longman.

Cunningham, S., & Moor, P. (2007). *New Cutting Edge*. Harlow: Longman.

Černá, M. (2005). *ICT in teacher education: extending opportunities for professional learning*. Pardubice: Univerzita Pardubice.

Dellar, H. (2012). Translation: tackling the taboo. In *21st International IATEFL Poland Conference*. Wroclaw: IATEFL Poland Newsletter.

Derwing, T., Rossiter, M., Munro, M., & Thomson, R. (2004). Second language fluency: judgments on different tasks. *Language Learning*, 54(4), pp. 655-679.

Doff, A., & Becket, C. (1991). *Cambridge skills for fluency: Listening*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Downing, A. (22.5. 2013). Affective filter. [personal communication].

Dunkel, P. (1986). Developing listening fluency in L2: theoretical principles and pedagogical considerations. *The Modern Language Journal*, 70(2), pp. 99-106.

Dušková, L. (1988). *Mluvnice současné angličtiny na pozadí češtiny*. Praha: Academia.

Dušková, L. (2009). *Mluvnice současné angličtiny na pozadí češtiny. Elektronické vydání* [online]. Praha: Ústav anglického jazyka a didaktiky, Filozofická fakulta, Univerzita Karlova v Praze. Retrieved from: http://www.mluvniceanglictiny.cz

Dušková, L. (2012). The definition of communicative langage funcions. [personal communication].

Elkhafaifi, H. (2005). The effect of prelistening activities on listening comprehension in Arabic learners. *Foreign Language Annals*, 38(4), pp. 505-513.

Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language learning and teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

English Club Listening: The Vein of Love. (2013). [online]. Retrieved from: http://edition.englishclub.com/podcasts/interesting-facts/the-vein-of-love/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+englishclub+%28EnglishClub%29

Etchegoyen Rosolová, K. (17.10. 2012). Relevance in teaching English to adults. [personal communication].

Feaster, P. (2007). Speech acoustics and the keyboard telephone: rethinking Edison's discovery of the phonograph principle. *ARCS Journal*, 38(1), pp. 10-43.

Ferjenčík, J. (2000). *Úvod do metodologie psychologického výzkumu: jak zkoumat lidskou duši*. Praha: Portál.

Feyten, C. (1991). The power of listening ability: an overlooked dimension in language acquisition. *The Modern Language Journal*, 75(2), pp. 173-180.

Field, J. (1998). Skills and strategies: towards a new methodology for listening. *ELT Journal*, 52(2), pp. 110-118.

Field, J. (2002). The changing face of listening. In Richards, J., & Renandya, W. (eds.), *Methodology in language teaching: an anthology of current practice*. (pp. 242-247). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Field, J. (2008). *Listening in the language classroom*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Finocchiaro, M., & Brumfit, C. (1983). *The functional-notional approach: from theory to practice*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Fried, V. (1972). *The Prague School of Linguistics and Language Teaching*. London: Oxford University Press.

Gardner, H. (1993). *Multiple intelligences: the theory in practice*. New York: Basic Books.

Gavora, P. (1996). *Výzkumné metody v pedagogice: příručka pro studenty, učitele a výzkumné pracovníky*. Brno: Paido.

Gavora, P. (2010). *Úvod do pedagogického výzkumu*. Brno: Paido.

Gillham, B. (2007). *Developing a questionnaire*. (2nd ed.) New York: Continuum.

Godfrey, D. (1977). Listening instruction and practice for advanced second language students. *Language Learning*, 27(1), pp. 109-122.

Goh, C. (1998). How ESL learners with different listening abilities use comprehension strategies and tactics. *Language Teaching Research*, 2(2), pp. 124-147.

Graham, P. (2006). Listening comprehension: the learners' perspective. *System*, 34(2), pp. 165-182.

Graham, S., & Macaro, E. (2008). Strategy instruction in listening for lower-intermediate learners of French. *Language Learning*, 58(4), pp. 747-783.

Grellet, F. (1981). *Developing reading skills: a practical guide to reading comprehension exercises*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Harding, K. (2012). Video in the business English and ESP classroom. In *Great ideas for great teachers*: *OUP Mini Conference*. Praha: OUP Prague.

Harmer, J. (2001). *The practice of English language teaching*. Harlow: Pearson/Longman.

Harmer, J. (2012). Drilling - repetition - practice? Saying the same things creatively. In *21st International IATEFL Poland Conference*. Wroclaw: IATEFL Poland Newsletter.

Harwood, N. (2002). *Taking a lexical approach to teaching: principles and problems* [online]. Retrieved from: http://privatewww.essex.ac.uk/~nharwood/lexapproach.htm

Hedge, T. (2000). *Teaching and learning in the language classroom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hendl, J. (1999). *Úvod do kvalitativního výzkumu*. Praha: Univerzita Karlova.

Hendrich, J. (1970). Poslech. In Beneš, E. *et al*., *Metodika cizích jazyků*. (pp. 121-135). Praha: SPN.

Hendrich, J. *et al*. (1988). *Didaktika cizích jazyků*. Praha: SPN.

Hinkel, E. (2006). Current perspectives on teaching the four skills. *TESOL Quarterly*, 40(1), pp.109-131.

Hinkel, E. (2010a). *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Hinkel, E. (2010b). Integrating the four skills: Current and historical perspective. [online]. *Elihinkel.org*. Retrieved from: http://www.elihinkel.org/downloads/Integrating_the_four_skills.pdf

Howatt, A., & Widdowson, H. (2004). *A history of English language teaching*. (2nd ed.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hudson, T. (1982). The effects of induced schemata on the "short circuit" in L2 reading: non-decoding factors in L2 reading performance. *Language Learning*, 32(1), pp. 1-33.

Hulstijn, J. (2003). Connectionist models of language processing and the training of listening skills with the aid of multimedia software. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 16(5), pp. 413-425.

Hymes, D. (1971). *On communicative competence*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Johnson, K., & Morrow, K. (1981). *Communication in the classroom: applications and methods for a communicative approach*. London: Longman.

Kay, S. (1997). *Reward Elementary: Resource Pack*. Oxford: Macmillan Heinemann English Language Teaching.

Kay, S. (1999). *Reward Pre-intermediate: Resource Pack*. Oxford: Macmillan Heinemann English Language Teaching.

Keddie, J. (2012). *Lessonstream.org: Angry Monkeys* [online]. Retrieved from: http://lessonstream.org/2013/01/07/angry-monkeys/

Kelly, P. (1991). Lexical ignorance: the main obstacle to listening comprehension with advanced foreign language learners. *IRAL - International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 29(2), pp. 135-149.

Kerr, P. (2012). The return of translation. In *21st International IATEFL Poland Conference*. Wroclaw: IATEFL Poland Newsletter.

Kollmannová, L. (2003). *Jak porozumět cizí řeči: teorie a praxe poslechu s porozuměním v angličtině*. Voznice: Leda.

Komenský, J. (2012). *Orbis sensualium pictus: výbor v jazyce latinském, českém, německém, anglickém, ruském*. (2nd ed.). Beroun: Machart.

Kostková, K. (2012). *Interkulturní komunikační kompetence. Rozvoj interkulturní komunikační kompetence studentů učitelství anglického jazyka* (Dissertation). Praha: Filozofická fakulta, Univerzita Karlova v Praze. Retrieved from: http://ckis.cuni.cz/F/?func=direct&doc_number=001441967&local_base=CKS01&format=999

Kotásek, J. (2002). Modely školy budoucnosti. In *Rozvoj národní vzdělanosti a vzdělávání učitelů v evropském kontextu: výstupy řešení za rok 2001: výzkumný záměr*. (pp. 8-24). Praha: Univerzita Karlova v Praze.

Krashen, S. (1987). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall International.

Krejčí, J. (2008). *Kvalita sociálněvědních výběrových šetření v České republice*. Praha: Sociologické nakladatelství.

Kumaravadivelu, B. (1994). The postmethod condition: (e)merging strategies for second/foreign language teaching. *TESOL Quarterly*, 28(1), pp. 27-48.

Kumaravadivelu, B. (2005). *Understanding language teaching from method to postmethod*. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. Retrieved from: http://livelongday.files.wordpress.com/2011/08/kumaraposmethod.pdf

Lam, W. (2002). Raising students' awareness of the features of real-world listening input. In Richards, J., & Renandya, W. (eds.), *Methodology in language teaching: an anthology of current practice*. (pp. 248-253). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Larsen-Freeman, D. (2000). *Techniques and principles in language teaching*. (2nd ed.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lewis, M. (1993). *The lexical approach: the state of ELT and a way forward*. London: Language Teaching Publications.

Lewis, M. (1997). *Implementing the lexical approach: putting theory into practice*. Hove: LTP - Language teaching publications.

Lightbown, P., & Spada, N. (2007). *How languages are learned*. (3rd ed.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Littlewood, W. (1981). *Communicative language teaching: an introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Long, D. (1989). Second language listening comprehension: a schema-theoretic perspective. *The Modern Language Journal*, 73(1), pp. 32-40.

Long, M. (1983). Linguistic and conversational adjustments to non-native speakers. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 5(02), pp. 177-193.

Lund, R. (1991). A comparison of second language listening and reading comprehension. *The Modern Language Journal*, 75(2), pp. 196-204.

Lynch, T. (1996). *Communication in the language classroom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lynch, T. (2009). *Teaching second language listening*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Machová, P. (2012). Pre-teaching phrases before listening. [personal communication].

Malinovský, M. (2009). Twenty years later: changes in the Czech educational system and foreign language learning. *ATE Newsletter, Journal of English Language Teaching: zpravodaj Asociace učitelů angličtiny v České republice*, 21(1), pp. 23-31.

Mareš, J. (1998). *Styly učení žáků a studentů*. Praha: Portál.

McCarthy, M. (1990). *Vocabulary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

McCarthy, M. (1991). *Discourse analysis for language teachers*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

McKay, H., & Tom, A. (1999). *Teaching adult second language learners*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Minsky, M. (1975). Minsky's frame system theory. In *Proceedings of the 1975 workshop on Theoretical issues in natural language processing - TINLAP '75*. (pp. 104-116). Morristown, NJ, USA: Association for Computational Linguistics.

Mothejzíková, J. (1988). *Methodology for TEFL teachers*. Praha: SPN.

Mothejzíková, J. (1991). *Functions for oral interaction: a course in conversational English for upper-intermediate and more advanced students*. Praha: SPN.

Mothejzíková, J. (1992). *Conducting an English lesson in English*. Praha: J. Kanzelsberger.

Nation, I. (1999). Fluency and accuracy. In Spolsky, B., & Asher, R. (eds.), *Concise encyclopedia of educational linguistics*. (pp. 611-612). New York: Elsevier.

Nation, P. (2002). Best practice in vocabulary teaching and learning. In Richards, J., & Renandya, W. (eds.), *Methodology in language teaching: an anthology of current practice*. (pp. 267-272). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

New English File: Oxford University Press webpage. (2012). Retrieved from: http://elt.oup.com/student/englishfile/?cc=cz&selLanguage=cs

Nichols, R. (1948). Factors in listening comprehension. *Speech Monographs*, 15(2), pp. 154-163.

Nunan, D. (1988a). *The learner-centred curriculum: a study in second language teaching*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Nunan, D. (1988b). *Syllabus design*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Nunan, D. (1989). *Designing tasks for the communicative classroom*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Nunan, D. (1999). *Second language teaching and learning*. Boston, Mass: Heinle & Heinle.

Nunan, D. (2002). Listening in language learning. In Richards, J., & Renandya, W. (eds.), *Methodology in language teaching: an anthology of current practice*. (pp. 238-241). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Olshtain, E., & Celce-Murcia. (2007). Discourse analysis and language teaching. In Schiffrin, D. (ed.). *The handbook of discourse analysis*. (Reprinted.) Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Pub.

Oprandy, R. (1994). Listening/speaking in second and foreign language teaching. *System*, 22(2), pp. 153-175.

Oxenden, C., & Latham-Koenig, C. (2007). *New English File*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Oxford, R. (1990). *Language learning strategies: what every teacher should know*. Boston, Mass: Heinle.

Oxford, R. (2006). *Task-based language teaching and learning: an overview* [online]. In *Asian EFL Journal*. Retrieved from: http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/September_06_home.php

Palenčárová, J., & Šebesta, K. (2006). *Aktivní naslouchání při vyučování: rozvíjení komunikačních dovedností na 1. stupni ZŠ*. Praha: Portál.

Pelikán, J. (1998). *Základy empirického výzkumu pedagogických jevů*. Praha: Karolinum.

Plag, I. (2003). *Word-formation in English*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Postovsky, V. (1974). Effects of delay in oral practice at the beginning of second language learning. *The Modern Language Journal*, 58(5-6), pp. 229-239.

Prabhu, N. (1987). *Second language pedagogy*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Prabhu, N. (1990). There is no best method - why? *TESOL Quarterly*, 24(2), pp. 161-176.

Pride, J., & Holmes, J. (eds.). (1972). *Sociolinguistics: selected readings*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin.

Quinn Novotná, V. (2012). *World Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca: a reflection of global paradigmatic changes in the Czech Republic* (Dissertation). Praha: Filozofická fakulta, Univerzita Karlova v Praze. Retrieved from: http://ckis.cuni.cz/F/?func=direct&doc_number=001510791&local_base=CKS01&format=999

Rabušic, L.,& Soukup, P. (2007). Několik poznámek k jedné obsesi českých sociálních věd – statistické významnosti. (Some Notes on the Obsession of the Czech Social Sciences with Statistical Significance) *Sociologický časopis/Czech Sociological Review* 43 (2): 379-395.

Richards, J. (1983). Listening comprehension: approach, design, procedure. *TESOL Quarterly*, 17(2), pp. 219-240.

Richards, J. (1990). *The language teaching matrix*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J. (2002). Addressing the grammar gap in task work. In Richards, J., & Renandya, W. (eds.), *Methodology in language teaching: an anthology of current practice*. (pp. 153-166). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J. (2005). Second thoughts on teaching listening. *RELC Journal*, 36(1), pp. 85-92.

Richards, J. (2006). *Communicative Language Teaching today*. Retrieved from: http://www.cambridge.org/other_files/downloads/esl/booklets/Richards-Communicative-Language.pdf

Richards, J. (2009). *Teaching listening and speaking: from theory to practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J., & Lockhart, C. (1999). *Reflective teaching in second language classrooms*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J., & Rodgers, T. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J., & Renandya, W. (eds.). (2002). *Methodology in language teaching: an anthology of current practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Riley, P. (1981). Viewing comprehension: L'oeil encoute. In British Council, *The teaching of listening comprehension: papers presented at the Goethe Institut Colloquium held in Paris in 1979*. (pp. 143-154). London: British Council, English Language Division, Central Information Service.

Ritchie, W., & Bhatia, T. (eds.). (2009). *The new handbook of second language acquisition*. Bingley: Emerald.

Rivers, W. (1987). *Interactive language teaching*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Rivers, W., & Temperley, M. (1978). *A practical guide to the teaching of English as a second or foreign language*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Rixon, S. (1986). *Developing listening skills*. London: Modern English publications.

Rosolová, K. (2008). *Language in search of practice: the progress of curriculum reform in the Czech Republic*. (Dissertation). Michigan State University: Bibliobazaar, Llc.

Ross, J. (2007). Designing lessons for EFL listening comprehension classes. *English teaching forum online*, 45(3), pp. 30-33. Retrieved from: http://ebookbrowse.com/designing-lessons-for-efl-listening-comprehension-classes-by-justine-ross-pdf-d426292678

Rost, M. (1990). *Listening in language learning*. Harlow: Longman.

Rost, M. (1991). *Listening in action: activities for developing listening in language teaching*. New York: Prentice Hall.

Rost, M. (1994). *Introducing listening*. London: Penguin.

Rost, M. (1999). Listening in a second language. In Spolsky, B., & Asher, R. (eds.), *Concise encyclopedia of educational linguistics*. (pp. 290-295). New York: Elsevier.

Rost, M. (2002). *Teaching and researching listening*. Harlow: Pearson Education.

Rost, M. (2007). Commentary: I'm only trying to help: a role for interventions in teaching listening. *Language learning and technology*, II(I), pp. 102-108.

Rubin, J. (1994). A review of second language listening comprehension research. *The Modern Language Journal*, 78(2), pp. 199-221.

Rumelhart, D. (1980). Schemata the building blocks of cognition. In Spiro, R., Bruce, B., Brewer, W. *Theoretical issues in reading comprehension: perspectives from cognitive psychology, linguistics, artificial intelligence, and education*. (pp. 33-58). Hillsdale, N.J.: L. Erlbaum Associates. Retrieved from: http://www.questia.com/library/102615827/theoretical-issues-in-reading-comprehension-perspectives

Rumelhart, D., & Ortony, A. (1977). The representation of knowledge in memory. In Anderson, R., Spiro, R., & Montague, W. *Schooling and the acquisition of knowledge*. New York: distributed by the Halsted Press Division of Wiley.

Rumelhart, D., & McClelland, J. PDP Research Group. (1986). *Parallel distributed processing: explorations in the microstructure of cognition*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Ryšavý, D. (2011). Úskalí on-line dotazování při měření postojů vysokoškoláků a pracovníků vysokých škol. (Use and misuse of online surveys for measuring attitudes within higher education institutions.) *Data a výzkum – SDA Info* 5 (1): 85-103.

Santos, D., Graham, S., & Vanderplank, R. (2008). Second language listening strategy research: methodological challenges and perspectives. *Evaluation*, 21(2), pp. 111-133.

Saussure, F. (1996). *Kurs obecné lingvistiky*. (2nd ed., transl. F. Čermák). Praha: Academia.

Scrivener, J. (1994). *Learning teaching: a guidebook for English language teachers*. Oxford: Macmillan Heinemann English language teaching.

Scrivener, J. (2011). *Learning teaching: the essential guide to English language teaching*. (3rd ed.) Oxford: Macmillan Education.

Scrivener, J. (2012). Can teachers teach? In *The 8th International and 12th National ATECR Conference*. Hradec Králové: Univerzita Hradec Králové.

Semrád, J. (25.2. 2013). Social and economic changes since the Velvet Revolution. [personal communication].

Sherman, J. (1997). The effect of question preview in listening comprehension tests. *Language Testing*, 14(2), pp. 185-213.

Skalková, J. (2007). *Obecná didaktika: vyučovací proces, učivo a jeho výběr, metody, organizační formy vyučování*. (2nd ed.) Praha: Grada Publishing.

Skehan, P. (1996a). A Framework for the implementation of task-based instruction. *Applied Linguistics*, 17(1), pp. 38-62.

Skehan, P. (1996b). Second language acquisition research and task-based instruction. In *Challenge and change in language teaching*. (pp. 17-30). Oxford: Heinemann.

Skehan, P. (1998). *A cognitive approach to language learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Spolsky, B. (1989). *Conditions for second language learning: introduction to a general theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Spolsky, B. (1990). Oral examinations: an historical note. *Language Testing*, 7(2), pp. 158-173.

Stanley, G. (2011). Innovations in foreign language learning. In *The 21th Annual IATEFL-Hungary Conference*. Budapest: IATEFL Hungary.

Stanovich, K. (1980). Toward an interactive-compensatory model of individual differences in the development of reading fluency. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 16(1), pp. 32-71.

Stern, H. (1983). *Fundamental concepts of language teaching*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Stern, H. (1992). *Issues and options in language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sternberg, R. (2009). *Kognitivní psychologie*. (2nd ed.). Praha: Portál.

Strauss, A., & Corbinová, J. (1999). *Základy kvalitativního výzkumu: Postupy a techniky metody zakotvené teorie*. Boskovice: Albert.

Swain, M. (1985). Communicative competence: some roles of comprehensible input and comprehensible output in its development. In Gass, S., & Madden, C. *Input in second language acquisition*. Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House Publishers.

Swain, M. (2000). The output hypothesis and beyond: mediating acquisition through collaborative dialogue. In Lantolf, J. *Sociocultural theory and second language learning*. (pp. 97-114). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Swan, M., & Walter, C. (1984). *The Cambridge English course*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Šebestová, S. (2011). *Příležitosti k rozvíjení řečových dovedností ve výuce anglického jazyka: videostudie* (Dissertation). Brno: Pedagogická fakulta, Masarykova univerzita.

Švaříček, R., & Šeďová, K. (2007). *Kvalitativní výzkum v pedagogických vědách*. Praha: Portál.

Taglieber, L. et al. (1988). Effects of prereading activities on EFL reading by Brazilian college students. *TESOL Quarterly*, 22(3), pp. 455-472.

Thornbury, S. (1998). The Lexical Approach: a journey without maps? *MET*, 7(4), pp. 7-13.

Thornbury, S. (1999). *How to teach grammar*. Harlow: Longman.

Thornbury, S. (2002). *How to teach vocabulary*. Harlow: Longman.

Tsui, A., & Fullilove, J. (1998). Bottom-up or top-down processing as a discriminator of L2 listening performance. *Applied Linguistics*, 19(4), pp. 432-451.

Tůma, F. (2012). *Developing communicative competence through online discussion tasks: computer mediated communication and the skill of writing* (Dissertation). Praha: Filozofická fakulta, Univerzita Karlova v Praze. Retrieved from: http://ckis.cuni.cz/F/?func=direct&doc_number=001498315&local_base=CKS01&format=999

Tyler, M. (2001). Resource consumption as a function of topic knowledge in nonnative and native comprehension. *Language Learning*, 51(2), pp. 257-280.

Underhill, A., & Scrivener, J. (2012). *Demand High ELT* [online]. Retrieved from: http://demandhighelt.wordpress.com/

Underwood, M. (1975). *Listen to this!* (2nd ed.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Underwood, M. (1976). *What a story!* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Underwood, M. (1979). *Have you heard...?: Listening comprehension*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Underwood, M. (1989). *Teaching listening*. New York: Longman.

Ur, P. (1984). *Teaching listening comprehension*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ur, P. (1996). *A course in language teaching: practice and theory*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Vachek, J. (1972). The linguistic theory of the Prague School. In Fried, V. (ed.), *The Prague School of Linguistics and Language Teaching*. (pp. 11-28). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Van Ek, J. (1977). *The Threshold Level for modern language learning in schools*. Harlow: Longman-Group.

Vandergrift, L. (1997). The Cinderella of communication strategies: reception strategies in interactive listening. *The Modern Language Journal*, 78(2), pp. 494-505.

Vandergrift, L. (1999). Facilitating second language listening comprehension: acquiring successful strategies. *ELT Journal*, 53(3), pp. 168-176.

Vandergrift, L. (2003). From prediction through reflection: guiding students. *Canadian Modern Language Review / La Revue canadienne des langues vivantes*, 59(3), pp. 425-440.

Vandergrift, L. (2004). Listening to learn or learning to listen? *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* (24), pp. 3-25.

Vandergrift, L. (2007). Recent developments in second and foreign language listening comprehension research. *Language Teaching*, 40(03), pp. 191-210.

Vandergrift, L. (3.6. 2013). The length of the pre-listening stage. [personal communication].

Vandergrift, L., & Goh, C. (2009). Teaching and Testing Listening Comprehension. In Long, M., & Doughty, C. *The handbook of language teaching*. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell. Retrieved from: http://site.ebrary.com/lib/natl/Doc?id=10323198&ppg=431

Vandergrift, L., & Tafaghodtari, M. (2010). Teaching L2 learners how to listen does make a difference: an empirical study. *Language Learning*, 60(2), pp. 470-497.

Vanderplank, R. (2010). Deja vu? A decade of research on language laboratories, television and video in language learning. *Language Teaching*, 43(01), pp. 1-37.

Vicente, P., & Reis, E. (2010). Using questionnaire design to fight nonresponse bias in web surveys. *Social Science Computer Review* 28 (2): 251-267.

Vinopal, J. (2009). Situace standardizovaného dotazování z hlediska kognitivních přístupů. *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review*, 45 (2): 397-420.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1976). *Vývoj vyšších psychických funkcí*. (transl. J. Průcha & M. Sedláková). Praha: SPN.

Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in society: the development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Wenden, A. (1986). Incorporating learner training in the classroom. *System*, 14(3), pp. 315-325.

Whitney, N. (1999). Listening: second language pedagogy. In Spolsky, B., & Asher, R. (eds.), *Concise encyclopedia of educational linguistics*. (pp. 639-644). New York: Elsevier.

Widdowson, H. (1972). The teaching of English as communication. *ELT Journal*, XXVII(1), pp. 15-19.

Widdowson, H. (1990). *Teaching language as communication*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wilkins, D. (1976). *Notional syllabuses: a taxonomy and its relevance to foreign language curriculum development*. London: Oxford University Press.

Wilkins, D. (1999). Applied linguistics. In Spolsky, B., & Asher, R. (eds.), *Concise encyclopedia of educational linguistics*. (pp. 6-17). New York: Elsevier.

Williams, M., & Burden, R. (1997). *Psychology for language teachers: a social constructivist approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Willis, J. (1996a). *A framework for task-based learning*. Harlow: Longman.

Willis, J. (1996b). A flexible framework for task-based learning. In Willis, J., & Willis, D. *Challenge and change in language teaching*. (pp. 52-62). Oxford: Heinemann.

Willis, J., & Willis, D. (2013). *Task-Based Teaching: free lesson plans to download* [online]. Retrieved from: http://www.willis-elt.co.uk/taskbased.html

Willis, J., & Willis, D. (1988). *Collins COBUILD English course*. London: Harper Collins.

Willis, J., & Willis, D. (eds.). (1996). *Challenge and change in language teaching*. Oxford: Heinemann.

Winitz, H. (1981). *The Comprehension approach to foreign language instruction*. Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House Publishers.

Yalden, J. (1987). *The communicative syllabus: evolution, design, and implementation*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall International.

Zelenda, S., Šafařík, L., & Ždímalová, H. (2003). Online výuka angličtiny po kapkách. *Aula: Revue pro vysokoškolskou a vědní politiku*, 11(3), pp. 40-44.

Ždímalová, H. (2009a). How to teach speaking at elementary level. In Betáková, L., & Koy, C. *English for Life*. (pp. 9-11). České Budějovice: Západočeská univerzita.

Ždímalová, H. (2009b). Prediction in listening. *ATE Newsletter, Journal of English Language Teaching: zpravodaj Asociace učitelů angličtiny v České republice*, 21(1), pp. 15-22.

Ždímalová, H. (2009c). Prediction in listening to stories. In *The 1st International and 4th National Anglophone Conference*. Hradec Králové: Univerzita Hradec Králové.

Ždímalová, H. (2010a). Task-based learning at lower levels. In *The 7th International and 11th National ATECR Conference*. Ústí nad Labem: Univerzita Jana Evangelisty Purkyně.

Ždímalová, H. (2010b). Integrace mluvení a poslechu u dospělého žáka na úrovni A1-A2. In *Sborník Asociace učitelů češtiny jako cizího jazyka (AUČCJ) 2010*. (pp. 135-142). Praha: Filip Tomáš - Akropolis.

Ždímalová, H. (2011a). Teaching speaking to adults at A1-A2 levels. *ATE Newsletter, Journal of English Language Teaching: zpravodaj Asociace učitelů angličtiny v České republice*, 21(1), pp. 22-25.

Ždímalová, H. (2011b). Teaching of listening at A1-B1 levels. In *ELT SIGNPOSTS: MSATE International Conference*. Brno: Masarykova univerzita.

Ždímalová, H. (2012a). Teaching/learning of listening from the adult learner's perspective. In *The 21st International IATEFL Poland Conference*. Wroclaw: IATEFL Poland Newsletter.

Ždímalová, H. (2012b). Foreign language learning of listening from the adult learner's perspective. In *Challenges IV International Conference*. Ústí nad Labem: Univerzita Jana Evangelisty Purkyně.

Ždímalová, H. (2012c). Task-Based Learning v pojetí Jane Willis. In *Sborník Asociace učitelů češtiny jako cizího jazyka (AUČCJ)*. (pp. 23-30). Praha: Filip Tomáš - Akropolis.

Ždímalová, H. (2012d). *Online questionnaire: Listening instruction and pre-listening techniques*. [online]. Retrieved from: http://langdpt.avcr.cz/dotaznik

Ždímalová, H., & Anýžová, P. (2012). Pre-listening stage and teaching listening from the adult learner's perspective. *ATE Newsletter, Journal of English Language Teaching: zpravodaj Asociace učitelů angličtiny v České republice*, 24(2), pp. 23-38.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Student quotes on listening from semi-structured interviews.

Appendix 2: The 2012 questionnaire and survey results.

Appendix 3: A sample form recording the time teachers spent on listening instruction and the pre-listening stage as observed in teacher observations (2011-2012).

Appendix 4: Listening situations (based on Underwood 1989: 5-7).

Appendix 5: Pre-listening techniques (Ždímalová 2011b).

Appendix 6: Stages of listening instruction (Vandergrift 2004).

Appendix 1: Student quotes on listening from semi-structured interviews.

The 2008 semi-structured interviews with A2 students focused on learning L2 speaking, however, the students often commented on their difficulties in L2 listening. These are some of the selected portions of the transcribed interviews.
(Q = Questions: in italics, S = student.)

Q - *Jaké máte zkušenosti se studiem angličtiny, jaké kurzy jste absolvoval a jak moc se tam mluvilo*?
S1: Já jsem začal angličtinu v patnácti letech, měl jsem ji tři roky na SŠ….. tehdy jsem měl tu úroveň angličtiny skoro nejlepší. Ale nicméně byl jsem pořád před takovým „prahem srozumitelnosti" (tedy poslechově). Protože já čtení a psaní, sice s chybami, jakž takž zvládám, ale ten poslech je prostě kámen úrazu, to se nechytám. A i tehdy to byl problém, protože to byl bod, který jsem nikdy nedokázal pořádně překročit. Když někdo mluví srozumitelně a pomalu, jako třeba lektor v hodinách, tak já rozumím bez problému. Ale ve chvíli, jak slyším např. zprávy, tak je to těžké…

Q - *A pracovali jste na SŠ s magnetofonem? Poslouchali jste nějaké nahrávky*?
S1: S magnetofonem se více méně nepracovalo. To bylo na úrovni slovní. Učitel na nás hovořil a občas si někoho přivedl…

Q - *Co Vám pomohlo se rozmluvit v kurzu JARO*?
S1: Byli jsme ve skvělé partě… Pak určitě ta rozmanitost. Uznávám to střídání aktivit, myslím, že to tam musí být. To znamená trénink čtení, psaní, poslechu, mluvení. A ještě ty formy, třeba quizy, rozhovory, hry. Jediné, co mi tam trochu chybělo, bylo video, ale postupně se to v našem kurzu zlepšovalo. Tam jde o to propojení vizuálního s poslechem, to mi přesně vyhovuje. Já to opravdu potřebuju mít takhle kombinované. Mně třeba vysloveně poslech jen rádia dělá problém, ale když to vidím v televizi nebo na videu, tak je to lepší. Přecejen se víc chytám. No, a potom rozmluva s živým člověkem, tak se dá korigovat ta rychlost, to prostě si člověk vynutí, něco zopakovat podruhé a tak. A je tam ta vzájemná interakce a reagování jeden na druhého.

Q - *A můžete uvést, zda si při komunikaci překládáte*?
S1: Při poslechu se mi někdy stane, že poslouchám, poslouchám a potom narazím na slovíčko, které neznám, a je to vlastně důsledek toho dřívějšího stylu, že jsem to překládal, tak se snažím najednou se rozvzpomenout a překládám to slovíčko. A tím ztratím zbytek toho poslechu. Takže mám snahu spíš to vnímat, představovat si, takovou tu představu před očima, co se to děje, co to poslouchám.

Q - *Máte pocit, že byste potřeboval, jako student, mluvit v kurzu více nebo naopak méně a proč*?
S1: Pro mě se uskutečňuje přiměřeně. Já prostě uznávám tu proměnlivost těch aktivit….. Když by se tomu poslechu věnovalo více času, tak by se muselo zase něco jiného ubrat. Samozřejmě trošku si pak nevím rady s tím poslechem, no ale je to asi na mě, abych si to doma pouštěl…

Q - *A teď k Vašemu učebnímu stylu. V dotazníku Vám vyšel nejlépe pohybový a vizuální styl, ale úplně nejnižší ze třídy ta poslechová složka*.
S1: Ono to právě koresponduje, já mám ten hudební ‚hluch', jak se říká. Mám hudbu rád, ale to rozpoznávání, tu detailizaci neslyším a prostě nerozumím.

Q - *To je pro Vás zřejmě handicap v těch posleších*?
S1: Hlavní problém v té angličtině je ta plynulost těch mluvčích, kdy oni to tam všechno spojují. To jsem Vám říkal ten příklad, když jsem viděl nějaký film, moc hezký film o švédské královně a tam bylo vždycky slovo, mezera, slovo, mezera, krátké věty, jedna věta a dlouho nic. Tomu jsem krásně rozuměl, bylo to úžasný, najednou jsem měl pocit, že rozumím anglicky. A pak jsem si pustil zprávy a nerozuměl jsem téměř ničemu, kdyby k tomu nebyly ty obrázky, tak bych opravdu nevěděl, o čem je řeč. A občas mě to i deprimuje, tohle.

S2: Tak mně se třeba v poslední době líbily ta videa z té kanceláře.
Q - *A co Vás na tom bavilo*?
S2: Mně dělá velký problém to poslouchání, ale v okamžiku, kdy je vidím, tak je to mnohem lepší. A to je u všeho, protože já prostě potřebuju toho člověka vidět. Jakmile ho nevidím, tak mi to začne splývat v takový vodopád a špatně rozumím. Zase, asi kdybych víc poslouchala kazety, TV noviny atd., tak by se to asi taky trochu zlepšilo.

Q - *A co Vás motivuje ve studiu, proč pokračujete dál*?
S2: Protože myslím, že se jednou zlepším. No, je to ta údržba, aby člověk nezapomněl úplně všechno, a ta domluva ve světě. Mám příbuzenstvo ve světě. Člověk chce cestovat a teď k nám jezdí i ti cizinci.

Q - *A co Vás motivuje ve studiu*?
S3: No, já jsem vždycky měla takovou tu ambici a motivaci, abych se teda něco naučila, abych se domluvila. Já jsem byla několikrát v zahraničí o prázdninách a hrozně mně vadilo, když jsem tam neuměla vůbec jako o nic si říci a vlastně ničemu jsem nerozuměla a museli to za mě vyřizovat jiní. Takže to je pro mě velká motivace, abych si uměla o něco říci a abych se trošku domluvila v zahraničí.

Q - *Co Vám konkrétně pomohlo v tom mluvení v kurzu JARO*?

S3: Hm. Hodně mně pomohlo takovéto mluvení v párech třeba, když děláme nějaké ty aktivity v párech. Tak to mi hodně pomohlo, protože… jsem slyšela stejnou Aj, kterou jsem mluvila téměř já, a tu výslovnost podobnou, a tak, a byly to jednoduchý věty, a každý se z těch mých spolužáků vyjadřoval jednoduše... Pak takové ty dialogy, když jsme si měli o něčem povídat, tak třeba mi pomohlo, že jsem opravdu jako chytala ta slovíčka a že jsem si říkala: „Ježíš, vždyť já to vlastně znám, ta slovíčka.“ A prostě, jak to jednou slyším od někoho, tak se to tak nějak usadilo ve mně, takže jsem to potom také uměla používat. To mi pomohlo.

Q - *Zmínila jste určitý „tvořivostní“ prvek - to Vám vyhovuje*?

S3: Hm. Jo, už si vzpomínám, jak jsme měli, to byl poslech, kde byly určité ty části, byl to příběh… vlastně maminka s nějakým malým synkem šli nebo pronajali si nějaký domek mimo město a šli tam vlastně, někdo je tam měl přivítat a nikdo tam nebyl, a ten synek tam lezl okýnkem střešním, tak my jsme vlastně vždycky si pustili tu jednu část a pak jsme predikovali nebo snažili se uhodnout, jak to bude dál pokračovat. Takže to mě motivovalo, že jsem potom opravdu pečlivě teda poslouchala, abych se dozvěděla, jak to teda dál pokračuje.

Q - *Do jaké míry se mluvení v tom současném kurzu realizuje*?

S4: Já myslím, že je to docela vyvážené. No, že tam děláme všechno vlastně. Někdy bych řekla, že potřebuji víc poslechu, protože hůř rozumím, ale zase to mluvení je pro mě osobně jako potřeba víc, protože když jedu do ciziny, tak většinou potřebuji já něco zjistit, tak já se musím nejdřív zeptat a to už zase pak spíš rozumím, jestli mi řeknou „ano“, „ne“ nebo mi někam ukážou. Takže sice chci rozumět, ale pro mě je důležitější to mluvení…..

No, už určitě i víc rozumím. Na začátku, když jsme měli ten poslech, tak to jsem byla úplně ztracená. A teďka už přeci jenom, když někdo vyslovuje něco, co je už srozumitelný pro mě, tak něco pochytím. Je to lepší právě, když k tomu je ten děj.

Q - *Co Vám konkrétně pomáhá v mluvení v kurzu JARO*?

S5: Když třeba bereme ty texty, ty poslechy, tak vlastně já jsem si koupila to CDéčko k učebnici a vždycky, když si to doma ještě párkrát poslechnu….., tak já si ty věty potom zapamatuju a vlastně i tu výslovnost. Takže mi to strašně jako pomáhá.

S5: ….. Minulé prázdniny jsem potkala v jednom kempu v Německu nějakou paní z Holandska a bavily jsme se o životě. I když se mnou měla velkou trpělivost, tak jsem v konverzaci s ní cítila handicap, protože jsem nerozuměla tomu, co povídala, a když se na něco zeptala mě, tak jsem jí stěží rozuměla. Bývala bych si s ní ráda víc popovídala.

Appendix 2: The 2012 questionnaire and survey results.

For the Czech version of the questionnaire, go to: http://langdpt.avcr.cz/dotaznik

Instructions for the online questionnaire:

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for your decision to fill in our online questionnaire and thus contribute to improving our language teaching at the Department of Language Studies. The questionnaire is anonymous. In case of any comments or queries, do not hesitate to contact me at: zdimalova@langdpt.cas.cz

If you study two foreign languages, please choose the one which is your priority. If you are interested, it is possible to fill in two separate questionnaires, one for each language course.
If you attend a course shared by two teachers, please choose only one teacher and fill the questionnaire with that particular teacher and part of the course in mind. If you like, you can also fill in two separate questionnaires, one for each teacher.

* The answer is compulsory.

I. Introduction

1. The foreign language you study at our Department: *

(%)	(371 respondents)
79.6	a) English.
8.3	b) German.
9.6	c) French
2.6	d) Spanish.

2. Language proficiency level (according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages): *

CEFR levels: A1 – C2. Every level has two stages: "I" stands for the first year of study (the 1st stage) of the course and "II" stands for the second year of study (the 2nd stage) of the course at the same proficiency level. (NB: Students are familiar with the system.)

(%)	(374 respondents)
1.3	- A1/I (elementary, 1st year of study).
2.4	- A1/II (elementary, 2nd year of study).
6.7	- A2/I (pre-intermediate: 1st year of study).
15.5	- A2/II (pre-intermediate: 2nd year of study).
8.3	- B1/I (intermediate: 1st year of study).
10.2	- B1/II ("intermediate": 2nd year of study).
17.6	- B2/I ("upper-intermediate" to FCE: 1st year of study).
19.0	- B2/II ("upper-intermediate" to FCE: 2nd year of study).
10.4	- C1/I ("advanced": 1st year of study).
5.9	- C1/II ("advanced": 2nd year of study).
1.9	- C2/I ("proficiency": 1st year of study).
0.8	- C2/II ("proficiency": 2nd year of study).

3. Course number (e.g. A23): ……

If you do not want to specify the course number, please specify which coursebook is used or, if you do not use a coursebook, specify the type of the course.

II. Self-evaluation and learner needs

It is not always easy to reflect on yourself or evaluate yourself. Nevertheless, please try to be as objective as possible.

4. Assess your language skills by assigning a grade on the scale from 1 (the best grade, i.e. "excellent") to 5 (the worst grade, i.e. "unsatisfactory") [as if in school]:

(369 respondents)

		Grade				
Self-evaluation	Average	1	2	3	4	5
a) Reading	1.92	24.1%	60.7%	13.8%	1.4%	0.0%
b) Writing	2.61	4.1%	41.3%	44.8%	9.2%	0.5%
c) Listening	2.77	8.1%	30.6%	38.5%	21.7%	1.1%
d) Speaking	2.78	4.3%	30.6%	48.5%	15.7%	0.8%

5. Assess your language knowledge in each area by assigning a grade on the scale from 1 (the best grade, i.e. "excellent") to 5 (the worst grade, i.e. "unsatisfactory") [as if in school]:

(368 respondents)

		Grade				
Self-evaluation	Average	1	2	3	4	5
a) Grammar	2.50	5.4%	47.3%	39.7%	7.1%	0.5%
b) Lexis/Vocabulary	2.60	7.1%	37.1%	45.0%	10.6%	0.3%
c) Spelling	2.48	8.2%	44.3%	38.8%	8.7%	0.0%
d)Phonology/Pronunciation	2.38	11.2%	47.0%	35.5%	5.2%	1.1%
e)Communicative language functions (CLF, see below)	2.49	11.6%	40.1%	37.6%	9.4%	1.4%

[Definition: **CLF** = the ability to express oneself clearly and appropriately in a given situation/context, e.g. giving directions.]

6. What is your learning goal in terms of which language skill you want to improve most? (Tick max. 2 options):

(%)	(369 respondents)
3.3	a) Reading
33.1	b) Writing
54.7	c) Listening
90.8	d) Speaking

7. Which language area do you want to improve most? (Tick max. 2 options):

(%)	(370 respondents)
31.4	a) Grammar
53.5	b) Lexis/Vocabulary
8.9	c) Spelling
13.8	d) Phonology/Pronunciation
69.2	e) Communicative language functions (CLF, see the definition above)

III. Course tuition and your teacher

Now, let us move to your teacher. If you have more than one teacher, choose one teacher whose teaching you will have in mind when you complete the rest of the questionnaire, and please try to be consistent.

8. Is your teacher native or non-native?

(%) (373 respondents)

34 a) A native speaker of the foreign language you study.

66 b) A non-native speaker of the foreign language you study.

9. Evaluate the overall quality of your teacher's teaching in the course by assigning a grade on the scale from 1 (the best grade, i.e. "excellent") to 5 (the worst grade, i.e. "unsatisfactory") [as if in school]:

(370 respondents)

Average	2
Modus	1
Median	1

Grade	1	2	3	4	5
	56.2%	35.4%	7.8%	0.3%	0.3%

10. Evaluate the quality of your teacher's teaching of listening comprehension in the course by assigning a grade on the scale from 1 (the best grade, i.e. "excellent") to 5 (the worst grade, i.e. "unsatisfactory") [as if in school]:

(369 respondents)

Average	2
Modus	2
Median	2

Grade	1	2	3	4	5
	40.7%	40.9%	14.9%	3.0%	0.5%

11. Evaluate the quality of your teacher's teaching of speaking in the course by assigning a grade on the scale from 1 (the best grade, i.e. "excellent") to 5 (the worst grade, i.e. "unsatisfactory") [as if in school]:

(370 respondents)

Average	2
Modus	2
Median	2

Grade	1	2	3	4	5
	41.6%	42.4%	13.2%	2.7%	0.0%

12. In the classroom, the means of instruction and communication can be either the target (foreign) language (L2) or Czech (the students' mother tongue, L1). Estimate the percentage in which Czech is used as the means of instruction and communication.

(367 respondents)

Average	18%
Modus	0%
Median	10%

13. In your opinion, what would be the ideal percentage of using Czech (L1) as the means of instruction and communication in your language classroom?

(363 respondents)

Average	11%
Modus	0%
Median	10%

IV. The teaching of listening in your classroom

Please focus on the teaching and learning of listening in your course with your teacher.
The teaching of listening is a targeted activity during which students listen to a type of listening text and respond to questions/tasks focused on listening comprehension and meaning. The types of listening used in the classroom are various, e.g. listening to audiorecordings (on a cassette/CD/computer), listening to a teacher's story, and listening to your teacher reading a text, under the condition that these concern some kind of listening task fulfilment. (In this definition we will not include: students' dialogues when they learn how to speak, teacher's explanation of grammar rules while teaching grammar, or even short and not targeted teacher's narration which is not accompanied with some kind of listening task fulfilment, etc.)

14. Estimate how often your teacher involves listening sessions in your course:

(%) (370 respondents)

39.7 a) Every lesson (i.e. once a week).

43.0 b) Once in two weeks.

0.0 c) Once in three weeks.

16.5 d) Once a month.

0.8 e) Less than once a month.

0.0 f) Never.

15. Please note that the listening comprehension session (i.e. part of the language lesson) has three stages: pre-listening (preparatory), while-listening, and post-listening (discussing the answers etc.). How many percent of your course time is spent on listening comprehension sessions? Estimate the percentage of the amount of time spent on learning listening comprehension in your course:

(360 respondents)

Average	23.24%
Modus	20%
Median	20%

of the course time.

16. In your opinion, how many percent of the course time should listening comprehension sessions ideally occupy?

(350 respondents)

Average	29.91%
Modus	30%
Median	30%

of the course time.

17. In which part of the 90-minute language lesson is listening comprehension usually practised?

(%) (367 respondents)

2.7 a) During the first 20 minutes.

30.2 b) Around the middle of the lesson.

17.4 c) During the last 20 minutes.

49.6 d) It depends (i.e. in various parts of the lesson).

18. Choose the types of listening comprehension you practise in class and estimate their percentage so that in total it forms 100% (e.g. 50% radio, 30% course DVD, and 20% songs). If you do not use the type of listening mentioned, leave the „zero" answer:

(average %) (358 respondents)

64.7 a) Listening to audiorecordings (on CD/tape/computer) from the course textbook or supplementary textbooks.

5.1 b) Listening to the teacher reading a text (usually following setting up listening tasks).

3.2 c) Listening to the teacher narrating a story (usually following setting up listening tasks).

5.6 d) Listening while viewing the course DVD/video.

7.3 e) Listening to songs with a focus on their lyrics.

1.4 f) Listening to foreign language radio or audiorecordings from radio broadcasts.

6.7 g) Listening to authentic recordings of native speakers (e.g. from You Tube).

0.5 h) Listening to authentic recordings of non-native speakers (e.g. from You Tube).

3.7 i) Listening while viewing original films/DVDs/videos.

0.8 j) Listening while viewing a foreign language TV channel.

1.2 k) Do you listen to anything else in class? If yes, please specify:

……

……

19. The teacher may play one listening text once or more than once. Estimate how many times you listen to one text on average:

(356 respondents)

Average	2.3x
Modus	2x
Median	2x

1x	2x	3x	4x	5x
5.3%	61.8%	30.9%	1.4%	0.6%

20. Which form of classroom organisation prevails?

(%) (367 respondents)

1.4 a) We work individually and then the teacher supplies the answers immediately.

54.2 b) We work individually, the teacher asks for the answers and then we discuss them.

17.4 c) We work in pairs: we discuss possible answers. The teacher asks the pairs for their solutions and then the teacher supplies the answers.

22.1 d) We work in pairs: we discuss possible answers. The teacher asks the pairs for their solutions and then we discuss whose answer/solution is the best.

2.7 e) We work in groups of 3-4: we discuss possible answers. The teacher asks the groups for their solutions and then the teacher supplies the answers.

2.2 f) We work in groups of 3-4: we discuss possible answers. The teacher asks the groups for their solutions and then we discuss whose answer/solution is the best.

21. Would you like to practise any type of listening in class more often? Which one? Tick max. 3 options:

(%) (306 respondents)

23.9 a) Listening to audiorecordings (on CD/tape/computer) from the course textbook or supplementary textbooks.

5.9 b) Listening to the teacher reading a text (usually following setting up listening tasks).

14.1 c) Listening to the teacher narrating a story (usually following setting up listening tasks).

26.5 d) Listening while viewing the course DVD/video.

25.5 e) Listening to songs with a focus on their lyrics.

21.2 f) Listening to foreign language radio or audiorecordings from radio broadcasts.

41.5 g) Listening to authentic recordings of native speakers (e.g. from You Tube).

5.6 h) Listening to authentic recordings of non-native speakers (e.g. from You Tube).

33.7 i) Listening while viewing original films/DVDs/videos.

23.5 j) Listening while viewing a foreign language TV channel.

22. Would you like to listen to anything else in class? If yes, please specify:

……

…….

V. Preparatory techniques in the pre-listening stage

In the pre-listening stage, before the students start to listen (for the 1st time), the teacher can either directly briefly set up the listening task, or use specific pre-listening techniques to prepare the students for listening.

23. Which of the following pre-listening techniques does your teacher use in the course? Please tick all that apply: *

(%) (374 respondents)

29.4 a) Brainstorming students' ideas / suggestions for the given listening topic.

34.5 b) Brainstorming students' suggestions of lexis for the given listening topic.

66.3 c) Teacher familiarizes students with the 'less familiar' key words in the text.

42.2 d) A picture description and discussion introducing the given context of the listening text.

38.5 e) A story prediction based on pictures.

25.4 f) Students' predictions / guesses of the answers to the given listening questions.

12.0 g) Students' filling information into a table / graph / map, e.g. geographical data.

11.2 h) Inferring the listening topic from a short list of lexis included in the listening text.

18.2 i) Inferring the listening topic from reading a short text (connected with the listening topic).

5.3 j) Inferring the listening topic from listening to the first few opening sentences.

32.1 k) Students' narration on the given topic, e.g. 'a disastrous holiday'.

32.6 l) Grammar revision in the context, e.g. the Past Simple for a narrative in the past.

17.4 m) Revision of a communicative language function in the context, e.g. 'asking for/giving directions'.

55.1 n) Free conversation on the given listening topic.

1.3 o) The teacher does not use any of the above mentioned techniques.

24. Following the previous question, please evaluate your teacher's usage of pre-listening techniques (in the course) by assigning a grade on the scale from 1 (the best grade, i.e. "excellent") to 5 (the worst grade, i.e. "unsatisfactory") [as if in school]: *

Average = 1.76 (374 respondents)

Grade	1	2	3	4	5
	42.2%	42.8%	12.0%	2.1%	0.8%

25. How many pre-listening techniques does your teacher usually use before one listening text? *

(%) (374 respondents)

13.1 a) More than two pre-listening techniques.

55.3 b) One to two pre-listening techniques.

15.0 c) One pre-listening technique.

13.4 d) Sometimes one pre-listening technique and sometimes none.

2.4 e) Usually none.

0.8 f) None.

26. Think about all the listening sessions you do with your teacher. Estimate in how many percent of all listening texts your teacher uses any pre-listening technique(s): *

(374 respondents)

Average	70.18%
Modus	100%
Median	80%

27. What percentage would suit you? Suggest in how many percent of all listening texts the teacher should use pre-listening techniques. ("100%" means in all cases, "zero %" means in none.): *

(374 respondents)

Average	75.22%
Modus	100%
Median	80%

28. In your opinion, how would you describe the inclusion of pre-listening techniques in the pre-listening stage? *

(%) (374 respondents)

58.0 a) Definitely useful.

31.3 b) Rather useful.

3.7 c) Rather useless.

0.5 d) Definitely useless.

6.4 e) I do not know / I cannot say.

29. Which pre-listening techniques are, in your opinion, the most effective? Please tick max. five top choices.

(%) (346 respondents)

24.9 a) Brainstorming of the students' ideas / suggestions for the given listening topic.

57.8 b) Brainstorming students' suggestions of lexis for the given listening topic.

75.1 c) Teacher familiarizes students with the 'less familiar' key words in the text.

28.9 d) A picture description and discussion introducing the given context of the listening text.

23.4 e) A story prediction based on pictures.

12.4 f) Students' predictions / guesses of the answers to the given listening questions.

4.0 g) Students' filling information into a table / graph / map, e.g. geographical data.

13.3 h) Inferring the listening topic from a short list of lexis included in the listening text.

15.9 i) Inferring the listening topic from reading a short text (connected with the listening topic).

5.2 j) Inferring the listening topic from listening to the first few opening sentences.

15.3 k) Students' narration on the given topic, e.g. 'a disastrous holiday'.

25.7 l) Grammar revision in the context, e.g. the Past Simple for a narrative in the past.

13.6 m) Revision of a communicative language function in the context, e.g. 'asking for/giving directions'.

42.5 n) Free conversation on the given listening topic.

VI. Problems with listening to audiorecordings in the classroom

30. If you have any problems with hearing and/or acoustics, tick which ones:

(%)		(374 respondents)
21.4	a) The classroom acoustics is quite bad.	(80)
44.1	b) In the classroom, we can hear outside noise (from the corridor or the street).	(165)
20.9	c) The audiorecordings have distracting noises in the background.	(78)
11.8	d) I suffer from limited hearing.	(44)
9.9	e) It is necessary to have a musical ear, but I do not have it.	(37)

31. If you have any problems with the speakers' pronunciation, the length of the recordings and/or the speech rate, tick which ones:

(%)		(374 respondents)
57.2	a) It is difficult to recognize individual words because of connected speech.	(214)
32.9	b) I have difficulty with the accent of native speakers.	(123)
6.4	c) I have difficulty with the accent of non-native speakers.	(24)
18.4	d) I have difficulty with the intonation of native speakers.	(69)
1.9	e) I have difficulty with the intonation of non-native speakers.	(7)
20.3	f) Some women's voices have a very high pitch that I do not comprehend.	(76)
13.9	g) The audiorecordings are too long.	(52)
60.4	h) The speakers speak too fast.	(226)

32. If you have any problems with preparation for listening, tick which ones:

(%)		(374 respondents)
18.4	a) I lack adequate amount of context (who, when, where, what…).	(69)
18.2	b) I lack visual support, e.g. a picture introducing the situation.	(68)
16.8	c) I have little knowledge of the topic(s).	(63)
5.3	d) I have little knowledge of the cultural differences.	(20)
4.3	e) I lack the opportunity to brainstorm ideas for the given topic.	(16)
9.4	f) I lack the opportunity to predict what the listening is going to be about.	(35)
20.3	g) I lack the opportunity to familiarize myself with a few key words from the listening text.	(76)

7.0	h) I lack the opportunity to quickly revise a grammar structure prevailing in the listening text.	(26)
5.9	i) I have little imagination (I cannot imagine the situation, people…).	(22)
11.8	j) I do not have enough time for reading the instructions.	(44)
9.4	k) I tend to have difficulty in comprehending the instructions.	(35)

33. If you have any problems concerning stress and/or using specific listening subskills, tick which ones:

(%)		(374 respondents)
19.5	a) I am trying to comprehend every word.	(73)
24.3	b) Unfamiliar words throw me off balance.	(91)
23.3	c) I do not know where to direct my attention while listening.	(87)
28.6	d) I tend to translate the listening text and therefore cannot manage to keep up.	(107)
16.6	e) I get stressed and frightened that I will not comprehend the text.	(62)
17.4	f) I feel stressed because I cannot stop the recording and replay the part I need.	(65)
20.3	g) I am nervous because of the fact that I am unsuccessful in listening.	(76)
12.0	h) I am nervous because of the fact that I am worse than the others are at listening.	(45)
14.2	i) I lack the opportunity to see the speaker(s).	(53)
18.2	j) I lack the opportunity to read the listening text simultaneously with the listening.	(68)
19.8	k) It is not sufficient for me to hear the listening only twice.	(74)
35.8	l) I do not manage to listen and simultaneously write the answers to the given listening questions.	(134)

34. Do you have any other problems than the above mentioned ones? If so, please specify:

……

……

……

…….

VII. Listening outside the classroom

Now, focus on those listening activities outside the classroom which you do often and intentionally.

35. Estimate how many minutes a week you devote to listening outside the classroom on average:

(353 respondents)

Average	85.79
Modus	30
Median	30

minutes per week.

36. Which type of foreign language listening do you engage in most often? If you engage often in more types, tick max. five top choices:

(%) (349 respondents)

13.2 a) Listening to audiorecordings from the course textbook/materials.

14.0 b) Listening to audiorecordings that your teacher sets for homework.

11.7 c) Listening to other audiorecordings.

21.5 d) Listening to conference contributions (to a speech at a conference or on the internet).

31.2 e) Listening to foreign language radio.

30.4 f) Listening while viewing a foreign language TV channel.

17.8 g) Listening to authentic recordings of native speakers (e.g. from You Tube).

1.1 h) Listening to authentic recordings of non-native speakers.

23.2 i) Listening to songs with a focus on their lyrics.

4.3 j) Listening to native speakers on the phone.

2.9 k) Listening to non-native speakers on the phone.

0.9 l) Listening while viewing the course DVD/video.

21.5 m) Listening to native speakers in face-to-face encounters.

22.3 n) Listening to non-native speakers in face-to-face encounters.

45.0 o) Listening while viewing films/DVDs/videos in the foreign language with Czech subtitles.

26.9 p) Listening while viewing films/DVDs/videos in the foreign language with subtitles in that language.

19.8 q) Listening while viewing films/DVDs/videos in the foreign language without subtitles.

37. Do you often engage in any other type of listening? If so, please specify:

……

……

……

……

VIII. Additional questions

At the end of the questionnaire, please, answer a few additional questions that will serve just the purpose of statistical analyses of the data and will not be used for any other purposes under any circumstances.

38. How many years have you been learning the foreign language in question in total (including breaks / interruptions to studies)?

(358 respondents)

Average	15.13
Modus	20
Median	14

years.

39. How many years have you been learning the foreign language recently without interruption?

(353 respondents)

Average	5.29
Modus	1
Median	3

years.

40. If you have ever lived in a country where the foreign language is spoken, how long was your longest stay in months?

(163 respondents)

Average	2.15
Modus	0
Median	0

months.

41. Which learning style is best for your learning? Order the learning styles from 1 (the best) to 3 (the worst) according to your preference:

… By seeing, i.e. visual style (using pictures, colours etc.) (348 respondents)

… By hearing, i.e. auditory style (listening to native speakers, songs, audiorecordings etc.) (332 respondents)

… By touching and moving, i.e. kinaesthetic/tactile style (role-plays, simulations, changing partners in discussions, matching cards etc.) (315 respondents)

Learning	1st	2nd	3rd
visual style	59.2%	31.6%	9.2%
auditory style	38.0%	47.0%	15.0%
kinaesthetic/tactile style	8.9%	20.0%	71.1%

42. Are you a man or a woman? *

(%) (371 respondents)

24.5 Man.

75.5 Woman.

43. Please, specify your age: *

(364 respondents)

Average	39.08
Modus	27
Median	35

years.

44. What is your highest finishing level of education? *

(%) (371 respondents)

0.0 a) Basic education.

0.0 b) Apprentice / secondary education without ‘maturita’ state exam.

14.8 c) Secondary education with ‘maturita’ state exam.

2.2 d) Higher education (i.e. after ‘maturita’ but not a university degree).

5.1 e) Bachelor degree (at university).

56.6 f) Master’s degree (at university).

21.3 g) PhD degree.

45. What is your current employment? *

(%) (372 respondents)

0.0 a) I am studying at secondary school.

1.1 b) I am studying for a bachelor degree (at university).

2.2 c) I am studying for a master's degree (at university).

23.1 d) I am studying for a PhD degree at university and I am employed at AV CR.

1.6 e) I am studying for a PhD degree at university and I am not employed at AV CR.

1.3 f) I have a postdoc position at AV CR.

14.8 g) I am a scientist at AV CR.

22.8 h) I am a research associate at AV CR.

17.5 i) I work in administration / technical support at AV CR.

8.9 j) I am not employed at AV CR.

0.3 k) I am on maternity / paternity leave.

0.0 l) I am unemployed.

1.1 m) I am retired.

5.4 n) Other.

46. What is the primary purpose of your foreign language study? If you have more priorities, please tick max. five top choices: *

(%)		(241 respondents)
40.4	a) Writing academic articles.	(151)
53.5	b) Writing emails and letters.	(200)
64.4	c) Reading academic literature.	(241)
31.8	d) Reading for pleasure.	(119)
40.9	e) Taking part at conferences.	(153)
31.8	f) Oral communication with native speakers at work.	(119)
29.1	g) Oral communication with non-native speakers at work.	(109)
17.1	h) Oral communication with native speakers in my free time.	(64)
10.4	i) Oral communication with non-native speakers in my free time.	(39)
62.6	j) Oral communication when travelling.	(234)
7.5	k) Telephoning in the foreign language.	(28)

28.9	l) Viewing films in the foreign language.	(108)
7.8	m) Viewing foreign language TV channels.	(29)
8.8	n) Listening to foreign language radio.	(33)
16.6	o) Training my brain.	(62)
8.6	p) Foreign langue study is my hobby.	(32)

47. Do you use the foreign language primarily for a different purpose(s) than mentioned in the previous question? If yes, please specify:

……

……

……

48. Space for any additional comments concerning the teaching of listening.

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

……

Thank you for participating in our survey,

Mgr. Hana Ždímalová, KSJ ÚJČ AV ČR, v.v.i.

P.S.: If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at: zdimalova@langdpt.cas.cz

Appendix 3: A sample form recording the time teachers spent on listening instruction and the pre-listening stage as observed in teacher observations (2011-2012).

Language Aims (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation) Word formation: suffixes -ist/-ism/-ic /-al *Vocabulary* related to art (styles of painting e.g. impressionism, cubism; artistic, canvas, chaotic, critic, dab, dribble, drip, easel, energetic, flick, flow, format, intense, original, predetermined, scratch, smear, splash, spontaneous, style, technique, unique) *Pronunciation* of individual words *Grammar* – no special focus, problematic areas that will arise while speaking will be dealt with (passive – active voice) **Context (how will the students use the language?)** Talking about art and listening to a guide in a museum **Conversation/Writing (Activation)** Expressing preference and opinion about art, describing artists and works of art **Skills practise (reading, listening)** Listening to a guide in a museum (Subskills: listening for a gist, specific information)	
Anticipated difficulties for students (What is difficult about the language in the lesson?) Unknown vocabulary necessary for completing the listening tasks Length of the listening text – some Ss may have a problem to keep concentrated Overflooding Ss with vocabulary	
Materials and aids to be used (mention book references and page numbers where relevant) Listening extra, Unit 9 Word cards and worksheets with pictures and definitions Worksheet with language to express opinion and describe paintings and artists 2 PowerPoint Presentations with visual aids	
Personal aims (areas you wish to improve in your teaching) Rapport with students because so far there is still lots of ice to be broken Reduce teacher talk, give students plenty opportunities to experiment with new vocabulary	

Stage / time		Student activity	Stage aim (why?)	Mode	Observer's comments:
1. Brainstorming	10	Ss brainstorm styles of painting and representative painters	Activate vocabulary, improve Ss' accuracy in usage of suffixes -ism/-ist/-ic/-al	Whole class	**6mins.** *Great chart on board. Good eliciting……*
2. Lexis	10	Ss study a list of adjectives and verbs used to describe paintings and artists, explain new words with T's help.	Give Ss lexical input and pre-teach adjectives for speaking	Indiv. & report to whole class	**19mins: 12mins.** *List of adjectives quite long but useful. T dealt with the meaning of about 15-18 words in the T-S setting. Great CCQs.* **7 mins:** *pronunciation…….*
3. Speaking	10	Ss look at famous paintings, describe them and express their preferences and opinions.	Let Ss experiment with new lexis and exchange opinions	Pairs	**20mins: 7mins:** *pair work. Pairs are a bit shy……* **13mins:** *T elicited opinions while projecting paintings on WB. Excellent: T's stories.*
4. Pre-teaching lexis	5	Ss use dictionaries, study key words for understanding the listening text, and match them with definitions or pictures. Then each pair presents one phrase (miming etc.)	Check and pre-teach key language	Pairs & whole class	**8mins:** *Ss found the vocab difficult but T helped the individual groups, great. Pairs prepared their presentations for the others. Excellent idea. In the pair: 1st student told a story or described the word, 2nd student mimed its meaning for the rest of the class.*
5. Listening: gist	5	Ss listen for a gist and complete the first listening task	Check general understanding	Indiv.	**6mins:** *The listening text is quite specific…*
6. Listening: details	10	Ss listen for specific information and complete the task on the board	Have Ss listen for specific lexis, report on the board (check spelling)	2 groups	**6mins:** *good division of labour: 1 group listened for Verbs, 2nd group listened for Adjectives……..*
7. Art vs. rubbish	5	Ss discuss what is Art and what is Rubbish	Ss practise speaking using new lexis and exchanging opinions	Pairs	**8mins:** *T showed a few paintings on WB & elicited Ss' opinions. Excellent visuals…*
8. Argument	10	Ss report their opinions and support them with arguments	Give Ss personalised feedback on speaking	Groups: Art vs. Rubbish	**10mins**….
9. Game	5	Ss play a game with words	Recycle new lexical items	Groups	*Omitted. HW: learn vocab, write a story… in Moodle.*

Appendix 4: Listening situations (based on Underwood 1989: 5-7).

Interactive listening situations:

Face-to-face conversations with family or friends: The listener usually knows the speakers very well and has enough context to comprehend the messages with ease;

Discussing work with colleagues: Again, similar background and knowledge of the speakers and topics aid the comprehension process;

Chatting with friends or strangers at a party (e.g. small talk): This depends on how well the listener is acquainted with the speaker; the more acquainted they are, the easier the comprehension;

Attending a lesson/seminar: The listener needs to grasp concepts and to distinguish between main and subsidiary ideas. During lessons and seminars, students often interrupt the teacher to ask questions and are called upon to respond to what is being said.

Attending a formal occasion, e.g. a wedding ceremony: The listener knows some of the speakers and may not know others. The listener usually knows what to expect, depending on the formality of the occasion and his or her previous experience;

Getting professional advice, e.g. from a doctor or a therapist: The listener usually knows the speaker and the topic, but may not know enough about the subject and therefore needs to check his or her comprehension by additional questions;

Being tested orally in a subject of study, e.g. an oral interview at FCE exam, or being interviewed for a job: The listeners are in huge disadvantage because they usually do not know the speaker, may easily misunderstand the questions being asked and may not have the courage to ask for repetition or explanation. Unfortunately, the listening component of the oral exam may affect the speaking task immensely, but is not evaluated because listening comprehension is a 'hidden process' (see Chapter 2.3).

'Eavesdropping', i.e. listening to live conversations in which one takes no part: Most often the listener is unaware of the context and sometimes also unfamiliar with the speakers (see Chapter 4.6.3).

Listening on the phone to exchange news, hold a conversation, take a message, or make an arrangement: The listener usually cannot see the speaker (apart from new IT technologies, e.g. Skype). In addition, the listener may have problems in distinguishing the spoken sounds because of interference and distortion.

Non-interactive listening situations:

Attending a lecture / listening to a conference presentation (or listening to someone giving a public address): As opposed to lessons and seminars, during lectures and presentations the listeners may take notes but do not interrupt the lecturer. At the end of the speech, there may be time allocated for the questions. (e.g. Lynch: Study Listening 2004; Kollmannová 2003).

Watching a movie / live performance of a play: The objective is nearly always entertainment. The listener will follow the movie/play as an 'eavesdropper', remaining an outsider (see point 7 above). The movie viewer may be at advantage because he or she can usually see the facial expressions, gestures, etc. more clearly than in the theatre.

Listening to the news / weather forecast / announcements / sport report etc on the radio or TV: The listener either wants to extract important information and will choose only a part of the discourse to listen to, or has another purpose for listening, e.g. wants to know all the main items of the news and will listen to the whole news bulletin. In watching TV, the visual support will help the viewer in the comprehension process.

Listening to the radio or watching TV for entertainment: The listener often has very limited knowledge of what is going to be said or who is going to speak. This is probably one of the most difficult listening situations, especially listening to the radio, where we lack any visual support.

Listening to songs, usually for pleasure: The listener usually does not listen so carefully as in other situations. The sound of the music often interferes with the sound of the words, but on the other hand the rhythm and rhymes of the lyrics may help the listener to predict what will come next.

Listening to loud speaker announcements at railway stations, airports etc: The listener has to extract and/or confirm the relevant information while ignoring the rest of the discourse. He or she may act upon the newly acquired or confirmed information later.

It should be noted that we can have various combinations of the above examples, e.g. being interviewed for a job on the phone.

Appendix 5: Pre-listening techniques (Ždímalová 2011b).

(A conference worksheet for teachers)

1. Questions, please! (adapted from Rost 1991: 35)

Stage: pre-listening or while-listening.

Aim: Groups of students predict questions associated with the topic, e.g. 'my holiday' (see below), they develop quick interactions with a speaker and promote clarification exchanges.

Text type:

1. **Reciprocal**[16]: teacher's prepared talk, e.g. about his/her own story or a well known story from history. This activity is sometimes called 'live listening'.
2. **Non-reciprocal**: a recorded dialogue on a more general / '*schematic'* topic such as *a job interview* or *country factfile*.

Procedure:

a) Students work in pairs and write 5-10 questions they expect to be answered in the listening text, e.g. 1) questions about teacher's holiday (then s/he tells them a story) or 2) '*country factfile'*: questions concerning *location*, *territory*, *population*, etc.

b) The fastest pairs put their questions on board (model). When most students have finished, the teacher goes through the sentences on board, then elicits more sentences from the other pairs.

c) Students listen to the teacher's story / recorded dialogue:

1. In 'live listening' students interrupt the teacher's story with their questions. The teacher should adjust the speech rate and complexity of the story to the level of his/her students. When listening to an audiorecording, students check which questions are answered in the text. They compare their answers in pairs, then we check the list in class.

2. Listening for details.

Level: A1 and higher levels (according to CEFR).

Evaluation: This activity is very useful because it is close to real-life situations, e.g. listening to a talk / lecture: we naturally think of questions we would like to hear answers to.

---

[16] In reciprocal listening 'the listener has the opportunity to indicate understanding and non-understanding, and to intervene when clarification is needed during communication' (Lam 2002: 248).

2. Brainstorming vocabulary (adapted from Thornbury 2002: 49)

Stage: pre-listening.

Aim: to predict lexis of the chosen topic and explore meaning in collaborative learning.

Procedure:

a) Students in pairs or small groups of 3-4 think of as many words and phrases on the topic as they can in 3 minutes, e.g. 'flying': *airport, checking-in, gates, oxygen masks,* etc.

b) Go through their lists in class encouraging students to ask questions ('*What does X mean?'*) and clarify the meaning of unknown words to each other (miming, drawing, giving definition or translation). With lower levels, put more difficult words on board and highlight the pronunciation. However, be careful not to pre-teach too much[17].

c) Students listen firstly to get the gist of what was said, secondly to see how many words from their lists actually occur in the text.

Level: effective for A2 and higher levels.

Modification for A1 level: present the target language, e.g. instead of a) put words and phrases on the board and ask students to predict the topic the words have in common.

Evaluation: This is effective because a lot of the topical/cultural knowledge is elicited from the students – it activates *content schemata*. Students suggest lexis based on their preference (personalisation of the activity). With difficult cultural issues, pre-teach the necessary cultural points.

3. Predict the next part (adapted from Rost 1991: 101)

Stage: while-listening or post-listening.

Aim: to use imagination and general knowledge of the world to predict the next event/ending.

Text type: a teacher's prepared story or story recorded on audio/video cassette, preferably a humorous or criminal story.

Procedure: Speaker narrates the story but stops when a new event is about to happen or a decision is about to be made, or before the end. Learners compare their understanding of the

[17] Field points out that in real life students cannot expect unknown words to be explained in advance and that if we spend too much time on the pre-listening stage, it 'can result in much of the content of the listening passage being anticipated' (Field 2002: 243)

listening text in pairs and predict what will happen next. The teacher should encourage any plausible continuation. Then students listen to the next part/ending. With higher levels, it is possible to stop even in the middle of a complex sentence and ask students to predict the second half, e.g. *I was really pleased but*….

Level: A1 .and higher levels.

Evaluation: In this type of prediction, students use linguistic knowledge (formal schemata), e.g. discourse markers: '*However'* before a contrasting statement, etc.

During the listening they adjust to the pitch, speed and quality of the speaker's voice, which makes the following listening easier. This activity develops imagination and creativity, and integrates listening and speaking.

4. Picture ordering / Guessing the topic from pictures

Stage: pre-listening or while-listening.

Aim: to give visual support and more context, to predict a sequence of events.

Text type: a story presented by the teacher, or recorded on audio / video cassette, preferably a humorous or detective story.

Material: set of pictures for every group, e.g. from *Listening Extra* (Craven 2004).

Procedure: Students work in small groups. They are given a set of pictures connected with the events of the story they are going to listen to. First students predict the general topic of the story and then a possible development of the story by ordering the pictures. Students present their suggestions in class. I encourage discussion but do not judge their hypotheses. Then they listen to the tape to see how close their predictions were. They order the pictures according to the listening and discuss what is different from their predictions.

It is useful to ask the students why they ordered the pictures that way.

Level and learning style: A1+ and higher levels, suitable for visual and kinaesthetic learners. It keeps students involved throughout the whole listening. At higher levels, students can even attempt to write and present a story of their own (based on the pictures).

Evaluation: This activity encourages students' creativity and imagination. They use 'top down processing' to guess the main topic and to sequence the events. After listening to the text students are more likely to remember parts that are different from what they imagined.

Appendix 6: Stages of listening instruction (Vandergrift 2004).

Pre-listening: Planning/predicting stage

1. Once students know topic and text type, they predict types of information and possible words they may hear.

First listen: First verification stage

2. Students verify initial hypotheses, correct as required, and note additional information understood.

3. Students compare what they have understood/written with peers, modify as required, establish what still needs resolution and decide on important details that still require special attention.

Second listen: Second verification stage

4. Students verify points of earlier disagreement, make corrections, and write down additional details understood.

5. Class discussion in which all class members contribute to the reconstruction of the text's main points and most pertinent details, interspersed with reflections on how students arrived at the meaning of certain words or parts of the text.

Third listen: Final verification stage

6. Students listen specifically for the information revealed in the class discussion which they were not able to decipher earlier.

Reflection stage

Based on the earlier discussion of strategies used to compensate for what was not understood, students write goals for the next listening activity.

(Vandergrift 2004: 11; Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari 2010: 475)