

Abstract

This master's thesis deals with basic vocabulary of standard Czech in relation to speakers of Czech as a heritage language. These speakers constitute the second generation of speakers of Czech who grew up in Germany, specifically in Regensburg and its surroundings. The aim of the thesis is to identify areas of basic Czech vocabulary that the speakers did not manage to master in the process of incomplete language acquisition.

The theoretical part of the thesis primarily explains concepts such as heritage language, speakers with a migrant background, incomplete language acquisition and basic vocabulary with respect to the speakers examined. Based on conclusions drawn from specialist literature, it maps out basic vocabulary and contextualizes this knowledge with respect to Czech language. The focus of the theoretical part of the thesis is to map out the active and passive vocabulary of Czech, its range and variations. The basic Czech vocabulary is viewed from the frequency as well as from the communicative-pragmatic approach. For the purpose of this research, the frequency approach was chosen along with the use of the Czech National Corpus.

The empirical part of the thesis describes an experimental research using vocabulary translation tests. This research examines both the active and passive vocabulary and the speakers' ability to use synonyms. The research shows that these speakers have acquired approximately four fifths of basic vocabulary of standard Czech in the process of incomplete language acquisition. The most challenging words for these speakers include "faux amis" and polysemic expressions. Research outcomes can help Czech lecturers focusing on this target group, as well as authors of textbooks, and last but not the least, the respondents themselves. The conclusion lists several ideas on how to build on this research.

Keywords: heritage language, basic vocabulary, active vocabulary, passive vocabulary, language acquisition, incomplete language acquisition, functional bilingualism