

Univerzita Karlova v Praze  
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## **BAKALÁŘSKÁ PRÁCE**

### **British YouTube Personalities and the Effects of their Videos on the Vocabulary of Czech Viewers**

Britští YouTuberi a vlivy jejich videí  
na slovní zásobu českého diváka

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**Rok odevzdání:** 2016

## DECLARATION

I declare that I have written this Bachelor's thesis on the topic of British YouTube Personalities and the Effects of their Videos on the Vocabulary of Czech Viewers exclusively by myself under the supervision of Mr. Mark Farrell and that all the sources used in the process of writing this thesis were properly cited.

Prague, 11 April 2016

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Firstly, I would mainly like to express my sincere thanks to Mark Farrell for his valuable guidance, helpful suggestions and for spending his time on improving this thesis. Secondly, my thanks go to the staff at Gymnázium Jihlava, mainly to Mgr. Iveta Nečadová, Mgr. Jiřina Kuncová and Mgr. Jitka Kremínová for offering me the much needed space in their English lessons that enabled me to carry out the research. Lastly, I would like to thank my roommate, who was so kind to help me with testing out the materials for the practical part, and my supporting family for standing by me the whole time I was working on this thesis.

## ANNOTATION

The aim of this bachelor thesis is to prove that videos posted by British YouTube personalities on a platform such as YouTube can be beneficial to viewers in terms of second language vocabulary acquisition. In the theoretical part the notion of YouTube is introduced together with its brief history. The term *YouTuber* is then explained and the focus is drawn specifically to YouTube personalities in the United Kingdom. The effects of watching videos on vocabulary learning are explored and implicit vocabulary acquisition is clarified as well.

The practical part then examines these possible effects on students from a Czech Grammar school. The hypothesis of this thesis is researched with the aid of a questionnaire and an achievement test. A section of the practical part also deals with the advantages of multimedia learning over the use of only one medium, in this case an audio recording, in the process of learning.

**Key words:** YouTube, YouTuber, incidental vocabulary acquisition, multimedia learning

## ANOTACE

Cílem této bakalářské práce je dokázat, že videa přidávána Britskými YouTubery na stránku jako je YouTube mohou být divákům přínosná, co se týče osvojování slovní zásoby druhého jazyka. V teoretické části je uveden pojem YouTube společně s jeho stručnou historií. Dále je pak vysvětlen termín *YouTuber* a YouTuberi ze Spojeného království jsou detailněji představeni. Zkoumány jsou také vlivy sledování videí na slovní zásobu a implicitní osvojování slovní zásoby je taktéž objasněno.

Praktická část pak zkoumá tyto možné vlivy na studentech z českého gymnázia. Hypotéza této práce je ověřována pomocí dotazníku a didaktického testu. Zlomek praktické části se také zabývá výhodami multimediálního vzdělávání ve srovnání s užitím pouze jednoho média, v tomto případě zvukové nahrávky, v průběhu vzdělávání.

**Klíčová slova:** YouTube, YouTuber, vedlejší osvojování slovní zásoby, multimediální vzdělávání

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

The twenty-first century can be characterized as the age of various information technologies and their rapid development. According to Don Tapscott, the contemporary generation is growing up digitally and that influences the way it is able to think. By this, he refers to people that were born at the turn of the millennium. He calls this generation the Net Generation and stresses that not only are these people capable of multitasking owing to being surrounded by various information technologies during their lives but he also claims that their brains are slightly different from the ones of the previous generations.

This phenomenon is supported by modern scientists and Buzetto even points out in her study that the learning styles of digital learners differ from those of traditional ones. It is for this reason that there is a need to draw more attention to the use of technology aids in the field of education whether it be digital videos, presentations created in PowerPoint, for instance, or the use of tablets during lessons.

As far as digital videos concerned, it is worth focusing attention on YouTube and its possible use in education. YouTube is a platform that allows users to upload and watch content for free from anywhere around the world with only having to be connected to the Internet. The simplicity and accessibility of such a platform attracts many people especially the Net Generation. Because of the great number of users, the site is a perfect tool to be used in education as well. By watching videos in a foreign language a viewer can acquire not only new word stock or grammar but also the information about the cultural background of a particular country.

The growth of YouTube during these past years has caused another phenomenon never experienced before. It has given rise to people that are now called YouTubers. Some of these people even make a living by creating short video clips that they post on this platform. YouTube personalities have inevitably become a part of the countries' popular culture and seem to have an impact on the viewers as well.

In the first chapter of the theoretical part of this bachelor thesis, YouTube as a platform is introduced together with a brief history of its creation. The following chapter then defines the term *YouTuber* in greater detail and in subchapter 2.2.1 the focus is drawn closer on YouTube personalities in the United Kingdom. Chapter 2.3 then deals with second language acquisition and its instruction in various educational facilities. Thereafter, chapter

2.4 focuses on second language vocabulary acquisition. Different types of vocabulary knowledge are stated with greater attention to implicit and receptive vocabulary learning in subchapters 2.4.1-2.4.6.

In chapter 2.5 the term multimedia is introduced and two approaches to multimedia learning are examined in subchapters 2.5.1 and 2.5.2. The importance of videos in multimedia learning is justified in subchapter 2.5.3, and subchapter 2.5.4 then focuses on the influence of watching videos on second language acquisition especially its vocabulary.

The purpose of this thesis is to prove that watching videos created by British YouTube personalities not only provides a source of entertainment but that it can also work as an educational tool either utilized by the viewer himself or herself or by teachers. Bull and Bell focus on implementing digital videos into a curriculum in subjects such as social studies, science or even mathematics. They claim that by watching digital videos the knowledge is built more easily and that it helps to understand the topics of the curriculum. A foreign language could most probably then be taught by using YouTube videos created by British YouTubers as well.

The practical part of this thesis thus offers research carried out to provide evidence for the hypothesis of this thesis. An achievement test was given to three secondary school classes in order to examine second language incidental vocabulary acquisition. What was also looked into was the effect of including only one media in the process of vocabulary learning in one group and incorporating multimedia in the form of visual and auditory input in the second group. All participants were also asked via questionnaire to express their attitudes towards YouTube videos and their usage in the process of learning. The results of the questionnaire are described in more detail in chapter 3.3. Chapter 3.4 then deals with the results of the multiple-choice test. The subchapters of this particular chapter are divided according to the set of words on which the students were tested. It also offers a subchapter that deals with the overall results comparing individual groups with each other. Chapter 3.5 then discusses several variables that could have affected the results of the executed research.

Even though this thesis only aims at the vocabulary learning of an individual viewer, more research into the use of YouTube videos during lessons at Czech schools should be encouraged as such videos have great potential in the educational process of foreign languages. They are more engaging to the students and could provide much needed motivation for the studies.



## **2 THEORETICAL PART**

### **2.1 What is YouTube?**

As videos uploaded to YouTube are examined in this Bachelor's thesis, it is of importance to start off by describing the platform itself. YouTube is one of the applications that can be found on the Web 2.0 together with others such as Facebook, Wikipedia, Flickr and many more. The website was created in 2005 by Chad Hurley, Steve Chen and Jawed Karim and can be found at [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com).

There were not many chances to easily share video clips with friends, family members or even with people from around the world before so these three former PayPal employees decided to do something about it. In the beginning, the website was only meant as a medium that would offer other people the opportunity to upload and share their home-made videos. Nevertheless, Google obtained YouTube for the amount of 1.65 billion American dollars in October 2006. The reason was that although Google "has been hauling away huge profits from the booming search market" (Associated Press) it was not endowed with a platform that would offer video playing where the advertisement could be enhanced. After the purchase, the interest in such a platform began growing rapidly and globally.

The number of uploaded videos reached 85 million by April 2008 and approximately 3 million videos were viewed every day. YouTube is currently the third most visited website after only Google and Facebook, and the number of viewers keeps growing every day.

There are many reasons for YouTube's inconceivable success. Firstly, there was no website similar to YouTube at the time of its creation so it caught the attention of the public. Also the website is very user-friendly. Watching videos is free and viewers can even create their own accounts in order to be able to like and follow their favourite channels. There is no need to download any other software to be able to watch the videos so one needs only press play and enjoy the chosen footage. This makes it accessible even for the less computer-savvy. Furthermore, YouTube is constantly developing and improving itself in order to satisfy its viewers. Since a newly launched service in May 2006 users are able to upload clips straight from their phones which means more freedom in sharing videos. In 2008, the possibility of using captions in the videos was added and that enabled deaf people or even foreigners to watch the videos and understand them without having to hear the audio. They were first introduced by the BBC channel and offered five foreign languages. In 2009,

YouTube also introduced 3D videos that offered a completely different experience.

Thanks to YouTube, a worldwide community of people with the same avocations came to existence. It enabled the users to share the content they are interested in and get the feedback from other viewers as well. The users can communicate with each other by leaving comments below the videos and express their satisfaction or possibly dissatisfaction by liking or disliking the videos. In other words, although YouTube had offered the means to people in the end it was the users themselves that enhanced the popularity of the website.

## 2.2 Who is a YouTuber?

As the rise of YouTube has given people a chance to stand out many of them managed to make themselves visible to the rest of the world. Many people are now known thanks to their videos and even the term *YouTuber* came to existence at the beginning of this century. According to Oxford Dictionaries a *YouTuber* is “a frequent user of the video-sharing website YouTube, especially someone who produces and appears in videos on the site.”<sup>1</sup>

These nowadays YouTube stars are just ordinary people that have decided to expose their lives and ideas through the Internet by creating videos and they have achieved to attract thousands or even millions of viewers. The content of the videos created by YouTubers is so diverse that it even seems impossible to list all of the types and genres. Nonetheless, one particular type of such videos has become highly popular among the YouTube community and it is called a *vlog*. A vlog is a blend word made out of two words – video and blog. A blog is an online journal created by people that post it on the Web in the written form. Vlog is then simply a version of a blog supplemented with the visual and auditory support as it graphically shows the background of the YouTuber’s life.

The interest in such personalities is so immense that even conventions dedicated to meeting these video makers are held to which thousands of tickets are sold. One of the largest being VidCon which started in 2010 and which takes place annually in the United States. Around 20,000 visitors came to this convention last July and the numbers are rising every year. Even the Czech Republic hosted a festival dedicated to YouTubers for the first time in 2015 under the name of Utubering. This year the festival is going to take place in the two biggest cities in the Czech Republic – Prague and Brno and is going to bring many popular video personalities together from all around the country.

All this information presented above proves that the influence of such personalities is significant especially regarding the younger Net Generation in its teenage years and more attention should be paid to how beneficial they could be in the educational environment.

### 2.2.1 *YouTube personalities in the UK*

A quite significant group of YouTubers has arisen in the United Kingdom during

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<sup>1</sup> “YouTuber.” Def. 1. *Oxford Dictionaries*. N.p., n.d. Web. 28 February 2016. <<http://www.oxforddictionaries/definition/english/youtuber>>.

these last few years and the most prominent part of the British YouTube community is united by the Gleam Futures media talent agency. The agency was founded by Dominic Smales who saw great potential in these digital videos. Gleam Futures now manages popular YouTube personalities from the entire United Kingdom such as Zoe Sugg, Alfie Deyes, Tanya Burr, Jim Chapman, Marcus Butler and many more.

Each YouTuber has his or her own style and specific genre of his or her videos. Anyone can choose from the variety of content of these videos and that is what makes them so attractive and potentially favourable to being used in the field of education. When visiting Butler's or Chapman's channel the viewer can see various challenge and prank videos while Sugg's or Burr's channels are mainly devoted to beauty and fashion. Although British YouTubers might be completely unknown to the older generations these people are more important to today's teenagers than well-known celebrities occurring in popular culture such as Adele or One Direction. This is further evidence that these videos are a great possible educational tool that could be used during English classes as people taught at schools are mostly children in their teenage years.

This thesis does not present all British YouTube personalities as there is a great number of them and it would take much time and space to introduce them all. Nevertheless, a closer look is offered at two of them as they both feature in the video used in the practical part of this thesis.

The first of them is Zoe Sugg who is also known by her nickname Zoella. She is inevitably one of the most prominent British YouTube personalities with 10,215,806<sup>2</sup> subscribers to her main channel which is endowed with 691,964,184<sup>3</sup> views in total. She uploaded her first video in 2009 and in this video she presents sixty things that can be found in her room. Since then she has made over 260 videos<sup>4</sup> with various content including hauls, challenges, look books, tutorials, tags, monthly favourites or question and answer videos (also known as Q&As). She created her second channel called MoreZoella three years ago that is full of vlog videos offering an insight into her personal life. By attracting so many viewers Sugg has become a great source for the marketing industry as well. In November 2014, her first book *Girl Online* was published and was the fastest selling book of that year. It was followed by a sequel published the following year in October under the title of *Girl*

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<sup>2</sup> YouTube. YouTube. Web. 5 March 2016. <<http://www.youtube.com/>>.

<sup>3</sup> YouTube. YouTube. Web. 5 March 2016. <<http://www.youtube.com/>>.

<sup>4</sup> YouTube. YouTube. Web. 6 March 2016. <<http://www.youtube.com/>>.

*Online on Tour*. She has launched her own brand of beauty products and on top of that she has been made into a wax figure that can be found in London's Madame Tussauds Wax Museum together with the wax figure of another famous British YouTuber - Alfie Deyes.

Her brother Joseph Sugg is also a well-known YouTube celebrity whose fame started thanks to his older sister. When he first appeared in a video posted on her channel in 2011 Joe immediately caught the attention of viewers, who then called for him to create his own YouTube channel. On August 7, 2012 Sugg satisfied the viewers' wishes by uploading his first ever video to his account that can be found under the nickname of ThatcherJoe. The channel now has 6,275,168<sup>5</sup> subscribers together with over 608 million views<sup>6</sup> on all of his videos altogether. Joseph made use of his popularity and in 2015 he released his first graphic novel named *Username: Evie*. The success was so great that the first signing of the book had to take place at Emirates Stadium in London.

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<sup>5</sup> YouTube. YouTube. Web. 13 March 2016. <<http://www.youtube.com/>>.

<sup>6</sup> YouTube. YouTube. Web. 13 March 2016. <<http://www.youtube.com/>>.

## 2.3 Second language acquisition

In this chapter, attention is brought to second language acquisition because it is important to understand how information is acquired in a different language before examining the effects of British YouTubers' videos on a viewer's vocabulary acquisition.

At first, it would be appropriate to explain what the term second language actually refers to in this thesis. Second language is a "language that a person can speak that is not the first language they learned naturally as a child"<sup>7</sup> and is also sometimes termed as L2 or a target language because it is a language that the learner aims to acquire. In this thesis, the English language is meant when talking about second language as the online videos made by British YouTube personalities are created in English.

Second language acquisition then means a process of learning a foreign language that is different from the learner's mother tongue which can also be referred to as the first language or L1. A learner of an L2 creates a system that is called interlanguage during his or her study. This system is identical with the level of the second language at a particular stage of the learning process of an individual learner. What this means is that every individual is endowed with an interlanguage that is different from anyone else's.

The aim of the learner during his or her studies of L2 is to reach proficiency level but most learners never do. One of the reasons is the fact that "L1 learners are typically exposed to significantly more satisfactory word input than L2 learners in terms of both quality and quantity" (Wu 21). Input basically means "the language that is available to learners; that is, exposure" (Gass 526). The input has to be comprehensible to the second language learners in order to provide sufficient acquisition. For example, teachers at schools should make their input more understandable by using shorter sentences, using words that are more frequent and by clearly articulating the words. It should also be interesting and relevant to the topic being discussed. Finally, the quantity of input plays a great role in the second language acquisition as well. Students need to be exposed to sufficient input in order to learn something new.

However, input is only the initial part of the cognitive processing of information which works on various levels. Atkinson and Shiffrin offer a general framework that

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<sup>7</sup> "Second Language." Def. 1. *Cambridge Dictionaries*. N.p., n.d. Web. 28 February 2016. <<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/second-language>>.

describes the full course of information processing. After the input is received from the environment it then goes through sensory register to the working memory also known as short-term memory. “The short-term memory system is considered to be limited in capacity, and to require conscious effort and control” (Skehan 44). The minor part of the information then gets stored in the permanent long-term memory which is larger in capacity than the short-term one. However, both memory systems interact together.

Cognitive psychologists assert that new information has a chance to be stored in the long-term memory depending on how the input is processed at the beginning. This means that if one pays more attention to the information and works with it profoundly there is a greater possibility that the information will be remembered.

In addition, the capacity of every individual to learn is limited by this memory system and one is able to store only seven pieces of new information on average. One way a new lexical unit can be remembered is also by attaching it to an already known word that is stored in the long-term memory. There are various ways to do so such as grouping the words by either proximity of meaning, word classes, etc. “Since the ‘old’ words are already fixed in the mind, relating the new words to them provides a ‘hook’ to remember them by so they will not be forgotten. New words which do not have this connection are much more prone to forgetting” (Chacon-Beltran et al. 35).

YouTube videos are a great source of valuable input as they are entertaining and appealing to the students especially those in their teenage years. It would come in useful to try to incorporate them in the English lessons as they offer authentic evidence of the second language.

### *2.3.1 Factors influencing acquisition of L2*

Second language is usually taught in classrooms either at schools or in private institutions, nevertheless the learner encounters L2 even outside these educational facilities or can even study it individually not attending any English classes whatsoever. Wu (2013) introduces the term “self-directed language learning” and states that in the 1980s the focus was brought to learning a foreign language independently and different strategies for self-study were offered. Humanism together with cognitive theory put the learner in the centre of the learning process. A successful self-learner is autonomous, decisive about his or her learning aims, able to follow a learning strategy and able to cooperate with others. This is the reason why YouTube videos can be very beneficial to self-taught people trying to learn

a new language as they offer authentic examples of the spoken L2 provided by real native people with various accents including all of its components as well as information about the country's culture. This basically implies that if the learner is not able to provide himself or herself with sufficient input, the YouTube videos could substitute for that shortage.

Additionally, there are many variables that can influence the efficacy of L2 learning. For example, the learner's aptitude which is "an individual-difference characteristic that refers to someone's natural ability to do something" (Gass 520) is the most significant one in the process of learning a second language as it indicates the student's capability of learning new knowledge about the L2. Some researchers such as McLaughlin claim that aptitude can develop over the course of time by learning the language while others see it as something inborn.

The age of the learner also determines success rate of the second language acquisition. Children are proven to retain new information better than the adults. "Acquirers who begin natural exposure to second languages during childhood generally achieve higher second language proficiency than those as beginning as adults" (Krashen 43).

Motivation is also a key factor in the self-learning process without which learning can be unsuccessful. Apparently, motivation is the second strongest factor coming after the aptitude. There are "two types of motivation, influenced by integrative and instrumental orientations" (Laufer and Hulstijn 7). An orientation that is integrative includes interest in the speakers of the second language and their cultural background whereas instrumental orientation means motivation that has risen from the need of L2 in practical situations such as job requirements. Motivation can be reached from various sources such as having a good teacher, need for a better job or interest in the subject matter that is discussed during the lessons. It is also proven that students that are motivated have higher chances in reaching proficiency than the ones lacking enthusiasm for learning.

This is another reason why YouTube videos could be used as an educational tool in the self-study of a second language as well as in education facilities. By watching YouTube videos, learners are provided with content that is interesting and which might motivate them so the learning becomes even more efficient. When a video is motivating the learners want to learn more, they can ask supplementary questions and therefore improve their second language skills.



## 2.4 Second language vocabulary acquisition

In the previous chapter, second language acquisition was examined in general. This chapter focuses solely on the issue of second language vocabulary acquisition. When it comes to studying a new foreign language its potential speaker needs to learn its grammar as well as vocabulary. The problem with learning vocabulary is that there are too many words in the language system to be acquired and there are no proven theories that would explain vocabulary learning. “The fact is that while without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed” (Wilkins 111). Whereas grammar has its fixed rules with several exceptions learning vocabulary is a more complex task as it requires different kinds of mental processes.

In order to understand why YouTube videos could be helpful in the process of vocabulary learning it would be appropriate firstly to take a closer look at what vocabulary really is and how its acquisition in the second language works.

The term vocabulary in its simplest meaning refers to “the words that make up a language”<sup>8</sup>. However, it becomes more intricate when one tries to define the term *word* because according to Levelt a lexical unit consists of two parts – lexeme and lemma. The latter “contains the semantic specifications that carry the conceptual meanings of a word and the syntactic information that specifies the item’s syntactic and grammatical functions” (Yongyan 26). By contrast, a lexeme is the bearer of the phonological, orthographic and morphological form of a word.

Thus vocabulary acquisition is a complex process as the learner needs to create a linkage between the form and the meaning of a word as well as its function in the text. The form-meaning connection is the most basic one in the process of vocabulary acquisition. Such knowledge is only initial and creates the base for further development of vocabulary. In order to know a word sufficiently the learner also needs to learn its grammatical characteristics and its meanings arising from the context. Knowledge of what the word means when it collocates with another words is important as well as its meaning in different registers. The first three aspects of learning a word mentioned above can be acquired via isolated vocabulary learning except for the contextual ones. These are more difficult to be

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<sup>8</sup> “Vocabulary.” Def. 1. *Merriam-Webster*. N.p., n.d. Web. 13 March 2016. <<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/vocabulary>>.

taught directly and the retention of them is reinforced by higher number of exposure. As YouTube videos offer diverse context in which the words can occur they provide great base for acquiring the contextual meanings of words.

Also some words tend to be memorized better if they are either similar to the mother tongue or when the exposure to the word is more frequent. Furthermore, what helps retaining a new lexical item is when it occurs with words that are somehow related to it and when the connections between them are meaningful rather than in isolated forms.

When talking about learning new word stock it is important to distinguish four types of vocabulary acquisition – implicit and explicit, intentional and incidental and two types of vocabulary knowledge – receptive and productive. All of these terms are further explained in the following subchapters 2.4.1, 2.4.2, 2.4.3, 2.4.4 and 2.4.5 as the cognizance of them is crucial for this thesis.

#### *2.4.1 Explicit vocabulary acquisition*

Explicit vocabulary acquisition is a type of acquisition that happens deliberately with the learner knowingly focusing on new vocabulary. The process of words being taught explicitly is common in English lessons where the teacher introduces several unknown lexical items through a systematic approach. The teacher then intentionally focuses on these items and introduces various learning strategies that can be used to memorize them.

Explicit knowledge then means that a person is aware of the things already known by him or her. The learner is also able to use this knowledge to produce some intended outcome.

#### *2.4.2 Implicit vocabulary acquisition*

The term implicit vocabulary acquisition is the opposite of the explicit one and is related to the behavioural approach. It means a process of vocabulary acquisition that happens without the learner realizing that he or she is acquiring new word stock. It happens naturally and without any purpose. Native speakers are more reliant on the implicit knowledge rather than the explicit one because the implicit acquisition of L1 starts already during childhood when children are exposed to an input provided by their parents or other children in the environment around them that is natural.

However, implicit vocabulary acquisition takes place in L2 learning as well. For example, reading a text in L2 is seen as an implicit process because the reader surmises on what an unknown word might mean in the text. This process is automatic but its

successfulness depends on the degree of occurrences of the unknown words in the text. If the number of unfamiliar vocabulary is too high, then the process is ineffective. Linguists suggest that at least 95% of the words in the text need to be known by the learner in order to acquire new vocabulary.

Some experts in the field claim that implicit learning does not benefit from explanations given explicitly and that explicit acquisition even has negative effects on implicit learning. On the other hand, some researchers contradict these findings by asserting that explicit acquisition can enhance the implicit one. As this matter is not so clear even to the experts in the field of vocabulary acquisition the connection of these two will not be examined any further but the possibility that such linkage might exist should be taken into account.

The viewers visiting YouTube do not go online to watch videos in order to learn new vocabulary but most probably to find a way to entertain themselves. Nevertheless, during the watching of such video clips in L2, implicit learning takes place as the viewers are unintentionally exposed to the language in its natural form. The viewer's knowledge of words connected to the video as well as other aspects of the second language including grammar and pronunciation can be then acquired without the viewer even knowing it.

#### *2.4.3 Intentional vocabulary acquisition*

Other important terms in the process of learning vocabulary are intentional and incidental acquisition. These terms were first introduced at the beginning of the twentieth century by researchers in the field of psychology. They are both used in investigating the process of learning with the student either being told or not whether he or she is later going to be tested on a given task. Intentional vocabulary acquisition happens when the learner aims to store certain word stock in his or her memory while completing a certain task as he or she is aware of the fact that there is going to be some testing on the task afterwards.

#### *2.4.4 Incidental vocabulary acquisition*

On the other hand, incidental vocabulary acquisition is “the learning of vocabulary as the by-product of the activity not explicitly geared to it” (Wu 28). During the vocabulary acquisition of the second language the majority of words is learned unintentionally while learning something explicitly. It is not that the students would not notice the unknown words while carrying out a task that is not connected to vocabulary acquisition. They simply do not intend to memorize them yet some of the words get incidentally acquired anyways.

Besides, the students involved in studies focusing on vocabulary acquisition are never told that they are being tested on vocabulary related to the given exercise so as not to bring their attention to the unknown words and devalue the results of the research. By contrast, when examining the intentional vocabulary acquisition of a second language the learners are alerted that testing is going to take place at the end of the activity and therefore they knowingly pay attention to the unknown words.

In this bachelor thesis, the focus of the practical part is especially on the incidental vocabulary acquisition as the students are not told in advance that they are going to be tested on a task that is presented. There are two ways in which incidental acquisition can be examined. In the first method, students are exposed to “relevant material without instruction to learn. This generally means that subjects must perform some sort of orienting task that leads them to experience the material to be tested”. (Laufer and Hulstijn 10). Of course, as this technique tests incidental learning, the learners are never warned on later testing of the task.

The second method that can be used in examining unintentional acquisition is used in the practical part and helps to prove that videos created by YouTube personalities can affect the learner’s knowledge of vocabulary. This particular technique demands attention from the students towards certain information from which the aim of testing differs. One example of this method is giving the students a certain text to go through and ask them to think about its content. However, what they are not told is that after carrying out the task they will not be tested on the content but on the unfamiliar vocabulary occurring in that particular text.

#### *2.4.5 Receptive and productive knowledge of vocabulary*

Other important terms that are worth mentioning when discussing vocabulary acquisition are those of receptive and productive knowledge. Knowledge of vocabulary is seen as a continuum that starts firstly with a word being recognized and then eventually being produced. Receptive knowledge of vocabulary of an L2 learner is usually larger than the productive as the learner is first exposed to the word in a certain form and with time he or she produces it.

Receptive knowledge of vocabulary is sometimes referred to as passive and signifies that the learner is able to make out the meaning of a word that is seen or heard and can possibly translate it into his or her mother tongue. Receptive learning is then a process of

acquiring what the word in the second language means. When the learner's knowledge of vocabulary is tested in a receptive way usually a translation of the word into L1 is required.

If one wants to enhance better retention of a word involvement is needed. When the involvement is higher it leads to better retention of receptive knowledge. A word is also better acquired when appearing in different contexts. This again proves the importance of YouTube videos because as the words occur in different videos and diverse contexts the viewer can associate them together and ensure improved retention.

The focus of this thesis is solely on the receptive knowledge of vocabulary as students involved in the research only watch the video and no oral or written production is demanded. There is also no involvement of the students required during the research. However, it is advisable to provide some productive follow-up tasks when using YouTube videos as an educational tool as vocabulary is then acquired with higher efficiency and the words are more memorable.

The counterpart of the receptive vocabulary knowledge is the active, also called productive vocabulary knowledge that represents the words one is able to use in speaking and writing. When using productive knowledge, the receptive is included and extended as well. Productive learning takes more time and is much more difficult to acquire. With time, productive knowledge also tends to be forgotten more than receptive knowledge.

#### *2.4.6 Teaching vocabulary*

This subchapter briefly describes attitudes towards vocabulary and the way of its instruction in the course of time. Vocabulary did not use to be taught primarily at schools in the past as the teachers put emphasis on learning grammatical rules and vocabulary acquisition was seen as something that comes naturally through exposure to the second language. Besides, it is more difficult for the teacher to manage and control the process of vocabulary acquisition than the grammatical one. However, this conviction started changing in the 1970s when more focus was put on the passive vocabulary of the students rather than on the active. Students were to memorize all the new words by heart and translate them into their mother tongue. More recently a change took place and students are now motivated to make out the meaning of a particular word from its context and to be able to link it to other words that have some specific relationship to it. This is another case in which videos created by British YouTube personalities could be helpful as they offer various contexts in which the unknown word is used and by even providing visual image they ensure better chances for

the word's retention.

Even though more attention is drawn to vocabulary teaching and learning it is still difficult to guarantee its successfulness. Learning vocabulary is a long process that requires exposure to new words and their recurrence. The main problem is that there is no proven method for teaching and learning vocabulary most efficiently as there are many variables that influence the process of learning. Firstly, it is the word itself as each word calls for a specific learning strategy.

Another factor is the learners themselves because each person is different and prefers various stances towards learning. The next factor is “the general teaching approach, that is intentional versus incidental learning” (Chacon-Beltran et al. 39). As intentional learning results in better retention of the words and their faster learning, incidental can provide contextual knowledge of the word.

## 2.5 Multimedia learning

In the previous chapters, YouTube personalities were introduced as well as the notion of incidental vocabulary acquisition as they are crucial for this thesis. The following chapter presents another topic that needs to be examined in order to provide sufficient background for the research carried out in the practical part. It deals with multimedia and how they can be beneficial in the process of learning a second language, particularly its vocabulary.

The word multimedia means a “presentation of material using both words and pictures” according to Mayer (2001). When speaking about words a verbal form is meant either in written or spoken text and as for pictures the term includes both static and dynamic graphics. Dynamic graphics are comprised of videos and animations. Since YouTube videos are the main topic of this thesis when referring to multimedia dynamic graphics accompanied with spoken words are meant.

Multimedia is a learning technology with a great potential to improve the human second language acquisition. Multimedia learning is a process of “building mental representation from words and pictures” (Mayer 2). Usually a projector is used together with speakers to provide sources of multimedia at schools but it can be substituted by a computer screen and headphones as well, especially in the cases of self-directed language learning.

The goal in learning is to remember things and understand them. What is always better than explaining things only in words is to accompany the words with images. There are various theories dealing with multimedia learning and a closer look is taken at some of them in subchapters 2.5.1 and 2.5.2.

### 2.5.1 *Information Delivery theory*

This theory claims that computers deliver messages to the learners who then receive them. The information is presented either in the written or verbal form sometimes even in both forms. Information Delivery theory also suggests that presentation of the information to the learner in the form of multimedia is not any better than the presentation in only one medium. The only exception is when the learners prefer different kinds of media. In that case, the presentation via multimedia is seen as more effective.

### 2.5.2 *Cognitive theory*

On the contrary, cognitive researchers see it differently. They suggest that visual

image of an information is processed by a channel that is different from the channel that processes the verbal representation and each channel can work with a few pieces of information at the same time. Cognitive theorists also claim that learning becomes efficient only when the processing is active. The way multimedia learning happens according to cognitive theory is then dual. The auditory element is processed by the organ of sight where only several lexical units are chosen and organized into a meaningful chain that is matched with the visual knowledge. At the same time, visual representation is received by the eyes from which the learner selects certain images that are later processed in an appropriate channel and associated with the auditory knowledge.

### 2.5.3 *Importance of videos in multimedia learning*

The effects of watching videos on the process of learning are described in this chapter and so it is of importance to explain what the term video actually means. Video in this thesis is understood as a “recording, reproducing, or broadcasting of moving visual images”.<sup>9</sup> Videos are in general mostly used for entertainment and relaxation. However, they can serve as an educational tool not only in the life of an individual but also in various institutions, such as schools, as well. Surveys given to educators validate that educational video “reinforces reading and lecture material, aids in the development of a common base of knowledge among students, enhances student comprehension and discussion, provides greater accommodation of diverse learning styles, increases student motivation and enthusiasm, promotes teacher effectiveness” (EDC 2).

Watching a video is rather an active process that happens between the viewer and the medium. Researchers indicate that when the information is seen and heard at the same time its possible retention is twice as much as in the case of only seeing or hearing the information. However, when the learner does not properly understand the video even the engagement of multimedia does not guarantee successful retention. On top of that, if the video is not coincident with the information one aims to deliver it can degrade the quality of learning.

“When students hear the audio only, they are denied a vital part of the meaning of the video” (Keddie 79). However, using just audio is not always completely inefficient. It can make the students more curious about the content of the recording and also motivate them to speak as they can discuss what the visual component of the video might be.

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<sup>9</sup> “Video.” Def. 1. *Oxford Dictionaries*. N.p., n.d. Web. 6 March 2016. <<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/video>>.



The teacher can also use the visual part of the video but turn off the audio in order to create a different type of activity. The students can be asked about what the people in the video might be saying and what its main topic could be. Although it is possible to use only one medium at a time in the process of teaching and learning the second language it is advisable to incorporate both media – visual and auditory to provide sufficient input. Besides, videos not only offer verbal sounds but also non-verbal ones. These can be further examined during the lessons as they help to understand the meaning of the video.

Most of the videos posted on YouTube are naturally not intended as an educational tool and for this reason some learners might have problems understanding them as the YouTubers might use slang, have strong accents or use low-frequency language items. It is then the teacher's job to take these variables into consideration when choosing a video for educational purposes. If the video is too difficult to comprehend it can have a negative impact on the process of learning as the students can feel demotivated by the difficulty of understanding a particular video.

#### *2.5.3.1 Use of videos in the educational system*

The usage of videos in the process of learning is not an amenity of this century as they had already been used for decades before. First motion pictures were used in 1910 in New York schools and Edison even predicted in 1922 that “the motion picture is destined to revolutionize our educational system and that in a few years it will supplant largely, if not entirely, the use of textbooks.”<sup>10</sup>

In the 1920s and the 1930s researchers stated that motion pictures gave students the needed motivation to learn. Nevertheless, films and videos were not used sufficiently during the lessons and the teachers were reluctant to use them frequently. That was caused by poor access to the materials, the teacher's incapacity to use such devices or the difficulty to find proper videos matching the purposes of the subject. Nowadays, there are more possibilities to access various videos on the Internet and teachers are increasingly making use of them. In the past teachers were left with only VHS cassettes and DVDs that offered limited content. However, thanks to the development of online videos the access to various content has been made easier.

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<sup>10</sup>“Thomas A. Edison Quote.” A-Z Quotes. N.p., n.d., n.d. Web. 7 March 2016.

<<http://www.azquotes.com/quote/702493>>.

According to Fabris (2015) “68 percent of students watch videos in class, and 79 percent watch them on their own time”. Even 74 percent of teachers asked in a PBS Learning Media survey find educational technology beneficial during the lessons and 68 percent of them still feel there is not enough access to technologies for the lessons.

Motivation, language input, language output, skills, content and models are the main reasons for incorporating videos into the language learning. Motivation has already been discussed in chapter 2.3 as well as the language input. As far as language output is concerned, the videos offer a “stimulus for language production tasks” (Keddie 74). The output according to Skehan (1998) helps to “produce better input, force syntactic processing, test hypotheses, develop automaticity, discourse skills and personal voice”. The output is important for successful learning of a foreign language as “only by frequent use is the fluency side of speech likely to be improved” (Skehan 18).

When discussing skills, the area that is most practised is listening as the learners are exposed to various accents of the language. Learners are familiarized with phonetic elements as well as with variety of rhythms, pitches and tempos. Thus the learners’ receptive knowledge of such form of communication increases and becomes better. Other skills that can be practised are “reading, critical thinking, and visual literacy” (Keddie 74).

Another reason for using videos in the process of learning a new language is the content. The videos can be very entertaining, but also informative. Lastly, online videos offer a demonstration of various tasks and the teacher can show an example of what he or she expects from the students to create themselves.

All this given information proves that videos uploaded to a platform such as YouTube have great potential in the educational system as they do not cost anything and offer a wide range of content to be chosen from. The only problem could be the lack of an Internet connection at schools as YouTube is still a web application. However, thanks to progress in the development of technologies YouTube videos can now be converted into various file types that can even be used without an Internet connection so there is no barrier in using these dynamic graphics as an educational tool during English language lessons.

### **3 PRACTICAL PART**

#### **3.1 Characteristics of the research**

Research was carried out to confirm or disprove the hypothesis that YouTube videos created by British YouTube personalities are able to affect the learner's acquisition of vocabulary. The research mainly focuses on incidental vocabulary acquisition through watching YouTube videos as well as the student's receptive knowledge of words as the students were not told about any testing of vocabulary in advance.

Another phenomenon that is further examined is the utility of multimedia in the process of learning vocabulary over the usage of only one media. This is achieved by exposing one group to a multimedia video while another group is only offered one medium.

The whole research was realized in the form of a questionnaire that was accompanied by a multiple-choice achievement test and the samples of both are to be found in the appendix on pages 47-49.

Both the questionnaire and the multiple-choice test were carried out in the Czech language in order to avoid any misunderstandings and to ensure the veracity of the research as the students taking part in the survey are students from a Czech grammar school. They were also both anonymous so the students were not afraid to provide genuine answers and would not be under the impression that they were being tested. To ensure that those two different unsigned papers did not get mixed up they were stapled together immediately at the end of the testing.

The questionnaire was created so it would be possible to establish a profile of the students participating in the research which would also allow for an even more accurate outcome of the research. The first part of the questionnaire includes variety of general questions stating the learners' gender, age and period of time for which they have been studying English. The second part of the questionnaire then focuses on the relationship between the learner and online videos as well as on his or her opinion on the videos created specifically by British YouTube personalities. Students were also asked what they think about the benefits of such videos and whether they find them or would find them useful in their English classes.

The multiple-choice test is then based on a set of English lexical units from which the participants must choose either answer A, B, C or D. The first three answers are various

translations of the word in Czech and only one of them is correct. Answer D then provides an “I don’t know” option just in case the students were not familiar with the word and as they might try to guess the correct answer if such option was not included.

The test consists of twenty-one English words in total. These words were selected based on vocabulary that is used in the video and on vocabulary that the students should already know from their previous lessons. The words were consulted with the teachers who ensured possible knowledge or ignorance of the word.

The list of tested vocabulary consists of seven words that appear in the video and the students should not know but could incidentally acquire by watching or hearing the YouTube video. The next seven words are such lexical units that also appear in the video but the students should know what these words mean as they have already encountered them in their textbooks. Finally, the last seven words do not appear in the video but the participants should be familiarized with them as they have been taught before during the English lessons. The number of seven units in each category was selected for a reason already stated in the theoretical part and that is that each individual is able to retain only approximately seven information units per encounter.

In order to be able to evaluate the research credibly, for every correct answer the students got one point. The points were not subtracted from the total of points if the students chose the wrong answer nor if they chose the option D. However, the error rate is taken into consideration in chapter 3.5. Each student was thus able to achieve twenty-one points as a maximum.

### *3.1.1 Characterization of participants*

The participants of this research are students from Gymnázium Jihlava (Jihlava Grammar School) in the Vysočina region. Three different classes equal to the second year at secondary school took part in the research. Two classes are in the eight-year study programme and one class in a four-year study programme of the grammar school. Each class is instructed by a different English teacher and represents one group (either A, B, or C). The reason for such separation is that each class had different tasks to fulfil.

Group A is a group that is exposed to the video with both its auditory and visual features. On the contrary, group B only listens to the audio from the video and is withheld from seeing the video. The motive for this is to test the multimedia learning theory that two media (in this case, a video showed on the screen via projector and the audio played from

the loudspeakers) are better in acquiring new vocabulary knowledge than only one (in this case, a recording coming out of the loudspeakers).

Finally, group C is only a control group as the students in this group do not see nor hear the video and they are only given the vocabulary achievement test. The main reason for this is to have evidence that the words appearing in the video are not known by the students at such level and that the rest of them should be known. The control group is meant to offer a framework of words that are known by the students at this stage of their study and which are not and could be not acquired incidentally.

### 3.1.2 *Tools*

In this subchapter, the tools used in order to guarantee a successful research are described including the video itself and the textbook used by the students in their English lessons.

#### 3.1.2.1 *The video*

A YouTube video created by Zoella and Joseph Sugg is used in this practical part as a tool in proving the hypothesis of this thesis. The video is called “*Most Likely To*” *Sibling Edition* and it was uploaded to YouTube on February 16, 2014. It is eight minutes long and already has more than 11 million views in total.<sup>11</sup>

One of the benefits of videos created by YouTubers is that they are not too long, usually taking ten minutes on average. This is an advantage because if they were used at schools as an educational material they would not take too much time of the lesson and the teacher would have enough space to work with it. It is also more convenient for a person that is watching such video in order to improve his or her listening comprehension as it does not get boring due to its lengthiness. YouTube videos are also easily accessible and offer various content.

#### 3.1.2.2 *The course book*

What was also used in the process of creating the multiple-choice test was the course book used by all three classes. The students are learning from the *Upstream Intermediate Student's book* whose level is B2 according to Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. The learners are currently in unit 8 and for that reason words from previous units were used in the test to ensure that the students are already familiar with them. There

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<sup>11</sup> YouTube. YouTube. Web. 13 March 2016. <<http://www.youtube.com/>>.

are seven words one from each chapter, except for the first one, that are incorporated in the vocabulary test and that all three groups should be able to answer even though they do not appear in the video.

## 3.2 Expectations from the research

This chapter focuses on what is expected from the research in order to confirm the hypothesis of this thesis. The questionnaire should show that the majority of students is familiar with YouTube and watches it on regular basis as they belong to the younger Net Generation. Then, the students should find YouTube videos beneficial in the process of learning a second language as they are exposed to native speakers offering a quality authentic input. It is also expected that the students would appreciate the use of such videos in their English lessons as they offer them a source of appealing content that is closer to them.

### 3.2.1 *Expectations from the multiple-choice test*

This subchapter introduces the expected results of the multiple-choice test. Firstly, it is anticipated that group A which is exposed to the video created by the Suggs will score better in the vocabulary test than the two remaining groups as it is exposed to all fourteen words occurring in the video and they should already know the seven ones from their course books as the words have already been studied. Also the engagement of multimedia should guarantee better retention of the seven unknown words than in Group B where only one media is engaged. It is not expected that the students would achieve the maximum of twenty-one points but they might get closer to the figure than the rest of the groups.

Group B is then most likely to have better scores than group C as the students were also exposed to all the words appearing in the multiple-choice test. However, as they were denied the image accompanying the audio it is most probable due to the multimedia principle they will not have better scores than group A.

Participants belonging to group C then should only score a maximum of fourteen points as the remaining seven words should be unknown to all students. Nevertheless, certain deviations have to be taken into account as well when assessing the results of the test such as the time for which the students have been studying English or whether they have been exposed to such words earlier in their study in different contexts.

### 3.3 Analysis of the questionnaire

#### 3.3.1 Gender and age of the participants

A total of thirty respondents took part in filling out the questionnaire as well as in the multiple-choice test out of which fourteen were men and the remaining sixteen were women. In group A, there were eight women to three men. In group B, there was a larger number of men as there was only one woman and ten men. On the other hand, group C consisted of only one man and seven women. Thus the composition of respondents is varied and offers more diverse responses.

The age of the participants varies from sixteen to eighteen years old. The average of all three groups is somewhere around 16.67. The highest representation is nevertheless by the seventeen-year-olds. The specific percentage of both variables, the age and gender, provided by the respondents can be seen in graph 1.



Graph 1 – Age and gender of respondents

All students have been studying English at least for six years and the highest number is eleven years of study. The average is then somewhere around 9.38 years of English instruction. This shows that the students should be on such a level at which it is not that difficult to comprehend the videos uploaded to YouTube.

#### 3.3.2 Relationship between the participant and YouTube videos

One of the questions in the questionnaire is also about the students' relationship with the YouTube videos. All respondents from groups A and C frequently watch YouTube videos. Group B then had one respondent that does not watch YouTube videos whatsoever while the



rest of the class does.

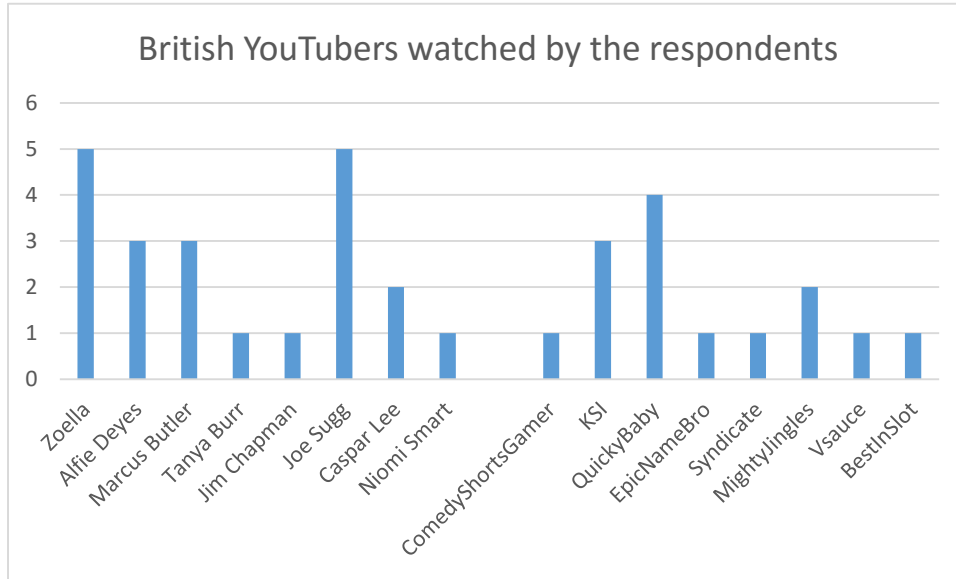
To the question of how long they watch videos weekly on YouTube, the answers offered a span from one hour to even twenty-six hours a week. It can be said that on average a sixteen-year-old student spends 6.14 hours per week by watching any kind of video on YouTube.

### *3.3.3 Participants' awareness of British YouTube personalities*

In the previous subchapter, the respondents' answers were offered to YouTube in general and almost 97% of them watch YouTube videos regularly. However, the numbers decrease when focusing only on British YouTubers. Thirteen students from all three groups are familiar with these personalities and watch them on a regular basis. The time spent on watching these British videos is, on average, around four hours per week with ten hours being the maximum.

When asked to give an account of personalities from the United Kingdom that the students watch the answers varied according to the viewer's gender. The women listed especially the mainstream YouTubers such as Zoe Sugg, Jim Chapman, Alfie Deyes and Joseph Sugg. On the contrary, men mentioned mostly YouTube gaming channels such as QuickyBaby, TheSyndicateProject and BestInSlot. Such gaming channels also have around hundreds of thousands of subscribers or even millions such as in the case of TheSyndicateProject. The men also mentioned KSI many times. KSI is more of an entertainer on the web who offers videos full of challenges and tags. The specific numbers of the viewers of each British YouTuber are given in graph 2 below.

Graph 2 – List of watched British YouTube personalities



### 3.3.4 Positive effects of such videos in L2 learning

The respondents were also asked whether in their opinion a YouTube video created in English could be beneficial in the process of L2 learning. All of the thirty students opted for the “Yes” option and they even gave the reasons for their responses.

Some students wrote that as the videos are entertaining and funny they are able to remember more and even enjoy the learning process. Moreover, several respondents noted that by listening to a native speaker in a natural environment enables them to acquire correct pronunciation and intonation as well as new vocabulary including the colloquial phrases and idiomatic expressions. Furthermore, a few students appreciate that the videos offer vocabulary connected to what they are interested in (mostly associated with the gaming channels). One student even expressed his belief that without YouTube videos he would fail his English course and that owing to watching such videos he has mastered comprehension of the listening exercises.

In the last question, the respondents were asked whether they would appreciate the usage of such videos in their own English lessons as an educational tool. Twenty percent of the students were against the idea of implementing YouTube videos in their classes. One respondent supported this decision by stating that the videos can be sometimes too vulgar which can be true in some cases. However, if the video was to be used in the English lesson it would be the teacher’s responsibility to make sure the YouTube video is appropriate.

The remaining eighty percent of students would welcome such videos in their English

lessons. From this part of the questionnaire it is obvious that the students find YouTube videos helpful in the process of second language learning and that most of them would be able to profit from them if they were used as part of the curriculum for the English language.

### 3.4 Analysis of the multiple-choice test

In this chapter, the results of the multiple-choice tests from all three groups are presented. The results are analysed in specifically divided subchapters according to the type of set of lexical units appearing in the multiple-choice test. Firstly, a closer look is taken at the anticipated unknown vocabulary occurring in the Suggs' video in subchapter 3.4.1. After that, subchapter 3.4.2 examines the results concerning the vocabulary that occurred in the video but that the students should already know. Lastly, already known vocabulary from the book is looked into in subchapter 3.4.3.

#### 3.4.1 *Unknown words*

This subchapter comprises all the data concerning the unfamiliar words from the video and their possible acquisition. The list of such seven words (*wind up*, *skittish*, *wit*, *wiggly*, *faint*, *subscribe* and *fart*) was chosen on the basis of a discussion with the English teaching staff who chose the words according to whether or not they have been taught before.

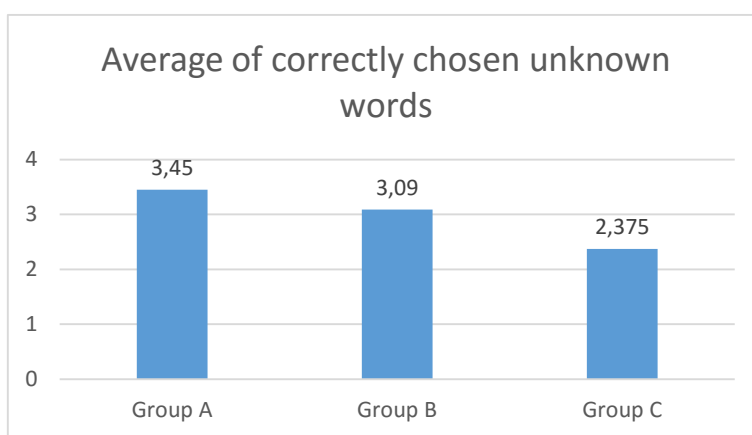
However, it is evident from the collected data that not all of the chosen words were completely unfamiliar to the students. When taking a look at the results of the control group (group C) it is indisputable that the students have already encountered the words *fart*, *faint* and *subscribe* before as 62.5 percent of them chose the correct translation without having seen the video. The word *subscribe* was correctly guessed by the students that watch YouTube on regular basis. As people interested in certain YouTubers can subscribe to their channels it is not surprising that the students knew the word. However, the teaching staff considered this word to be unfamiliar to the class. As far as the other unfamiliar words concerned their occurrence fluctuates on a lower level. The average is 2.38 points per person in group C.

Nevertheless, the average of the acquaintance is a bit higher in group B which was exposed to the audio of the video before taking the multiple-choice test and thus was exposed to these unknown words while group C did not have such advantage. The students recognized 3.09 words on average.

Furthermore, group A scored the best results in the test as predicted in chapter 3.2. The average of correctly chosen words reached 3.45 points out of seven per person. The numbers might seem low but what has to be taken into consideration is that this research

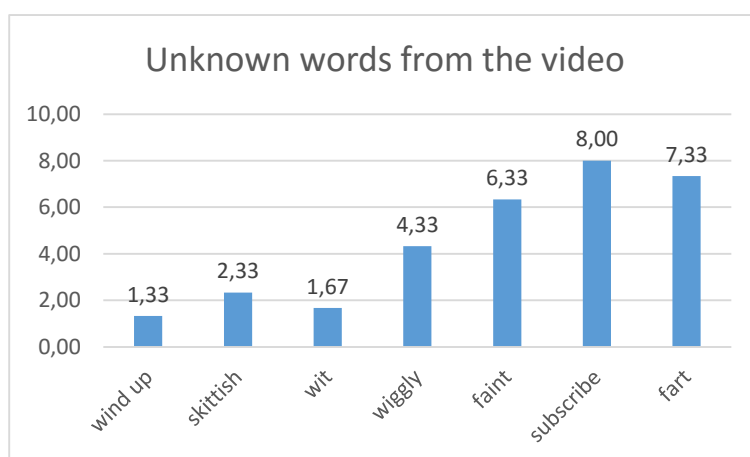
only deals with incidental vocabulary acquisition and that the students were not aware of the fact that they should pay attention to vocabulary whatsoever. If the research was aimed at explicit vocabulary acquisition alternatively if the involvement was included the results would probably be much higher.

However, these results imply that the best way to incidentally acquire new vocabulary is to expose the subject to both multimedia, visual and auditory, as one multimedia does not guarantee higher retention of vocabulary. Nevertheless, the auditory income inevitably has a certain positive effect on the second language vocabulary acquisition as well.



Graph 3 The average number of correctly answered set of unknown words

Graph 4 The average number of each word's correct answer



From graph 4 it is evident that the word *subscribe* was known not only by group C but by the rest of the respondents as well in high quantity even though it was not predicted. The words *fart* and *faint* were also familiar to few students altogether. However, the rest of the words was either known from previous encounters outside the English classroom or

incidentally acquired while either watching or hearing the audio.

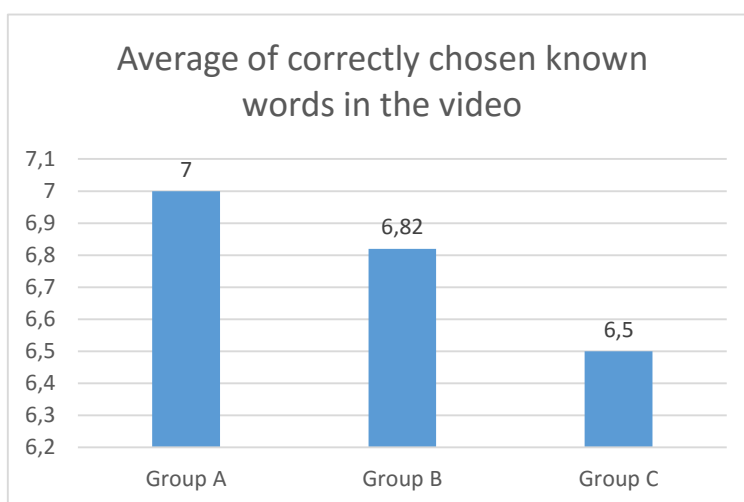
For example, the word *skittish* was correctly answered five times in group A as in the video the word is even accompanied by the gesture that explains the meaning of the word. As group B did not have access to such visual picture it is not surprising that only one person provided the correct translation.

### 3.4.2 *Known words in the video*

In this subchapter, the results concerning the anticipated already known words from the video are included. These seven words (*excited, unpredictable, decision, pain, drunk, public, lie*) occur in the video as well as in the students' textbooks thus it was predicted that the students, especially in group A and B, should score the highest number of points in this particular set which proved to be the case.

From all three groups, 97.14 percent of the students answered this set correctly which is a significant number. However, the group C had most difficulties in answering this set of questions which is not surprising as they have not seen nor heard the video. The two remaining groups, A and B, had the advantage of the video support that was able to remind them of the words or which they could have acquired incidentally while paying attention to the media. Group A then had much better scores than group B as the percentage of correctly answered words reached 100% while group B achieved 97.4%.

This again proves that the engagement of multimedia is of use when teaching vocabulary as the students tend to remember the input more than in case of one medium.



Graph 5 The average number of correctly answered known words

### 3.4.3 *Known words from the book*

This subchapter is devoted to the results of the set of the last seven words (*significant, arsonist, bracelet, majority, grater, experience, impatient*) occurring in the questionnaire. The reason for including this set was to create a more diverse multiple-choice test especially for the control group to be able to score some points and also to justify whether the students are at the level that is expected of them.

In this set, all students should have scored more or less the same as the words were already discussed in previous English lessons. However, while the two groups from the eight-year study programme (group B and C) performed very well in choosing correct answers for this set, the remaining group corresponding to a four-year study programme had some issues with several lexical units especially with the ones *arsonist* and *grater*.

This can indicate that perhaps the group did not manage to cover these lexical items during their English lessons which could also mean that some of the words from the set described in subchapter 3.4.2 might have not been taught as well. Alternatively, the frequency of the words was not satisfactory enough to be retained. Nevertheless, the rest of the words was not problematic and the groups scored more or less a similar result.

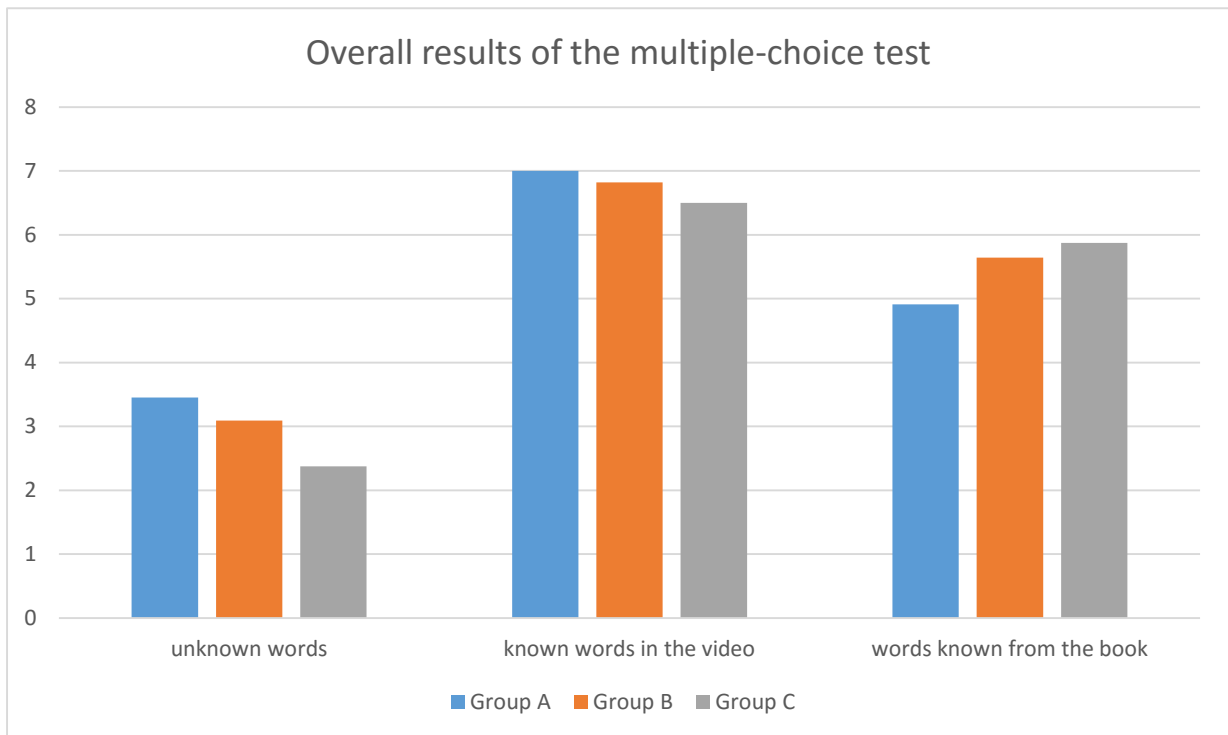
### 3.4.4 *Overall results*

This subchapter combines all the data introduced in the previous three subchapters 3.4.1, 3.4.2, 3.4.3 in order to give a complete picture of the results of the multiple-choice test and to compare the individual groups.

It was predicted that group A would score the highest number of points altogether as it had the much needed source of lexical information. None of the students in this or any other group were able to score the maximum of twenty-one points in total yet one respondent in group A and one respondent in group B managed to score twenty points.

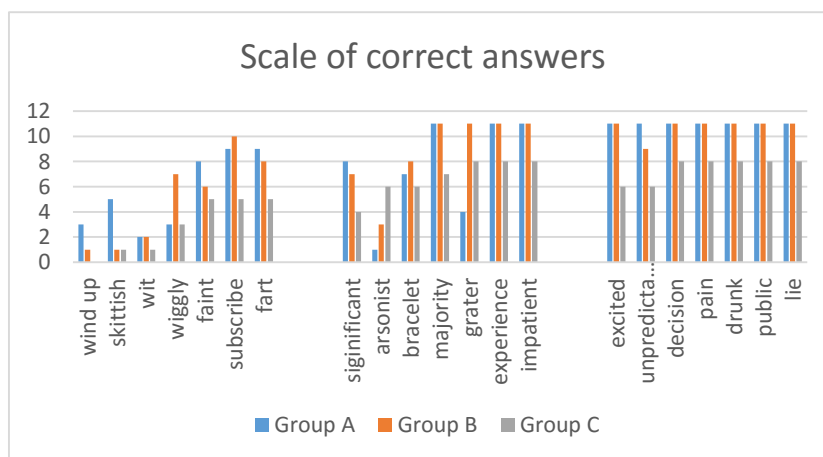
Besides, Group B was the group that had the highest total average score only thanks to the words known from the students' book as group A lacked the points from this set of words. Otherwise, group A would have scored the best in the total of the words and would then prove the expectations from this research.

Then, Group C had the lowest average with the total of the points being 14.75 per person. This is of no surprise as such results were expected and are described in chapter 3.2. Graph 6 shows the overall comparison of the results in the multiple-choice questionnaire taken by all three groups.



Graph 6 Overall results of the multiple-choice test

When taking a closer look at the words themselves the lexical units such as *decision*, *pain*, *drunk*, *public* and *lie* reached 100% of the responses as well as *experience* and *impatient*. These are the words that the students should be already familiar with. Then when looking at the set on the right in the graph 7 it is evident that the notion stated in subchapter 3.4.2 that the known words appearing in the video have overall the highest degree of correctness of the results is confirmed. Then the set of words in the middle corresponds to the words that should be known from the course book. The last set of words on the left in the graph shows the success rate of the students from group A in being familiar with the unknown words appearing in the video.



Graph 7 Overall scale of all correct answers offered by each group



### 3.5 Possible variables affecting the research

In this chapter several variables that could have affected the research are briefly described such as the error rate, existing knowledge of the word or already seeing the video.

Firstly, what has to be taken into consideration when analysing the data of the research is the possibility of the students guessing the correct answers. Even though the respondents were asked not to guess the meaning and to opt for the answer D in case of ignorance of the word still some of the students could have chosen the correct answer without even being sure about the words meaning. This is assumed from the number of incorrectly chosen answers to the words. The average of wrongly translated words is around 1.28 which indicates that the students tried to guess some meanings of the words and there is no way of finding out whether they also managed to estimate some meanings correctly.

Another factor that could alter the results of the research is whether or not a person has already seen the video before. There was one female respondent in group A that had seen the video and was able to score the number of eighteen correct answers of which five were the unknown words.

Furthermore, students could have acquired several lexical items some other place than school. Generally, students stating that they watch YouTube videos on a regular basis scored better in the test than the students that do not watch such videos. Better results were also noted from the respondents that on top of watching YouTube in general watch British YouTube personalities.

An additional factor that could have influenced the results was the acoustics of the classroom. Some students might have had problems comprehending the sound of the audio. However, this is most improbable, as the intelligibility was checked by asking the students whether they can properly hear the recording but some students could have withheld such difficulty.

Lastly, another factor that would be able to disrupt the results of the research is the disregard of the video from the part of the student. However, during the projection no such disregard was spotted.

## 4 CONCLUSION

It is evident not only from this thesis that nowadays, the younger Net Generation is growing up digitally and that teenagers in particular are able to spend several hours a week watching YouTube videos.

Generally, videos uploaded to YouTube are seen as a way of entertainment and recreation. On the other hand, some might see it as a waste of time. However, such videos can even have an educational potential when it comes to second language acquisition. Watching videos created by British YouTube personalities, for example, can enhance better acquisition of pronunciation, intonation, grammar and last but not least vocabulary.

This thesis has dealt particularly with incidental vocabulary second language acquisition and asked the question whether the videos created by British YouTubers can be of any use in learning new word stock in L2. Owing to the research carried out in the practical part of this bachelor's thesis in the form of a multiple-choice achievement test this notion has been proven. From the analysis covered in chapter 3.4 it is evident that the group that was exposed to multimedia scored better than the two remaining groups in terms of the unknown vocabulary. What was also proven was the fact that engaging multimedia is better than offering only one source of media in the process of instruction.

Moreover, some interesting variables described in chapter 3.5 arose after evaluating the results of the research. However, these are not supposed to have any significant impact on the veracity of the research.

Although it was proven that YouTube videos have positive effects on incidental vocabulary acquisition, it needs to be stressed that better retention of the vocabulary would be ensured by including some kind of involvement after watching the video. Teachers using such videos as an educational tool should engage students in activities following-up the content of the video to increase the number of acquired lexical units.

Lastly, it would be appropriate to encourage greater interest in the usage of such videos in the instruction of second language not only in various institutions but also in the process of self-studying as they provide a high quality input offered by a native speaker. There is not enough research concerning the benefits of YouTube videos which is a pity as the Net Generation would most probably gain much from the implementation of these videos in the curriculum.

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## 6 APPENDIX

### 6.1 Questionnaire

Vliv britských YouTuberů a jejich videí na českého diváka.

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**Vliv britských YouTuberů a jejich videí na českého diváka.**

Dobrý den,

jsem studentkou Pedagogické fakulty Univerzity Karlovy v Praze a chtěla bych Vás poprosit o vyplnění krátkého dotazníku týkajícího se britských YouTuberů. Děkuji za upřímné odpovědi.

Jste muž nebo žena?

Muž  Žena

Kolik je Vám let?

Kolik let studujete anglický jazyk?

Sledujete videa na YouTube?

Ano  Ne


Pokud jste v předchozí otázce zaškrtnli odpověď "Ano", napište kolik hodin týdně trávíte sledováním těchto videí.

Sledujete videa britských YouTuberů?

Ano  Ne

Pokud jste v předchozí otázce zaškrtnli odpověď "Ano", napište kolik hodin týdně trávíte sledováním těchto videí.

---

 on-line dotazníky zdarma – www.survio.com 1

Vliv britských YouTuberů a jejich videí na českého diváka.

Zaškrtněte jména těch britských Youtuberů, které sledujete.

- Britské YouTubery nesleduji
- Zoella
- Alfie Deyes
- Marcus Butler
- Tanya Burr
- Jim Chapman
- Joe Sugg
- jiné (vypište)

Domníváte se, že sledování videí na YouTube v anglickém jazyce může mít pozitivní vliv na Vaše studium angličtiny?

- Ano
- Ne

Odůvodněte Vaši volbu odpovědi v předchozí otázce.

Uvítali by jste využití těchto videí v rámci výuky angličtiny na Vaší škole?

- Ano
- Ne



## 6.2 Multiple-choice test

### **British YouTube Personalities and the Effects of their Videos on the Vocabulary of Czech Viewers**

**Zadání 1:** Zakroužkujte vždy JEDNU správnou odpověď. V případě, že by jste slovo neznali, zvolte odpověď D) Nevím.

1. Grater            a) cedník      b) struhadlo    c) prkýnko      d) nevím
2. Faint            a) malovat    b) obávat se    c) omdlít        d) nevím
3. Decision        a) zamítnutí    b) rozhodnutí    c) úsudek        d) nevím
4. Experience     a) moudrost    b) zdatnost      c) zkušenost     d) nevím
5. Pain            a) zranění      b) zármutek     c) bolest         d) nevím
6. Arsonist        a) lupič        b) žhář          c) obžalovaný    d) nevím
7. Wiggly         a) třesoucí se    b) otřesený      c) nacpaný        d) nevím
8. Drunk          a) ztracený     b) střízlivý     c) opilý          d) nevím
9. Skittish        a) lekavý        b) pohyblivý    c) náladový     d) nevím
10. Public        a) pozornost    b) veřejnost    c) společnost    d) nevím
11. Significant    a) významný    b) smysluplný    c) vážný          d) nevím
12. Bracelet      a) náramek     b) rovnátka     c) přívěsek      d) nevím
13. Lie            a) omyl         b) pokus         c) lež             d) nevím
14. Subscribe    a) podepsat    b) odebírat      c) popsat         d) nevím
15. Wit            a) bič          b) myšlení        c) důvtip         d) nevím

16. Impatient      a) netrpělivý   b) nevěrný   c) neshodný   d) nevím
17. Excited      a) zdobený   b) nadšený   c) snaživý   d) nevím
18. Wind up      a) prosit      b) nutit      c) balamutit   d) nevím
19. Fart      a) zívat      b) prdět      c) kýchnout   d) nevím
20. Majority      a) menšina   b) věčnost   c) většina      d) nevím
21. Unpredictable      a) nedocenitelný   b) nepravidelný   c) nepředvídatelný   d) nevím

