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Communicative Competence in Second Language Acquisition

(Diplomová práce)

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Abstract

This thesis deals with adult second language learners with respect to their communicative competence. Using authentic recordings of dialogues between teacher and student and between two students of the same or adjacent language level I will look at how students manage discourse, i.e. at situation management in students' communication. Furthermore, I will examine how students handle linguistically challenging situations and what type of communication strategies they apply. I will also provide examples of adjacency pairs and how students react to functional language. The paper consists of three main parts, theory, research and conclusion. Readers will learn something about the current issues in English Language Teaching. They will get an insight into communicative competence of five language levels based on the Common European Framework of Reference. Finally, a conclusion will be presented. The research analyses and the conclusion will include practical suggestions which could be implemented into adult language training.

Key words

second language acquisition, communicative language teaching, communicative competence, situation management, communication strategies, adjacency pairs

Anotace

Tato práce se zabývá komunikativní kompetencí dospělých studentů cizího jazyka. Za použití autentických nahrávek rozhovorů mezi lektorem a studentem a mezi dvěma studenty stejné nebo podobné jazykové úrovně, sleduje, jak studenti zvládají řízení diskursu, tj. situační management v ústním projevu. Práce dále zkoumá, jak studenti zvládají jazykově náročné situace a jaké typy komunikačních strategií uplatňují. Součástí jsou také příklady párových sekvencí a reakcí studentů na funkční jazyk. Práce se skládá ze tří hlavních částí, teorie, výzkumu a závěru. Čtenáři se dozví něco o současných otázkách v oblasti výuky anglického jazyka. Získají také přehled o komunikativních kompetencích studentů pěti různých jazykových úrovní stanovených podle Evropské referenčního rámce. Analýzy nahrávek a závěr práce poskytne několik praktických návrhů, které lze uplatnit ve výuce.

Klíčová slova

výuky cizích jazyků, komunikativní přístup k výuce jazyků, komunikativní kompetence, situační management, komunikační strategie, párové sekvence

Abbreviations

CEFR   Common European Framework of Reference

     A1   Elementary language level

     A2   Pre-intermediate language level

     B1   Intermediate language level

     B2   Upper-intermediate language level

     C1   Advanced language level

CLT   Communicative Language Teaching

CS   Communication Strategy

ELT   English Language Teaching

ESOL   English for Speakers of Other Languages

IRF   initiation – response – feedback

L1   First language

L2   Second language

SLA   Second Language Acquisition

TL   Target Language

Content

1 Introduction

English language teaching (ELT) is a field undoubtedly closely related to linguistics, pragmatics, phonetics and pedagogy. It is therefore virtually impossible not to encounter, struggle with and attempt to tackle the issues connected to these fields in an **ESOL** (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classroom. In this thesis I will mainly focus on the occurrence and circumstances of communication breakdowns in ESOL students' spoken language. It is a general phenomenon that second language learners demonstrate substantial discrepancy between their linguistic and communicative competence. I will examine situations in which students have difficulty utilizing their theoretical knowledge about the language in authentic communicative situations in order to overcome obstacles. In this paper is divided into three major areas:

a) Theoretical background to communicative language teaching
b) Circumstances in which students encounter communication predicaments and the ways they deal with them
c) Conclusions derived from the research regarding ELT practice

I will provide recordings of two types of interaction patters, i.e. student – teacher and student – student scenarios, and their analyses elaborating on the students' ability to engage in meaningful, coherent, acceptable interactional and transactional communication via applying communication strategies.

The aim of this thesis is to:

a) demonstrate communicative competence of Czech ESOL students in various discourse situations with respect to communication strategies;
b) show the correlation between achieved language level assessed on the grounds of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) and the quality of communicative competence demonstrated;
c) infer repeatedly occurring negative phenomena and suggest steps to remedy the situation in ELT.

I aim at introducing the phenomena of the above mentioned aspects of ESOL students' communicative competence to ELT professionals, especially

teachers, who seek theoretical explanations to some of the factors which influence their students' speaking skills.

1.1 Issues in current ELT

As an ESOL teacher I have had the experience with students of all levels and observed their learning processes, assessed their abilities, evaluated their short-term and long-term progress, researched a wide range of teaching materials and use them in practice. After several years of teaching I have reached the conclusion that communicative competence has been and is being underestimated and not catered to sufficiently in ELT. Apart from the fact that students demonstrate inadequate speaking skills compared to other language skills, another drawback comprises their incapability to handle ordinary, yet ever present misapprehension.

Second language acquisition (SLA), i.e. mastering a foreign language in its complexity, is carried out for various reasons.[1] The motivation and the ultimate goals vary. Some might argue that there are instances when learners need to acquire solely the receptive skills as they are unlikely to need to produce the target language. I will, nevertheless, focus on those learners whose aim is to master the language in its elaborateness and mainly for the purpose of communication. The study group involved adult students studying to meet the requirements of work environment communication, preparing for a Cambridge exam or studying for private purposes. The ways students are taught typically differ based on the age, background and target of the student. As opposed to children's SLA **adult SLA** is done with greater systematicness, graveness and indubitable respect toward the students' habits and requirements. Unfortunately, emphasis is often put on analyzing and learning "about" the language rather than producing it. SLA via games and entertaining activities gives way to elaborate grammar explanations, endless controlled practice and dull drill. The form of the listed techniques is not

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[1] H . Douglas Brown defines SLA as a subset of general human learning which requires the creation of a new linguistic system together with discourse and communicative functions of the language. Furthermore, it is significantly influenced by one's personality (Brown 2000, 271).

the key issue. The Achilles' heel is their failure to enhance communicative competence.

Communicative skills are best practiced in role plays, group discussions, presentations, real world scenarios. I maintain, and will try to prove through research, that linguistic proficiency does not inevitably lead to communicative competence. The latter must be taught and practiced as an integral and indispensable part of a language. I will suggest possible approaches to teaching, practicing and achieving production of naturally-sounding communication in Section 4 of this paper.

English language teaching offers a wide range of approaches and methods. Based on the student's needs the teacher chooses the appropriate approach and proceeds to apply methods he/she thinks will result in achieving the given target. As mentioned before, the objective of the majority of adult learners is affective communication. It is thus not surprising that in the course of time **communicative language teaching (CLT)** has become the prevailing and highly valued approach. Unfortunately, there are obstacles ESOL teachers encounter. There is no one generally accepted and used definition of CLT. The wide range of definitions and descriptions and the divergence of teaching materials contribute to the vague perception ELT professionals have about CLT. I will not attempt to elaborate on the various definitions, however, for the purpose of this paper I will follow Harmer's interpretation [2]. Communicative approach, or Communicative Language Teaching, includes not only new perspectives on what to teach but also how to teach it, claims Harmer. He points out that CLT puts emphasis on language functions rather than isolated grammar and vocabulary. He continues to note that typical CLT classroom activities involve learners in realistic communication and their target is a successfully completed communicative task, not accurate language (Harmer 2001, 84-85). I will look closely at two of the aspects of interactive and transactional communication, i.e. situation management and communication strategies.

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[2] Jeremy Harmer, linguist and author of ELT literature who is most well-known for his books The Practice of English Language Teaching and How to Teach English.

Giving priority to linguistic competence[3] before communicative competence in SLA is a phenomenon long discarded as dysfunctional. Nevertheless, linguistic competence is frequently conceived as the part of language a student needs to master before taking the consequent step towards performance, i.e. demonstrating the ability to use the second language in authentic communication. Whether this is caused by the imbedded conviction of teachers that this is the only logical sequence or whether it is due to the language teaching methodology and SLA approaches the students were exposed to in the past, is hard to say. However, in practice, I repeatedly encounter students whose linguistic competence, i.e. their knowledge "about" the language, is in great disparity with their ability to use the language as a functional communication tool.

Students tend to approach the target language (TL) as a system of isolated elements which are put into larger segments of text in the processes of actualization (Beaugrande and Dressler 1981). The discrepancy between a person's theoretical knowledge and his/her ability to utilize this knowledge in practical use will always be present and a prevailing issue all second language teachers will need to tackle. We have come to accept that our students' perceptive skills will always exceed their productive ones. Nonetheless, it is the aim of CLT to bridge that gap and help students develop their communicative competence.

Beaugrande and Dressler argue that language teaching is conceived as teaching a set of

> grammatical paradigms and syntactic patterns with the help of unsystematically compiled vocabulary lists. (Beaugrande and Dressler 1981)

They also state that in Europe, as opposed to the United States, the communicative approach has taken the lead in ELT in the 1980s and comment affirmatively on this. Language teaching has indisputably undergone significant changes, as can be seen most distinctly on recently published core texts to be used

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[3] The term linguistic competence will be explained in Section 1.2.1 below and will be used throughout the whole paper.

in ESOL courses.[4] In spite of the fact that CLT is designed to teach students how to apply newly acquired language skills beyond the classroom walls and thus be able to communicate effectively in the real world, I found that students frequently conceive their target language abilities as isolated, classroom-dependant and theoretical rather than as practically-utilizable skills. The major problem, I claim, lies in the lack of **communication strategies (CS)** applied and **situation management** skills demonstrated. Situation management in a discourse is the handling and changing of a situation, in other words steering the situation according to the speaker's needs and wishes (Beaugrande and Dressler 1981). Thornbury[5] maintains that

> Discourse knowledge also assumes an understanding of how speaking turns are managed – knowing that, for example, talk is collaboratively constructed through the taking and yielding of turns. However, since this is a universal feature of spoken interaction, it is not something learners need to be taught. They simply need to know how these turn-management moves are realized in the second language, through the use, primarily, of discourse markers. (Thornbury 2009, 33)

The factors which influence turn-taking and overall situation management will be discussed in detail below. I will also mention discourse markers and their role in ESOL classroom language. They will, however, not be the main focus of this paper. Situation management will be treated in greater detail in Section 1.2.5.

Communication strategy refers to problem-solving, i.e. the ability to deal with communication lapses and disruption.[6] Students naturally possess these skills and are capable of effectively and efficiently exploiting them in their **first**

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[4] Up-to-date ELT textbooks cater to all learning styles in providing visual and audio material as well as hands-on activities for kinesthetic students. From the long list of coursebooks currently being published which follow a notion-functional syllabus I will name e.g. Total English, The Business, Business Result, Global, Speakout (see Section 6 Bibliography). These texts encourage students to engage themselves in communicative activities in class rather than concentrate on self-studying. Numerous role plays simulating real-life situations are presented. The emphasis authors put on the authenticity of language introduced is strengthening. Speakout, using mostly BBC materials, is an outstanding example of this trend.

[5] Scott Thornbury, linguist, professor of English Language Studies, author of ELT methodology books.

[6] Communication strategies, or what is also referred to as strategic competence, is defined by Canale and Swain as the compensatory communication strategies to be used when there is a breakdown in one of the other competencies (Canale and Swain 1980, 27).

language (L1). The clash that occurs here, i.e. between L1 and L2, is, I believe, traceable to the approach both language educators and students themselves adopt to SLA. Bachman views strategic competence as a significant element of all communicative language use, not only the one which manifests deficient language abilities which need to be compensated (Bachman 1990, 100). I will, however, operate with the notion of communication strategies relating to compensatory functions used when the linguistic competence of a speaker is insufficient based on Canale and Swain and Tarone.[7]

As far as syllabi and there organizational structure are concerned, there is a major clash between **structural** and **notion-functional syllabi**.[8] Following the functional route rigorously, one could end up with a grammatically disorganized and subsequently impalpable syllabus. Viewed from the structural syllabus perspective, students would be required to comprehend and master several grammatical structures at once. This, regardless of CLT trends, could be perceived by both the language trainer and the recipients as overwhelming. It would pose and significant strain on students' cognitive skills, memory and attention span. The teacher's approach would need to be altered considerably. Take for instance making suggestions. The following list of expressions and sentences is taken from a B2 textbook (Duckworth and Turner 2008, 57) from a section on communication skills.

> **Putting forward proposals**
> One option would be to …
> How about we …?
> What I propose is …
> Let's keep our options open …
> Supposing we …, why don't
> we …?

If we look at the individual lexical items, words such as interrogative pro-forms *how/what/why*, personal pronouns *I/we*, the noun *option*, verbs *to*

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[7] See (Bachman 1990, 99), (Canale and Swain 1980) and (Tarone 1981).
[8] Brown's terms (Brown 2000, 252). The terms designating various types of syllabi vary among linguists. Harmer, for instance, uses the terms *grammar syllabus* and *functional syllabus* for the two aforementioned concepts (Harmer 2001, 296-297).

be/let's/keep, negative *don't* and adjective *open* are all part of a A2 syllabus at the latest. Considering the option and common practice of revising or pre-teaching vocabulary and hence familiarizing students with expressions such as *to propose* and *to suggest*, the students now have the necessary lexical facilities they need. They would, nevertheless, hardly be able to construct the above mentioned sentences. The obstacle they would face is the unawareness of cleft clauses, fronting, gerund used as the subject of a sentence, the fixed phrases *How about…?* and *Why don't we…?*. Approached from the point of view of linguistic competence, the teacher would need to cover theses grammar points in one lesson, including the presentation, practice and production phase.   The dissimilarity of the TL sentences is so great that the grammar involved would account for three separate lessons. This is the reason, I believe, why **functional language** is embedded into syllabi as one of the aspects of L2 alongside vocabulary and grammar points. Harmer labels a syllabus combining various approaches the "multi-syllabus" syllabus. It presents a combination of grammatical, lexical, functional language, topic, language skills and pronunciation issues (Harmer 2001, 299-300).

When presenting functional language, a teaching material naturally offers several options, for basic communication purposes it is however sufficient if the student retains one or two of the possibilities. As we will see in Section 3 in a transactional role play, it is not uncommon to encounter a situation which requires *making suggestions*, *accepting or rejecting the opponent's proposals* and *putting forward alternatives*. In my experience, unprompted inferring of functional phrases from the general language reserves a student already has is rare. Teaching functional language must therefore be an indispensible part of the syllabus.

The key issue is that teaching functional language on the principles of CLT carries with itself a discord of what comes first, grammatical competence or communicative competence? Is the latter a natural consequence of the former or can we assume that while focusing on communicative competence linguistic knowledge will be acquired as a side effect? Or does the competence of utilizing grammatical knowledge naturally emerge in communication? Adult students have, as opposed to children, mastered L1 **sociolinguistic** and **communication**

strategies.[9] Thornbury points out that the skills of speaking are transferable from L1 to L2 as they are theoretically identical (Thornbury 2009, 28).[10] Nevertheless, students do not always abide by this presumptive pattern. In short, students know what is appropriate to say, they have mastered the needed vocabulary, and yet they often fail to respond in a natural way which would be cohesive, acceptable, efficient. Furthermore, when they fail to utilize adequate language and run into difficulties a habitual reaction is one that would, one can assume, cause a communication breakdown or at least discomposure.

1.1.1 Teachers' input

Language trainers have mostly accepted CLT and concede that it is a valid and reasonable approach to language teaching. As mentioned above, it would be a herculean task to account for the reasons why our students on one hand score highly on grammar tests, but on the other are taken aback when asked to participate in conversation. It should nevertheless be ESOL teachers' target to help students bridge the abyss. Teachers face substantial hardship in this area for several reasons. Students have various language dispositions, they are generally communicative or taciturn, they are willing to cooperate and assume diverse roles in order to master the language or they are not. Students can adopt a passive role in class, they can have inhibitions and feel apprehensive. The natural role of the teacher naturally influences the overall dynamics. All these factors and many others can lead to students not performing in a way the teacher finds beneficial. Nevertheless, we need to take these human factors into consideration when analyzing students' language abilities. Communicative competence is all the more influenced by the student's involvement.

As mentioned above, nowadays ELT is grounded in CLT and thus tries to create genuine situations in the form of role plays, case studies, watching authentic video materials, etc. Nevertheless, numerous deficiencies occur as an inherent part of ELT. The teacher's abilities and skills heavily influence the course and outcome of a lesson. It is not surprising that to apply CLT effectively

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[9] Both terms will be explained and used in Section 1.2.1 and on below.
[10] See also quotation of Thornbury above.

teachers are required to excel at the language they intend to teach. To demonstrate L2 in its authenticity together with displaying extraordinary communicative competence requires laborious work on self-development and considerable talent on the teacher's part. Consequently, insufficient knowledge of CLT methodology and lack of training leads to falling back upon the classical audio-lingual approach.[11] In addition, it is substantially demanding and strenuous work for the teacher to create an atmosphere and provide materials that would truthfully simulate the real world. Classroom language is subsequently always going to bear the constraint of artificiality.

One of the possible consequences of the artificiality is the imbalance in **situation management** in conversation. One of the predicaments teachers face is their own dominance in the lesson. Students respect the teacher's authority and tend to assume a passive role. Especially in one-on-one student-teacher communication the student will almost exclusively fall on to **situation monitoring** and yield control to the teacher.[12] For this reason I will provide dialogues of student-student scenario in addition to student-teacher dialogues. As students will be chosen according to their CEFR level and matched accordingly, the distribution of control should be unforeseeable at the beginning and up to the participants to allocate. The distribution of directive power between conversation partners can be observed from the angle of language levels, communicative competences, inherent eloquence, sociolinguistic context, endeavor of participants. I will examine situation management in students' discourse from all the aforementioned perspectives.

A major question ESOL teachers should be asking themselves is which **communication strategies** to encourage their students to use. Tarone defines communication strategies as the speakers' attempt to communicate meaningful content when encountering apparent deficiencies in L2 (Tarone 1981, 285-286). Switching to one's L1 is a strategy students apply automatically and preferably

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[11] Brown describes the audio-lingual method as a method based on mimicry, memorizing of set phrases, contrastive approach to structures, repetitive drills, inductive grammar presentation, vocabulary set in context, abundant use of audio and visual materials, emphasis on pronunciation, etc. This method encompasses great effort to achieve error-free language production. Content is frequently considered unimportant (Brown 2000, 74-75).

[12] Situation monitoring refers to the phenomenon of not steering a conversation in a desired direction but rather limiting one's interference to describing observable facts (Beaugrande and Dressler 1981).

one which should be avoided. The question thus remains, are teachers to first and foremost concentrate on teaching language chunks expressing misapprehension, inability to decode an utterance, uncertainties and doubts? In an authentic real-life TL environment one of the first sentences we learn is "I don't understand" or "I don't speak the language." Should similar language chunks not likewise be one of the first **functional language** we introduce in classrooms? In other words, are we to insist our students use the TL exclusively when they need to express misapprehension, inability to decipher the received message, unfamiliarity with a certain word or grammatical structure, etc.? It can be argued that it is incomparably more efficient and effective to solve miscomprehension in class by switching to the participants' L1. It is, I believe, usually justified by the perspective of explaining an elaborate grammar point or correcting a student's misconception when no other means seem to be effective. On the other hand, in practice, students will undoubtedly need to deal with convoluted and unclear language without the possibility of falling back upon their mother tongue.

Another cause of students' failing to comply with the rule of using L2 only can be their distinction between the language being taught which they are to master and the language used for greeting, giving instructions, assigning homework, etc. Jane Willis uses the terms of **inner and outer language** to demonstrate the difference between the two aforementioned categories of classroom language.[13] The question posed is to what extent should a teacher insist on all communication among students and between students and the teacher to be carried out in TL and does it contribute to the students' language ability? Is it simply a matter of habit of some Czech students and the occasional teacher to focus on the **inner language** and consider resolving misapprehension in L1 the best practice? Outer language can be perceived as excluded from the language training itself not only by students but by teachers too.

I have heard propositions from teachers claiming that greeting students in TL is unnatural as it is not part of the language lesson and it is thus more unforced to use L1. Some would argue that giving instructions in L1 prevents erroneous task completion, is more efficient and thus helps maintain a lively pace of the

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[13] The matter of inner and outer language is covered in detail in Section 1.2.2.

lesson and should not be done in TL as it imposes additional and purposeless strain on students. In order to decide whether to use the second language in outer discourse we need to consider the impact it has on students' language abilities. I believe that it is up to individual teachers to determine what their objective is with respect to the students' needs. Is it to mediate isolated components of a language to the students and let them utilize their knowledge in practice as they see fit or is it to train the students for authentic real-life situations with emphasis on functional language as much as possible? To put it simply, is it to enhance their **linguistic** or their **communicative competence?**[14] Here again we encounter the question whether it is feasible to perfect someone's communicative competence when they, regardless of the language used, are inherently not eloquent individuals. I will try to shed some light on the matter in the research analysis.

1.1.2 Students' rooted patterns

ESOL teachers often struggle with the inadequacy of students' functional use of the TL and the vast abyss between their linguistic competence and their spontaneous text production. Ironically, it is often second language learners themselves who block the complete and unconditioned application of CLT in classrooms. Perception of SLA among adult learners is in many instances unilateral and inflexible. Contrary to the efforts of CLT a wide-spread idea of a learning process is a passive intake of linguistic competence without practical demonstrations. Even in instances when the student is naturally communicative or has perhaps become loquacious through the teacher's guidance an obstacle in verbal communication which requires asking for clarification, repetition or rephrasing is often not overcome adequately in L2. Students seem to find it too strenuous, unnecessary, pointless or not in accordance with the aim of the lesson to communicate their misunderstanding or misapprehension in L2.

On the samples of students' interactions either with the teacher or among themselves I will demonstrate whether and in what way **situation management** and overall **communicative competence** are present. The presumption is that as the students' level increases, their utterance and interaction will become more

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[14] For detailed analysis of the terms see Section 1.2

"standardized" with respect to the **standards of textuality**[15] and with regard to the conventionality of discourse management.[16]

1.2   Theoretical background to communicative competence

As indicated above, in SLA the target language can be divided into two, intertwined and indispensable, yet distinct areas.[17] Several linguists have been preoccupied with this distinction using various terminology. Diverse schemes have been created pointing to the interconnectedness of the systems and the reliance of one on the other. In Figure 1 below we can see an overview of the aforementioned terminology, i.e. the terms used by James Cummins, Dell Hymes, Michael Canale and Merril Swain, Lyle Buchman and Elaine Tarone (Brown 2000, 30, 246-248).

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[15] Beaugrande and Dressler defined text as a communicative occurrence which meets seven standards of textuality. The standards are cohesion, coherence, intentionality, acceptability, informativity, situationality, intertextuality (Beaugrande and Dressler 1981).

[16] Analyzing the validity of Grice's maxims should be treated as a separate topic. I will not elaborate on it in this paper. I do, however, believe that in the process of SLA, as the CEFR level increases, learners are capable of rendering more informative, concise, relevant and appropriate information. Students frequently provide incomplete information simply to make their utterance as short as possible and avoid using complex sentences. The maxim of quality can be judge only in connection to classroom conversation. The knowledge the teacher has about the student's real world is sometimes contradicted by what the student says. Students prefer to make things up and thus violate the quality maxim to struggling with unknown vocabulary or grammatical structures. Text relevance is frequently an issue as students often misunderstand preceding utterances, do not have sufficient linguistic knowledge to provide a relevant response and opt for topic avoidance or are so eager to say something, they will say anything. Prolixity occurs on a regular bases as the ability to be concise is, perhaps surprisingly, very difficult to master in L2. Students use paraphrasing, specifically circumlocution (Tarone 1981, 286), and thus use a lot of redundant language in order to be understood.

[17] In various sciences and fields we generally distinguish between competence, the theoretical knowledge of a system, and performance, the actual realization and demonstration of this competence (Brown 2000, 31). Regarding language, Brown argues, the competence is our erudition in the system, our comprehension of the rules and the volume of lexical items we have mastered. Performance is the production of language in use, i.e. the manifestation of our language competences, in speaking, writing, listening/comprehending and reading.

	Form	Function
Noam Chomsky	competence	performance
Dell Hymes[18]	linguistic competence	communicative competence
James Cummins[19]	cognitive / academic language proficiency CALP	basic interpersonal communicative skills BISC
Michael Canale Merril Swan	grammatical + discourse competence	sociolinguistic + strategic competence
Lyle Bachman	organizational competence	pragmatic competence
Elaine Tarone	linguistic system	production strategy communication strategy

Figure 1. Categorization of language competences according to Chomsky, Hymes, Cummins, Canale and Swain, Bachman

It is questionable to what extent it is advisable and beneficial to students to prioritize on before the other. We can argue that communicative functions require **linguistic competence** to be activated. Canale and Swain state that the supremacy which the two aspects of language should be assigned changes

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[18] In the categorization of language competences Hymes distinguishes between linguistic and communicative competence. He recognizes the knowledge "about the language" and the ability to use the TL in communication (Brown 2000, 246). As the terms linguistic vs. communicative competence seem the most accessible and lucid, I will use them as the key distinction between one's grammatical knowledge and the ability to communicate in TL.

[19] Cummins J. deals with pupils for whom English is a second language and the discrepancies between their conversational fluency and academic proficiency. He does not address the issue of adult learners and their second language acquisition. The distinction between form and function is therefore not exhaustive and does not entirely fit the boundaries of form and function in adult SLA. I mention him in the table as an example from a related field.

according to the students' language level. They maintain that in the early stages of SLA language use serves as a means to master grammatical competence (Canale and Swain 1980). The question remains, when is the right time to proceed to using grammatical knowledge about L2 to master **language use**?

1.2.1 Form and function

Communicative competence constitutes a key part of CLT. It goes far beyond the **linguistic competences** and involves using language as a tool to achieve a premeditated goal via verbal processing. CLT perceives language as a functional means of attaining a certain aim and succeeding in interpersonal communication (Harmer 2001, 84). Since the emergence of this approach more emphasis has been put on the ability of second language learners to effectively communicate in TL (Brown 2000, 13-14). Less attention is paid to precise wording, flawless grammatical structures, correct pronunciation and familiarity with irregular forms. Pragmatics, discourse, language functions and interaction have become the buzzwords of second language acquisition since 1980s and the constructivist movement (Brown 2000, 11). In practice this means teaching the TL not as a set of grammatical rules and an infinite inventory of vocabulary but as a communication tool taking into account **context** and the fact that pragmatic comprehension and the effect of **illocutionary acts** [20] are conditioned by cooperation among discourse participants.[21]

In **M. Canale's** and **M. Swain's** work the formal structure of a language is designated as **grammatical competence** and encompasses rules of morphology, syntax, semantics, phonology and lexis. They claim that having grammatical competence could seem to be the essential core of acquiring the TL and thus something a learner can build upon. Despite accepting that grammatical knowledge is indispensible, Canale and Swain believe that a native speaker would focus on conveying the desired meaning in his/her utterance rather that concentrate on its grammatical correctness and the same viewpoint should be applied to SLA (Canale and Swain 1980, 5).

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[20] John L. Austin's term for language functions such as requesting, apologizing, promising, etc.
[21] See also Harmer's definition of CLT in Section 1.1.

They also claim that limited knowledge of grammatical competence restrains the speakers ability to express semantic meaning, in other words, what can be said determines what can be meant (Canale and Swain 1980, 18). Some language functions and social behavior, they continue, are thus withheld from SLA beginners. Nevertheless, I agree with Canale and Swain that from a certain stage, i.e. after mastering the basics of a language, the range of semantic options speakers have widen disproportionately enabling students with limited grammatical competence to exploit a vast volume of language functions. It is this point which I define as the "bottleneck" of second language communication, the inability or reluctance of students to take full advantage of their knowledge and transform it into performance.[22]

Lyle Bachman distinguishes an **organizational competence** which consists of grammatical (vocabulary, morphology, syntax, phonology and graphology) and textual competences (cohesion, rhetorical organization). Organizational competence, he says, is that part of language ability which enables speakers to use grammatically correct sentences, either in isolation or in larger chunks of text, and accurately convey propositional content. In short, it is the database of vocabulary and grammatical rules students garner during their studies. Bachman also includes **textual competence** in this category, namely **cohesion** and **rhetorical organization**, which encompasses the knowledge of conventions for joining utterances together (Bachman 1990, 87).

Bachman, concerned mainly with language testing, asked himself a question whether **strategic competence** (dealt with in greater detail below) is relevant to language abilities assessment. He answers this question by maintaining that strategic competence is not to be considered solely as a language ability, but as a general ability to carry out a task effectively. He provides an example of two candidates dealing with a test task focusing on the practical outcome. While one examinee might be preoccupied with constructing grammatically flawless sentences and using a wide range of vocabulary, the other might be more goal-oriented and at the expense of making grammatical mistakes efficiently works his/her way toward task completion. As the task was effective communication, the

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[22] The expression bottleneck depicts a phenomenon where the overall performance is limited by insufficient number of resources.

latter examinee was awarded higher marks than the former (Bachman 1990, 104-105).

It was clear to Bachman that testing the knowledge merely of linguistic signals would not suffice if one desired to carry out a thorough language abilities assessment. He maintains that language communication inherently consists of the relationships between linguistic signals and their referents, language users and context. Consequently, he labeled these abilities the **pragmatic competence**. Referring to van Dijk's aspects of pragmatics – the performance of an intended function and the conditions that determine the success of an utterance in various situations – Bachman describes pragmatics as a subfield of:

[linguistics] concerned with relationships between utterances and the acts or functions that speakers intend to perform through these utterances. (Bachman 1990, 89)

Bachman's pragmatic competence is divided into **illocutionary competence** and **sociolinguistic competence** as you can see in Figure 2 below (Bachman 1990, 87).
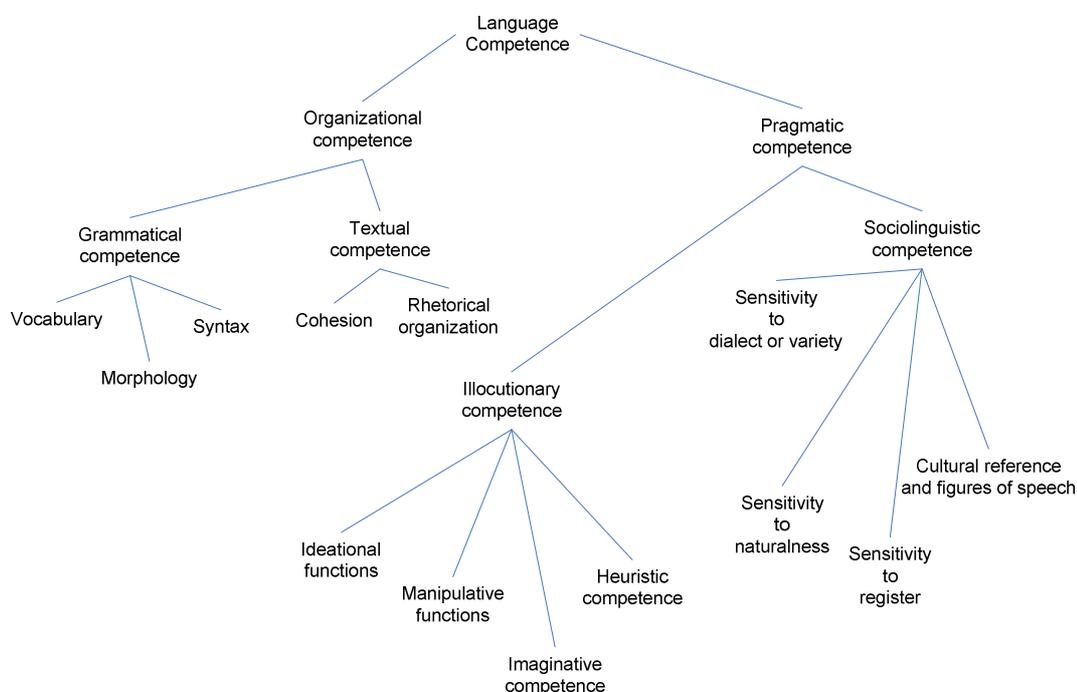
Figure 2. Bachman's components of language competence

Considering illocutionary competence, there are many strategies to perform an illocutionary act. Bachman introduces an example of asking someone for help differing in the amount of subtlety or directness used (Bachman 1990, 91). A native or proficient speaker naturally distinguishes and is capable of applying such strategies, e.g. selecting an appropriate text from the following:

a) I request that you help me.
b) Please help me.
c) If you help me, I'll buy you a new comic book.
d) Could you help me?
e) Why aren't you helping me?
(Bachman 1990)

The obligatory lexical items we are dealing with here are *I/you/me,/help/request//buy/to be/could/why/if/will/please* all of which an A2 student customarily knows. Yet I believe that not many students would be able to construct so many possibilities to execute the aforementioned illocutionary competence.

An interesting part of Bachman's theory of communicative language use is his **Model of language use**. He elaborates on the steps of language execution with respect to utilizing organizational competence, taking into consideration context and strategic competence. The first step is the **goal** which is to interpret or express speech with a specific function, modality, and content (Bachman 1990, 103). Bachman proceeds through three subsequent steps to arrive at **utterance**, i.e. expressing or interpreting language. From my point of view, with respect to L2 learners, the final phase, utterance, does not necessarily mean achieving the set goal. On the contrary, utterance may in this case comprehensively deviate from the intended text and thus block comprehension or the desired extralinguistic effect. In Figure 3 I therefore copied Bachman's model and added the ultimate phase, **achieved goal**.
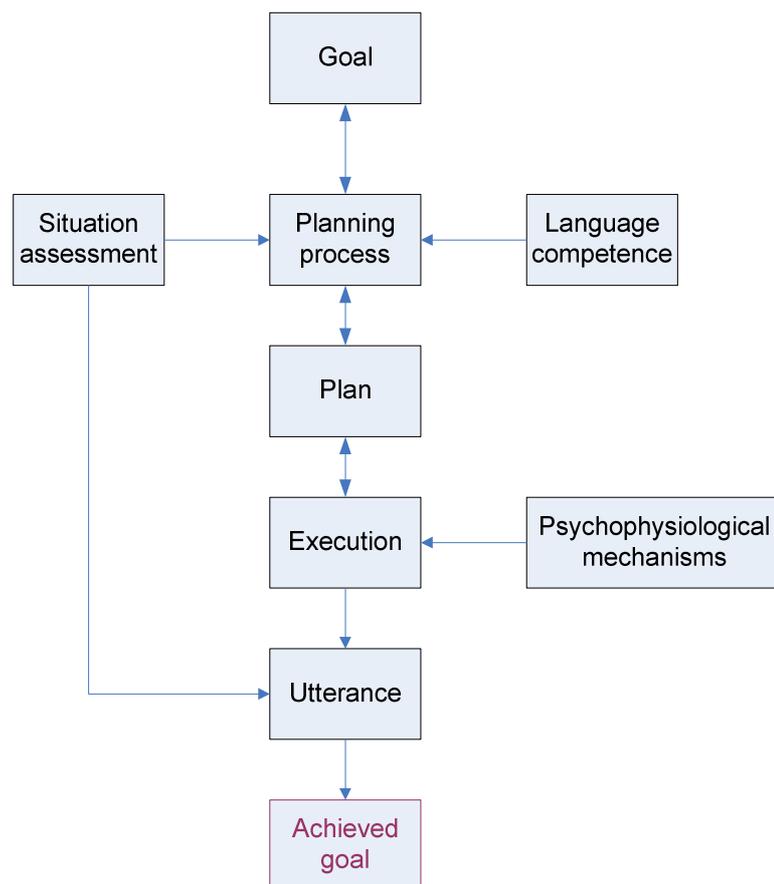
Figure 3. Bachman's Model of language use complemented with the "achieved goal" step

In case of L2 students problems will not occur in the situation assessment or the speaker's intentions as such but might appear in retrieving the language needed. We can naturally only operate with the language competence we have. The situation described below led me to add the final phase, **achieved goal** to the Model of language use. If setting a goal represents phase one, then achieving this goal should logically be the desired end of the language use process.

Let us look at a classic beginning of a lesson, for instance. When the teacher enters the classroom and greets the student it is often customary for the student to offer a beverage. The student assesses the situation correctly, plans to make an offer and activates the language he feels appropriate. He/she then utters "Do you like coffee or tea?" The whole process has been completed, starting with a goal and ending with an utterance. As Bachman describes the flow chart, the speaker sets an objective (= goal). He evaluates the situation and retrieves linguistic

knowledge from language competence (= planning process). Next he creates a plan composed of items whose realization should lead to the communicative goal (= plan). Using psychophysiological mechanisms the student executes the language (= execution) and utters a text (= utterance). In practice the student decided to offer a beverage. He retrieves incorrect language items. He composes the sentence which he thinks will lead to making an offer. Finally, he utters the sentence "Do you like tea or coffee?". He has not, in my opinion, reached his target. Instead of making an offer he inquired about the teacher's preferences. The illocutionary act was flawed and if the receiver failed to follow the cooperative principle of interaction or was not given sufficient contextual clues, agreeing on meaning could be jeopardized.

It is not unusual for teachers to consider a sentence like this satisfactory and respond to it as if "Would you like coffee or tea?" had been said. A reaction like this will certainly lead to an appropriate extralinguistic act, ease the student into the lesson and build his/her confidence via the feeling of accomplishment. On the contrary, when misapprehension is simulated, students' audacity to engage in meaningful outer language is suppressed. I believe there is a very fine line between leading students to accuracy via correction and encouraging them to train their communicative competence at the expense of precision.

The discourse of greeting and offering a beverage at the beginning of a lesson is a classic example of **outer language**. I believe the way to achieving self-confidence and independence in using L2 to a great extent lies in teaching students via outer language and it is for this reason that teachers should take advantage of situations like the one mentioned above to introduce functional language into their tuition.

One of the critiques CLT faces is that teachers tend to tolerate texts that would otherwise be incomprehensible to the outside world. In order to rightly judge whether the utterance was sufficiently understandable or not we need to step out of our role as the student's teacher and ask ourselves if people who are unfamiliar with the student and are given less contextual cues would **agree on**

meaning[23] with the speaker. I will provide a more detailed analysis of the situation and possible ways how to deal with it in Section 4.

Students by definition encounter obstacles in the final phase more often than native or proficient speakers. To extend on the notion of communication breakdowns in students' communication outlined in Figure 2, I looked into the final phase and its possible outcomes. Figure 4 depicts the development of the discourse in two directions

a) achieving the communicative goal

b) encountering communication breakdown

One would presume that L2 students would activate **communication strategies** when reaching a lapse in discourse (see Figure 4 below). I see another area of possible deficiencies here as many students find it overwhelming when they fail at meeting their communicative target. In ESOL classrooms many of them traditionally switch to first language code and resort to rectifying the situation in L1. This strategy proves Cummin's hypothesis that classroom language will always be **context-reduced** and is naturally not feasible in real communicative situations. The second option students select is to rely on their discourse partner to remedy the situation, which, as we will see in Section 3, is customarily the teacher or a more competent student. In my experience, students are, in contrast to the practice and expansion of CLT, incapable or reluctant to undergo the strain of mustering their L2 **organizational** and **pragmatic competences**[24] and restoring balanced conversational **turn-talking**.

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[23] E. Tarone's term for mutual understanding and congruity on the meaning of an utterance.
[24] See Figure 1 above.
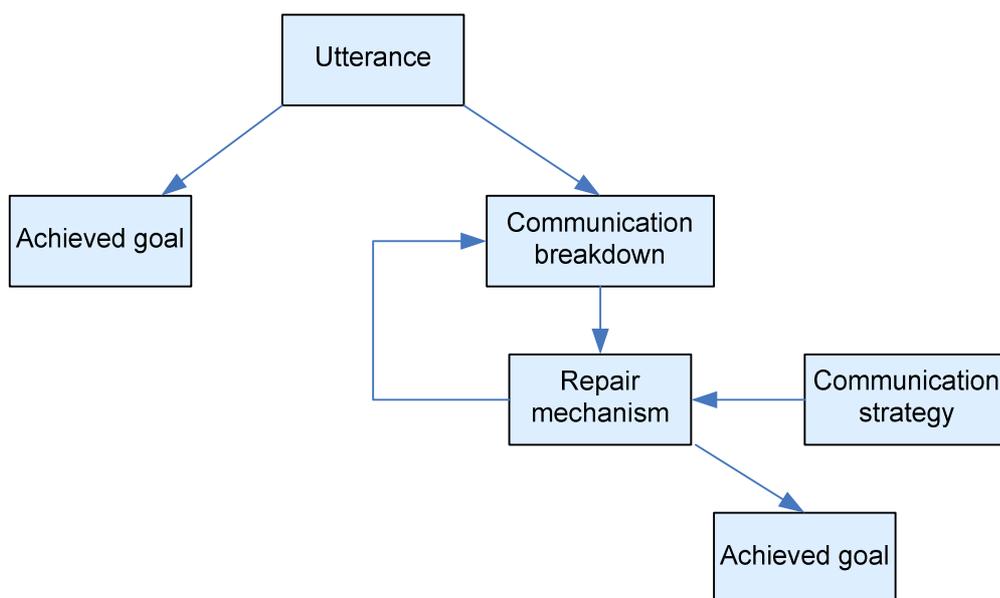
Figure 4. Model of communication breakdown and repair strategies.

In the better scenario the speaker completes the imaginary cycle of following the individual steps from intended goal via planning, execution and utterance to achieving the intended goal. Quite logically, with L2 learners language use is distorted by deficiencies in L2 inventory. When failing to achieve the preset goal the speaker faces a communication predicament. Choosing a CS the speaker finds most suitable in his/her situation, a repair mechanism is activated. The possible outcome is either achieving the intended goal and thus completing the cycle or again failing to reach agreement of meaning with the receiver. The number of loops from communication breakdown to repair mechanism and back a student is willing to undergo is subjective. In my experience however, students often choose language switch as their CS immediately or when their first TL CS fails to succeed.

1.2.2 Inner and outer classroom language

Classroom communication differs from that beyond it. As mentioned above, Jane Willis categorizes it into **inner language**, i.e. the language the teacher is intentionally and methodically presenting to the students and which he/she wants them to retain, and **outer language** used mostly to manage the lesson. In other

words, inner language is the vocabulary, grammar or functional language the students are to focus on and master. Outer language, on the other hand, is the language used to mediate the subject of learning (Willis 1992, 163). It may become just as authentic and purposeful as real-life language when dealing with pleasantries, making arrangements, giving feedback. The outer language of giving instructions, assisting students, asking concept checking questions, etc. serves a very clear and practical purpose, its content and range of utilization are, however, very strictly context-bound.

The situation described in Section 1.2.1 concerning the illocutionary act of offering someone a beverage is not an uncommon type of outer language one can encounter in a classroom. As I stated above, I maintain that teachers whose objective is to enhance students' communicative competence should

a) carry out all outer language in L2,

b) be consistent in demanding that all participants use L2 for all purposes,

c) insist the communication is coherent, acceptable and comprehensible even to persons beyond the classroom.

Willis states that the issue with inner language is that it is restrained to classrooms and consequently bears little resemblance to "normal" discourse (Willis 1992, 163). She claims that phrases, clauses and sentences adjusted to meet the requirements of ELT material undergo a certain devaluation of their communicative purpose. To quote her words:

Once they have been presented as target forms, no matter how meaningful the original illustrative situation was, they are devoid of their normal communicative value and are seen as samples of language. (Willis 1992, 163)

It is this reduction of authenticity which is an ever-present issue in second language teaching and one of the reasons why I would advise teachers to conduct all outer language in TL. We will see in the recordings that the fact that students themselves clearly distinguish between inner and outer language has impact on their speaking performance. The fact that all inner language is an imperfect

simulation of a real-life situation and cannot, therefore, lead to undesired or harmful perlocutionary acts or extralinguistic effects is a two-edged sword. On the one hand, it creates a safe and stress-free environment in which students can relax and focus on the learning process. On the other hand, it creates a gap between students' classroom performance and the language use they are able to demonstrate in practice. I believe this factor contributes to the differences between people who have learnt a language in classrooms and those who have learnt it "in the street" unassisted. My experience vindicates Thornbury's statement that the latter commonly display less linguistic knowledge and use fossilized inaccuracies. Nonetheless, their **communicative competence** exceeds that of the former group.

1.2.3 Communication strategy

Second language speakers naturally often run into difficulties when using L2 in communication. Even fluent speakers occasionally fail to reach meaning agreement with their conversation partner and thus need to resort to starting over again, **rephrasing** the utterance, **circumlocution**, **approximation**, **non-verbal communication**, etc. to restore conversation and avoid communication breakdown.[25] Students' mistrust in their linguistic knowledge leads to profuse hesitation and lapses. What I claim is that one of the examples of students' inability to actualize and exploit all their linguistic knowledge is their all too frequent falling on the **language switch strategy**, foregoing of **situation management** or resorting to **topic avoidance**. Tarone defines **communication strategy (CS)**, i.e. the pattern a speaker is accustomed to when dealing with communication difficulties and resolving them as follows:

> Communication strategies are used to compensate for some deficiency in the language system, and focus on exploring alternate ways of using what one does know for the transmission of a message without necessarily considering situation appropriateness. (Tarone 1981, 287)

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[25] Terms used by Tarone (Tarone 1981, 286).

It is disputable to what extent we are able to authoritatively assess students' communicative competence and CS in the classroom. The students' promptness and spontaneity would in all likelihood differ in authentic environment. When dealing with their teacher students rely on their L1 and assume language switch strategy to be the most effective and efficient. It is not uncommon for students to ask the teacher for translation of an expression or for assurance during a role play or other CLT exercises focusing on communication. The mutual attempt to **agree on a meaning** (Tarone 1981, 288) is considerably distorted as students

      a)   know that their teacher speaks their L1,

      b)   consider the goal of the activity to be task completion, not activating functional language,

      c)   they are under no pressure of having to convey their meaning and are aware that misinterpretation or a communication breakdown will only lead to correction, not to undesired effects.

Tarone writes that communication strategy works as a tool to bridge the gap between the student's linguistic knowledge and functional language he/she needs to use in a situation in order to reach agreement on meaning (Tarone 1981, 288). Some of the possible ways to bridge that gap can be[26]:

  a) **approximation**, using a semantically similar expression

  b) **word coinage**, making up a new word which seems a viable option to the speaker

  c) **circumlocution**, describing the concept they do not know the TL for

  d) **literal translation**, translating the L1 text word for word

  e) **language switch**, using their L1

  f) **appeal for assistance**, asking the interlocutor for the appropriate expression

  g) **mime**, non-verbal strategies

  h) **topic avoidance**, an attempt not to talk about a certain topic

  i) **message abandonment**, inability to continue and termination of utterance

I presume, and will use the recordings to either validate or refute my supposition, that language switch and appeal for assistance are the most common

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[26] Terms taken from Tarone (Tarone 1981, 286-287)

communication strategies with lower levels, i.e. A1, A2 and possibly B1 students. I do not, however, consider these strategies to be of any use in practical TL situations as they would be of no help in a TL environment. Approximation stems from insufficient lexical knowledge and is by nature a recurrent strategy and, on the contrary to the two aforementioned strategies, is greatly effective in practice. Circumlocution seems to be an adequate CS and one that would signal the willingness and effort to communicate meaning and invite the TL recipient to assist in reaching mutual comprehension. Nevertheless, circumlocution is ordinarily used by able and loquacious speakers who constitute a limited subset of ESOL students.

As stated above, a classroom is an artificial environment where speakers of the TL often share L1 and/or try limitlessly to understand each other. In real life situations recipients might not show understanding and equanimity with inapt conversation partners. The pressure on L2 learners is significantly increased and their feeling of insecurity reinforced in real life. The impatience and unwillingness of students to rephrase their utterance until the hearer comprehends the intended meaning frequently results into language switch strategy at the slightest sign of bewilderment. As Thornbury argues, even higher level students, if during the formulation phase they find that the gaol they have set is rather challenging, vote for the "safe" choice of message abandonment or opting for a less ambitious message (Thornbury 2009, 30). When encouraged by the teacher and given some prompts, though, they formulate an acceptable and effective utterance.

The aim of CLT is to enhance students' communicative competence and inherently their CS. The burden posed on language trainers is to make classroom situations as authentic as possible and to persuade students that their eagerness to utilize CS such as language switch or message abandonment would, in most circumstances, fail in real life. Tarone herself, basing her statement on research with American students of Russian, came to a conclusion that students of L2 who have experienced the TL solely in a classroom environment display lesser ability to paraphrase and rely mostly on avoidance strategies while students who have had extracurricular exposure to the TL show greater aptitude for CS (Tarone 1981, 292).

Scott Thornbury uses the widely spread term **self-monitoring** to refer to a process which is present in all the stages of language use, i.e. conceptualization, formulation and articulation (Thornbury 2009, 3-5). He explains that the stage at which self-monitoring occurs influences the actual repair mechanism applied:

> A re-think at the planning stage may result in the abandonment of the message altogether. … Self-monitoring at the formulation stage may result in a slowing down, or a pause and the subsequent backtracking and re-phrasing of an utterance. … Self-monitoring of articulation results in the kind of corrections that even fluent speakers have to make when the wrong word pops out or the pronunciation goes awry. (Thornbury 2009, 5-6)

We will see many instances of self-monitoring and subsequent repair strategies applied in Section 3. Furthermore, Thornbury talks about running **repairs** which are either based on self-monitoring or the interlocutor's response. With respect to communication strategies the number and terminology of strategies he lists are almost identical with that of Tarone's enumeration. Where the two authors differ is Thornbury's CS called **foreignizing a word**, i.e. passing an L1 word for an L2 word thanks to their phonetic similarity. In addition, he adds a so-called **discourse strategy**, which refers to borrowing, i.e. repeating, a whole language chunk from another speaker (Thornbury 2009, 29-30).

Thornbury claims that the aforementioned communication strategies buy speakers time and serve to maintain an illusion of fluency. He carries on to mention that linguists are in two minds about the benefits of the ability to apply communication strategies in abundance at a very early stage of L2 learning. Putting emphasis on communicative effectiveness on A1 or A2 level may result in **fossilization**, a process when one's ability to enhance one's linguistic knowledge is prematurely closed (Thornbury 2009, 30). In other words, neglecting to contemplate appropriate grammatical structures and the most appropriate vocabulary and contenting oneself with simplistic texts may prove to be harmful to the student. I would argue that whether a student is capable of and open to acquiring new linguistic knowledge is highly individual. If a student embraces

his/her language endowment and utilizes it to its maximum from a very early stage of learning, it can serve as a motivational tool. On the other hand, students who have vast linguistic knowledge but are unable to put it to use might succumb to demotivation finding it hard to break that barrier later on in their learning process. In Section 3 we will analyze the extent to which the speakers use CS and how it helps them in situation management, task completion and communicative effectiveness.

1.2.4 *Communicative competence*

For the purpose of ELT it is insufficient to say that a conversation is an exchange of information between two or more participants.[27] With the emergence and spreading of CLT the role of teachers has changed significantly. Going through structural syllabi is no longer the main objective. Especially if we take into consideration all the self-study materials, e-learning software and easily accessible language information, we must reach the conclusion that presenting mere linguistic data is unnecessary. The teacher's aim is teaching **communication**. The students' goal then is the ability to communicate in L2 fluently, naturally, effectively. Let us look at the following dialogue I devised for our purposes:

Example 1

A: I heard our colleague Mary is in the family way.

B: I thought her husband didn't want to have any more children.

A: Perhaps it was not his decision.

B: When is her baby due?

A: Sometime in June.

Although the language is comprehensive, logical turn-taking is applied, the text is coherent and acceptable, its flow is obstructed by lack of cohesive links.

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[27] This definition was randomly formulated by the author of this paper as a possible lay interpretation and is not meant to be understood as an official linguistic definition of the term.

The nature of the dialogue either points to participants' lack of interest in the topic, potentially in the conversation as a socializing act on the whole, or to artificial speech which sounds unnatural.

If we change the conversation slightly without altering the content, we might achieve something like:

Example 2

A So, I heard our colleague Mary is in the family way.

B: You don't say! I thought her husband didn't want any more kids.

A: Well, perhaps it wasn't his call, if you know what I mean.

B: (laughter) Alright, well, when's the baby due?

A: Sometime in June apparently.

Thornbury suggests students are to be taught how to turn similar texts as in Example 1 into cohesive and refined texts using discourse markers (Example 2). Practice has indeed shown that it is extremely difficult and thus rare for students of L2 to recognize and absorb the language which is used in everyday speech from classroom tuition. We could argue that students are exposed to naturally-sounding language of their teacher. I have found, however, that it is by no means guaranteed that the majority of students will simply retain the language their teacher uses. I maintain that if we require our students to master and actively use a certain element of TL we have to include it in the syllabus. Teaching students the above mentioned expressions and devices to help them sound natural should therefore be an indispensable part of the curriculum.

Rather than relying on students' ability to actualize concepts of grammar and vocabulary while at the same time considering sociolinguistic contexts and choosing appropriate register, L2 should be presented as **pre-fabricated chunks** of language, where possible and desirable. Even fluent and eloquent speakers need time to conceptualize and formulate their utterances. Second language speakers have less automated linguistic foundations, they require more time to formulate their language, they are under more stress. I agree with

Thornbury that in order to reach communicative effectiveness some degree of automaticity is necessary (Thornbury 2009, 6). To facilitate this process to students we should bear in mind that:

> At the level of formulation, automaticity is partly achievable through the use of prefabricated chunks. (Thornbury 2009, 6)

In the transcripts in Section 3 we will also analyze to what extent students of different CEFR levels apply effective and highly efficient spoken language. Thornbury argues that spoken language, as opposed to written one, is naturally more fragmentary, disconnected and not as carefully formulated. Speakers therefore use a so-called **add-on strategy** (Thornbury 2009, 4). When speaking, either in our mother tongue or in L2, we are pressed for time in the planning phase. To form convoluted sentences requires an amount of time which would cause pauses in the discourse. Pauses are of course natural, their length and frequency however define the speaker's fluency (Thornbury 2009, 7). They should become less numerous and shorter as the student progresses for the more competent the speaker, the less time he/she needs for the planning phase. Nevertheless, the add-on strategy will always be a characteristic part of spoken discourse. Simply adding phrases, incomplete sentences or chunks of language to one another is a consistent part of speaking (Thornbury 2009, 4).

I believe that applying add-on strategy will prove to be more commonplace with higher level students for the simple reason that they are more confident using L2. As students gain confidence through exposure to the target language they become aware that spoken language is significantly less structured than the textbook language they have been taught. In order to demonstrate their fluency, students of higher CEFR levels use chunks of language which are easy for them to actualize even at the expense of using incomplete sentences. Lower levels, on the other hand, do not manifest enough spontaneity and naturalness to react instantly. Whether one puts more emphasis on producing flawless sentences or whether he/she prefers a continuous utterance with minimal pauses which contains numerous errors is everyone's choice and stems from one's personality and approach to communication in general. Nevertheless, I claim that the more

advanced the student, the more natural his/her utterance with respect to efficiency, strategic competences and the use of discourse markers and pause fillers.

Adjacency pairs, paired utterances in which the second one is derived and dependent on the first (Thornbury 2009, 16-17), are another aspect of language we need to take into consideration when dealing with communicative competence. There are basic adjacency pairs which students are taught, perhaps without the teacher's conscious awareness. The function (speech act) of greeting, for instance, is introduced early on in the syllabus. There are, nevertheless, innumerable circumstances when the use of an adjacency pair is expected. Questions are expected to be followed by an answer, apology by acceptance, suggestion by approval or dismissal, etc. Some exchanges have typically three lines, particularly classroom language exchanges, e.g. asking a student to correct a chunk of language, the student's reply, the teacher's assessment or praise. These three-part sequences are called **IRF exchanges**, the abbreviation standing for **initiation – response – feedback** (Coulthard and Brazil 1992).[29] A **side sequence** can occur when the next speaker does not wish to provide the response immediately but inserts, for instance, a *misapprehension* utterance which can take form of a *questioning repeat* (Coulthard and Brazil 1992, 53). I envisage frequent occurrence of misapprehension in students' discourse and thus expect side sequences to be present in the recordings.

1.2.5 Situation management

Thornbury designates the capability of organizing and connecting individual utterances and embedding them into a coherent turn-taking structure **discourse competence** (Thornbury 2009, 15). He submits that a key aspect of discourse competence is using **discourse markers**. Beaugrande and Dressler go beyond this outline and examine **discourse action** which incurs changes in a situation (Beaugrande and Dressler 1981). As we saw in Bachman's Model of language use, speakers often operate with a certain goal they intend to reach via verbal communication. Discourse actions, according to Beaugrande and Dressler, are

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[29] The abbreviation is referred to as initiate-respond-follow-up in some resources (Thornbury 2009, 17).

plan-directed whenever the speaker is trying to steer the situation toward a goal. The term they use to designate this activity is **situation management**. On the contrary, a simple reaction to a situation by, for instance, describing apparent evidence is **situation monitoring** (Beaugrande and Dressler 1981). The way situation management and monitoring are present in students' discourse is through **interactive planning**:

> Since discourse is definable as a situation or event sequence in which participants present tests as discourse actions, we can consider communication through discourse as an instance of interactive planning. (Beaugrande and Dressler 1981)

Connected to students' involvement in discourse actions is undoubtedly their interest in the subject matter discussed. Inner language can be stimulating and make students wish to communicate something if the task is chosen well. The key issue in this case is an information gap, interest of participants, readiness to be involved.[30] ELT materials are not uncommonly discarded by students and teachers for incompatibility with students' aims and interests. It is the teacher's role, I believe, to adjust the activity so that students are drawn into it. The issue teachers face, though, is that despite their effort to supply intriguing input students tend to assume a submissive role and hence content to **situation monitoring** rather than **situation management**. We will see in the recordings that some students, especially when conversing with the teacher conceive of the dialogue as an interview. The teacher is than pushed into the role of an interviewer whereas the student merely responds to questions and inducements he/she is presented. Beaugrande introduces the term situation monitoring for simple reactions to a situation by describing facts, yet not steering the situation in any direction (Beaugrande and Dressler 1981). The example he offers to demonstrate the difference between managing and monitoring is an instance of a convoluted verbal manipulation in which one speaker is trying to impose her views on her partner. ESOL situations are rarely manipulative to this extent. Nonetheless, they still represent abounding sources of ample examples of situation management.

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[30] I would like to thank PhDr. Pazderová for pointing this fact out to me and giving me an incentive to take it into consideration when analyzing my students' communicative competence.

In Section 3 I will analyse the factors which influence students resignation to situation monitoring and how this phenomenon changes when one of the participants of the dialogue is the teacher. As mentioned above, one of the aims of CLT is for students to be exposed to authentic language and thus eventually arrive at producing natural and effective L2 themselves. I will look at the degree to which students embody an equally assertive conversation participant and the ways in which they manage verbal situations.

In order to thoroughly describe the phenomena in students' speech I have chosen to use the following terminology taken from Beaugrande and Dressler (1981):

Term	Definition
acceptability	the receiver's attitude that a text has some use or relevance for the receiver
actualization	the procedure of choosing available options from a virtual system of linguistic knowledge and utilizing them in a particular structure
cohesion	mutual connection of surface text components within a sequence
coherence	mutual accessibility and relevance of configuration of concepts and relations which underlie the surface text
continuity of sense	concord among the knowledge activated by the expressions of a text
frame	Global pattern which contains knowledge about some central concept
plan recovery	process of extracting plans which the text producer appears to be pursuing
scheme	Global pattern of events and states in ordered sequences linked by time proximity and causality
script	stabilized plan called up frequently to specify the roles of participants and their expected actions
spreading activation	the principle of activating closely associated items when some item of knowledge is activated
threshold of termination	the stage at which the comprehension and integration of a text is deemed satisfactory

2 Research question

Language teachers will find that linguistic / grammatical and discourse / organizational competence, whichever term you prefer, predominates the communicative / sociolinguistic and strategic / pragmatic competence,[31] i.e. the students' theoretical knowledge will surpass their productive skills. **Production** and **communication strategies** often prove to be untrained and lack efficiency.[32] I believe that there are many valid reasons why students have difficulties transforming their theoretical knowledge about the language into practical manifestation of their communicative competence. As mentioned in the Introduction I will focus on students' **situation management** and **communication strategies** via analyzing dialogues. In Section 4 I will derive conclusions and practical suggestions applicable in ELT and designed to improve students' ability to handle communication crises.

In Section 3 I will provide examples of conversations between the teacher and students and between students themselves. The tasks given will range from controlled to free practice and will include interactional and transactional language. In the analyses I will briefly remark on the fulfillment or failure to sustain continuity of sense, but I will mainly focus on aspects of portrayed communicative competence with respect to situation management and communication strategies. In the analyses of the recordings we will see in what circumstances students have trouble handling situation management and applying communication strategies and how they resolve the situations. The outcome should show the extent to which students are able to eligibly deal with communication difficulties in the target language. Furthermore, I will elaborate on how to approach ELT while taking into consideration that there is a disproportionate gap between students' linguistic competence and their ability to utilize it when encountering communication problems is proved.

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[31] Terminology adopted by Hymes, Canale and Swain, Bachman respectively.
[32] Elaine Tarone's terms for the speaker's ability to utilize language in use effectively and effortlessly (Tarone 1981, 289).

3 Research

In order to analyze displayed communicative competences with emphasis on communication strategies, situation management and adjacency pairs a research group had been selected comprising of students of various CEFR levels which then underwent a series of tasks and was recorded doing so. Students' language levels were determined by a placement test or their teacher's assessment following a longer period of cooperation. I was mostly interested in how students cope with communication breakdowns and whether their communication techniques are effective and efficient. Both interactional and transactional language functions were incorporated into the research.[34] I selected a role play activity where students can make up the details of their character and are therefore free to actualize language they are familiar and comfortable with. The second activity is small talk between colleagues which was chosen for its real operating conditions. The third dialogue was intentionally selected to represent a manipulative instrumental function, i.e. language used when the speaker needs to achieve some extralinguistic goal.[35] I will monitor the course of situation management, seek communication strategies and examine their effectiveness and try to account for their occurrence. Furthermore, I will provide one task focusing solely on adjacency pairs simply to present students' immediate and spontaneous reactions to adjacency pair initiations.

Recordings of students will grant me the opportunity to study authentic material and provide readers of this paper with practical examples. Students were not assisted if they ran into linguistic difficulties during the recording. Instructions were given to the extent of describing the task. Students were not explicitly asked to carry out all conversation in L2. I felt it would give them a clue as to what I was searching for and might negatively influence the authenticity of their utterances. The whole scale of language levels ranging from A1 to C1 was represented. Recording was done in class and students were not informed about the content of the tasks beforehand.

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[34] Thornbury operates with the terms interpersonal to denote communication whose main purpose is to establish social relations and transactional whose aim is the exchange of goods or services (Thornbury 2009, 13). The term interactional language is a synonymous expression widely used in ELT.

[35] The term manipulative instrumental fiction is dealt with in Bachman's concept of functional language (Bachman 1990, 93).

The tasks conducted were:

(i)   Predefined role play – interactional task in which students get assigned a certain social role and carry out a dialogue with a) the teacher, b) a fellow student. Role plays require students to impersonate a certain character and consequently invent the details or context of the role play. Some students, in my experience, find it difficult to engage in this type of activity. The success and completion of the task greatly depends on the willingness and captivation of the participants.

(ii)   **S**mall talk – interactional task where students represent themselves and engage in a one-on-one small talk with the aim of fulfilling a social duty. The dialogue will be carried out with a) the teacher and b) a fellow student.

(iii)   Manipulative instrumental function[36] – transactional task where the student needs to use his/her language abilities to arrange a meeting with a partner. The motivation of the negotiation was established separately before individual recordings so that the conditions would resemble the participants' real-life circumstances as much as possible. Carried out with a) the teacher and b) a fellow student.

(iv)   Adjacency pairs activity – students are read a list of sentences of diverse communicative functions (e.g. greeting, inquiries, apologizing, inviting) and are asked to react quickly and appropriately.

The research group composes of students with whom the teacher has been working for some time and therefore is familiar with their linguistic and communicative competences. All students are capable of carrying out the given tasks with more or less reasonably cohesive and coherent utterances in a way that the **threshold of termination**, a stage when comprehension and integration of text is considered satisfactory, is reachable while sustaining efficiency of

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[36] The term manipulative instrumental fiction is taken from Bachman and designates language whose primary purpose is to affect the world around us, specifically to get things done. (Bachman 1990, 93).

language.[37] As all participants of the dialogues are students of a similar level or their teacher, comprehension is reached with minimal strain. As opposed to the real world beyond the classroom, students who have studied together for some time get used to the language, however distorted, and concepts of their colleagues. The teacher is likewise accustomed to the students' syntax and can derive the pragmatic aspect of their text with ease.

The **continuity of sense** might be distorted by students' hesitation, inability to expand on the previous reply, inaccurate phrasing, failure to use the target language or misunderstanding on the receiver's side due to insufficient grammatical or lexical knowledge. Beaugrande and Dressler claim the difference between a meaningful and nonsensical text is the degree to which there is a match between the coordination of concepts and relations expressed and the interlocutor's prior knowledge about the world (Beaugrande and Dressler 1981). It is, in their words, the foundation of coherence. We will see whether the achievement of continuity of sense is directly related to language levels or whether it depends largely on the speaker's individual approach to communication. Furthermore, I will focus on how students identify and repair the disrupted discourse. I will monitor and attempt to conclude how applying CS evolves as we ascend on the CEFR scale. As Thornbury argues, the premises that the higher the level, the more effective use of CS is not axiomatic (Thornbury 2009, 29-30). He provides an example of Japanese students, out of whom most speakers stress accuracy and thus require extensively long formulation periods. In contrast, Thornbury describes one Japanese speaker whose fluency was considerably standing out, whose accuracy, however, was poor and level inappropriate. I will look into the matter with a group of Czech students.

Transcribing classroom discourse may be done in various ways. My transcription system is based on Walsh's criteria and recommendations (Walsh 2011, 67).[38] It comprises of symbols which will indicate phenomena I wish to

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[37] Threshold of termination reflects the lowering of conversation participants' standards in order to facilitate reaching agreement of meaning (Beaugrande and Dressler 1981).

[38] Walsh introduces the issues of faithfully reflecting classroom discourse. He stresses that researchers need to premeditate their true aim, decide whether to provide full or partial transcriptions, how they wish to organize the text (overlapping speech, pauses, etc.), whether to take prosody into account. He also provides an example of an approach to transcription using various symbols to distinguish speakers, signal overlaps and pauses, etc. (Walsh 2011, 67)

interpret. I did not transcribe subtle nuances of the discourse as I did not wish to preoccupy myself with intonation, stressed syllables, mispronunciation, etc. As my aim was to monitor situation management, a symbol for overlapping speech is crucial for the transcription. Moreover, symbols for short and long pauses will help in determining students' hesitation when encountering communication difficulties. I use the following symbols in the transcription:

Transcription system	Function
T:	Teacher
S1:, S2:	Student 1, 2
-	short pause (under 1 second)
---	longer pause
Text …	Incomplete utterance
S1: text … S2: S1:...text	Student 1 interrupted by Student 2. Student 1 restoring his/her utterance
[Jak se to řekne]	Word or chunk of language in mother tongue or incomprehensible sounds

Figure 5Transcription system

3.1   Concerning (i): Predefined role play

3.1.1 Task description

Students are involved in a role play activity where they take on the personality of a public figure and engage in small talk at a party for celebrities. Target language has been pre-taught or revised, depending on the students knowledge, shortly before activation. Students are therefore aware of the expected grammatical structure, i.e. in this case present continuous tense. A1 and A2 level students were presented present continuous tense before the assignment was handed out. They were asked to utilize the target tense in the activity. Regarding present simple declarative and interrogative sentences, students did not receive any clues on how and when to use them prior to the activity. Higher level students only received instructions how to complete the task, not what language to use. This was intentional as the teacher wished to observe their unguided performance.

The details of the characters were up to the students to make up. All information about the figure's origin, circumstances of work and titles of current projects were chosen by the role play participants themselves.

What are you doing in London?

Part 1

✂

You are an actress/actor. Where are you from? You are making a film in London. What is it called and who are you working with? Are you having a fantastic/good/bad/terrible time at the party? Why?	You are a writer. Where are you from? You are writing a book in London. What is it called and what is it about? Are you having a fantastic/good/bad/terrible time at the party? Why?
You are a singer. Where are you from? You are making a new record in London. What's it called and what type of music is it? Are you having a fantastic/good/bad/terrible time at the party? Why?	You are a film director. Where are you from? You are making a film in London. What is it called and who are you working with? Are you having a fantastic/good/bad/terrible time at the party? Why?
You are a famous sports man/woman. Where are you from? You are training for a competition in London. Which competition and where is it going to be? Are you having a fantastic/good/bad/terrible time at	You are a TV presenter. Where are you from? You are making a TV programme in London. What is it and what is it about? Are you having a fantastic/good/bad/terrible time at

Figure 6. Student cards for role play (Naughton 2005, 101)

3.1.2 Teacher's presumptions

Students are presented a specific and fairly minutely defined dialogue they are to carry out with a partner. Students are provided with preparation time giving them a chance to decide on the textual components they will use. Having a conversation at a party can be viewed as a pre-defined **frame** and one familiar to all participants. Several phrases or **chunks of language** are presumed to be among the students' frequently used configurations granting higher economy of search when activated.[39] The situation also has an expected **script**. Students, regardless of their target language ability, are expected to be able to recognize and

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[39] The premise that activating chunks of language accelerates the process of formulation can be found in Beaugrande (Beaugrande and Dressler 1981) and in Thornbury (Thornbury 2009, 6).

follow the scheme of conversation functions: *greeting - inquiry about name, origin, occupation (in any order) – further questions about occupation or current work* – expanding on received information – *inquiry about the current mood – signalling the end of conversation – goodbye phrase.*

3.1.3 Task completion

3.1.3.1 A2 student

T: Good evening, good evening.
S: Good evening.
T: What's your name?
S: er – My name is – er – Žaneta.
T: Nice to meet you Žaneta. What do you do?
S: Er – I am a writer.
T: You are a writer. That's fascinating!

| Line 8 | S: Yes, it's – it's – er – it's interesting. And where are you from? |

T: I'm from Denmark.

| Line 10 | S: Denmark. |

T: And you?
S: And I'm from Cuba.
T: Cuba? So what are you doing in London?
S: I'm here staying and writing a book.
T: A book about what?

| Line 16 | S: A book about – er – it will be very sad – about – er – unhappy love. |

T: Unhappy love?
S: It's called Broken Heart.
T: Oh my God. OK, OK. So a romance then?
S: Yes.
T: And do you normally live in Cuba or do you live in London?
S: Er - I live in Cube but – er – but several months I spend in UK – er – United Kingdom.
T: In the UK? Alright. OK.
S: [Říká se in the UK?]
T: [non-verbal approval] OK.
S: And I – I – have heard your name is Bara.
T: Yes, that is true.
S: And you are – what's your job?
T: I'm a film director.
S: Film director. It's interesting too. And where are you from? From Denmark.
T: Yes.
S: And what are you doing here?
T: I'm actually making a film.
S: Making a film.

T: Yeah.

S: Here's an actress - an actress from Atlanta and she's making a film here too.

T: Alright. I have to talk to her.

S: Ehm, ehm. And – ehm - er – and what's its name?

T: The film's name? It's called Vicious Circle.

Line 40	S: [silence]
Line 41	T: Vicious Circle, yeah.
Line 42	S: Vici – Vicious?
Line 43	T: Pessimistic name.

S: Pessimistic. But it's about – what about?

T: It's about relationships between – er – father and son and stepfather and stepson. Yeah. Family relationships.

S: Ehm, ehm. And are you having a good time?

T: Yes, I'm having a fantastic time. Yeah. Thank you for asking. And you?

S: I have a good time here too. But – er – maybe tomorrow it will be worse because I have a short time to finish the book.

T: Oh, you have a deadline then?

S: Yes, yes.

T: OK. Well, good luck with the book and enjoy the party.

S: Thank you, thank you.

T: Bye

S: Bye

Recording 1

Recording 1 analysis:

The text was overall **cohesive** not imposing any obstacles on the receiver's comprehension. Sentences are frequently broken up and repair techniques applied, the message is, however, always carried across efficiently and effectively. The failure to complete sentences is not vastly disorienting. Grammatical dependencies are not flouted.

The student uses repetition not in order to ensure cohesion but as a self-reassuring tool. In line 10 the student reiterates the word "Denmark" to reaffirm herself that she has understood well and to gain time for further language activation. In line 16 the student shows inability to rephrase or substitute the phrase previously used by the teacher. She therefore applies repetition. As both Beaugrande[40] and Thornbury[41] argue, recurrence is usual in spoken language due to short planning time even with native speakers of the language. It is therefore not the least surprising that students should copy the pattern already mentioned. On the contrary, it is a desirable effect when the pattern they repeat has been provided by the tutor since it serves as TL drill. Thornbury includes repetition of whole chunks of language in the list of communication strategies under the term

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[40] See (Beaugrande and Dressler 1981)
[41] See (Thornbury 2009, 3-8)

discourse strategy. Although students had time to prepare their language, the discourse itself is always formed by minute situations and unpredictable reactions of the partner. The example in line 16 shows that the aim and final structure of the sentence was diverted toward describing an attribute of the book, not its content.

The utterance of both the student and the teacher are comprehended by the respective side. The teacher naturally has an extensively lowered **threshold of termination** as he/she must portray high tolerance for violation of any of the seven standards of textuality. In Recording 1 increased tolerance was not necessary as the students' utterance could be fully accepted.[42]

As the topic discussed in this task required little strain on the speaker's and receiver's knowledge retrieval, there were no serious problems with **spreading activation**. Some language needed to be specified or paraphrased in order for the student to understand as unknown expressions were used by the teacher. Lines 40 through 43 clearly show that the student did not know the word "vicious". The inability to connect this expression with a relevant concept caused a momentary lapse in communication. In order to ensure **continuity of senses**, relating the title of the film and its sense to the previous discourse, the teacher resorted to linking the unknown word to a familiar concept. The word "pessimistic" was chosen before a synonym as it was clear to the producer of the language that the receiver will recognize it and discourse turn-taking will be restored. As we can see, the student did not ask for clarification verbally. By making a long pause and repeating the word "vicious" she implied that she did not have a clear idea of the concept. Nonetheless, as asking for repetition and clarification is a **problem-solving strategy** and as the student knows and can actively use the words *I*, negative of the verb *understand*, *word* and *vicious*, expressing the confusion

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[42] Taking into consideration Grice's maxims, co-operation was achieved to a great extent by contributing to the conversation as required. Although, in line 8 replying to "You are a writer. That's fascinating!" with "Yes, … it's interesting." would in real life cause confusion and perhaps evoke the feeling of rejection and effort to discard the topic. The quantity maxim was fulfilled by providing new and unpredicted information. As the situation is imaginary and the "facts" are thus optional within a range of logic, the maxim of quality was impossible to judge. Based on the fact that classroom case studies and role plays are majorly dependant on the teacher's instructions and the students' comprehension of the task, imagination, cooperation and interest in fulfilling the task, the maxim of relation is a significant, yet a considerably interchangeable aspect of discourse. In Recording 1 all information provided seemed to be in line with the role. As for the maxim of manner, intentions of providing and asking for information were plainly served. This maxim is commonly not violated in controlled or semi-controlled practice in ELT.

verbally would have worked as a solid **repair mechanism.** Repeating the puzzling expression with a rising intonation could imply either misunderstanding, or surprise. In this case misapprehension was the case as the students prosody signaled confusion, not surprise or curiosity. No further steps were taken, though, and the interlocutor had to deliver clarification without being asked for it. Although the student's language abilities render her competent to formulate a vast range of functional language, she decided to reserve herself to **situation monitoring** and take initiative as little as task completion allows.

One of our key research interests lies in **situation management**. Listening to the recording of Recording 1 we can clearly hear how the burden of setting an appropriate rhythm, overcoming lulls, clarifying misinterpretations and ending the small talk suitably lay on the teacher. **Turn-taking** took place appropriately. Thornbury argues, however, that turn-taking is not a reoccurring phenomenon in ELT as the principles of conversational rules are transferable from L1 and require communicative abilities in general, regardless of the language used (Thornbury 2009, 33). The aspect we should take into consideration is the quality and rhythm of turn-taking. As the task was a pre-defined role play, the student was presented a **script** to follow. Without regular turn-taking the student would not be able to complete the task of obtaining information from a partner. The functional language of *initiating small talk* and *concluding the dialogue* was, nonetheless, managed by the teacher. We must bear in mind, though, that the fact that one of the participants was the teacher plays a major role in situation management. As much as the teacher tries not to assert herself and take dominance, students intuitively assume the role of submissive partners and render it difficult for the teacher not to eclipse them.

Pre-intermediate students, just like elementary and intermediate ones, have difficulties expressing themselves efficiently and accurately. Comprehending their utterance requires considerable effort on the receiver's part. In Recording 1 the teacher knows what type of questions to expect and anticipates the answers to her own questions as she knows the task in detail. Viewed form the point of communicative competence the student displays quite exceptional abilities for an A2 level student. Adjacency pairs occurred appropriately and the distribution of initiating and concluding them was distributed more or less equally.

3.1.3.2 B2 student

T: Hi, good evening.

S: Hi, good evening. How are you?

T: I'm fine, and you?

S: Me too. – er –

T: Good. My name is Melanie Grifit, nice to meet you.

S: er – My name is Tomas Dvorak –er- nice to meet you too – er. What are you doing in London?

T: I'm actually writing a book.

Line 8	S: Really?
	T: Yes.
	S: You are a writer?
	T: I'm a writer, yes.
Line 12	S: Hm, interesting. And what is it book about?
	T: The book is about relationships, mostly, er- between men in the family, so father and son relationships.
Line 14	S: Ehm, interesting. And do you know the title of the book?
	T: Yes, the title is going to be The Vicious Circle.
Line 16	S: Hm, interesting. I hopefully will get the opportunity to buy the book – er …
	T: Well, I hope so too.
	S: … when you're finished.
	T: It should be out in about – er – four months.
Line 20	S: Hm, interesting.
	T: And what do you do?
	S: Eh – I'm an actor.
	T: That's even more fascinating!
Line 24	S: No...
Line 25	T: Yes it is.
Line 26	S: … no, no, no. – Er – eh – I'm a [s] – er – an unknown actor in an unknown – er – and I'm playing in unknown film of unknown producer so it's a really small film and not really fascinating or interesting.
	T: And you're working on it here in London?
	S: Yeah, yeah, I have some – er- some spots here – er – some scenes and so – er – yeah, we are working on it here.
	T: And where are you from, Tomas?
	S: I'm from Czech Republic – er – from a small city Frýdek-Místek – er – in the Czech Republic. And what about you?
	T: I'm from Denmark.
	S: Ehm, interesting. Also small country, - in Europe.
	T: Yes, it is.
Line 34	S: So we are more close than …
Line 35	T: Expected.
	S: Than expected.
	T: That is true. And how are you enjoying the party?
	S: Er – yeah, quite – er – a lot er. I met – er – some of my friends – er [havet] a beer with them – ehm- I also met you so it's a - great party.
	T: Thank you.
	S: What about you?
	T: Oh, I'm enjoying it very much, thank you for asking.

S: Ehm. OK, so hopefully we will meet each other sometimes in the future and …

T: That would be nice. So, good luck with your movie.

S: Thank you and good luck with your – er – book.

T: Thank you very much. Have a great time, bye.

S: You too. Bye, bye.

Recording 2

Recording 2 analysis:

The task completion was accurate and imposed no strain on either participant. The students' frequent hesitation filled out with "er" or "ehm" sounds is ascribed mostly to time gaining strategies applied because of the necessity to search for pragmatic input, not due to insufficient vocabulary knowledge. The student's utterance was fluent in other respects. Appropriate grammar was used, although minor lapses occurred in line 12 where two possible solutions to asking about the content of a book were used in one sentence,[43] in line 34 where incorrect grading of an adjective was used and in line 38 where it seems the student was not able to make a decision about the tense he should use.

As we can see in lines 12, 14, 16 and 20 the student makes extensive use of **discourse markers** showing interest in the information obtained. The repetition of the phrase "Ehm, interesting" does not, however, serve as a **cohesive** tool but rather becomes too apparent and signals lack of synonymous expressions. Compared to Recording 1 the flow of the conversation has a brisker pace and contributes to the **spontaneity** of the discourse. The student in Recording 2 also showed the ability to provide more information in a shorter time period (Recording 2 is one minute shorter).

Turn-taking was influenced by the eloquence of the student and the apparent willingness to reach the communicative goal. The only indication of a lengthy pause in the utterance (signalled by the *incomplete utterance* symbol) can be seen in line 34 where the student was searching for a suitable expression. As the lull seemed inadequately long to the teacher, she offered a **repair mechanism** in proposing a suitable conclusion to the broken sentence (line 35) in order to maintain the natural flow of the discourse. **Situation management** was in this case not reliant on the teacher. The student demonstrated speaking skills

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[43] According to Thornbury this feature of spoken text is very common. The term syntactic blend describe utterances like the one in line 12 where two grammatical structures are combined in the process of formulation (Thornbury 2009, 21).

sufficient to maintain a conversation while adopting a tantamount role with the teacher.

What is most interesting for our research area are lines 8 and 24 through 26. In the first example, line 8, the use of the expression "Really?" is clearly used as a **discourse marker** expressing interest, amusement and perhaps admiration. It is a plain manifestation of the student's ability to step out of the linguistic competence, utilizing **prosody** to add extra meaning to the word *really* and efficiently making use of a well mastered and automated lexical item by conceiving of **illocutionary functions**.

Similarly, in lines 24 and 26 a spontaneous reaction to flattery is provided. The student demonstrated significant sensitivity to **naturalness** (see Bachman's pragmatic competence in Figure 2). This is a classic example of how limited vocabulary one needs to convey meaning. There was no need to say "In order to appear modest I deny your attempt at flattery and claim that my job is by no means more glamorous than yours." This message was unmistakably conveyed by uttering a series of "no" and using appropriate intonation.

3.1.3.3 B1 student and B1 student

Line 1	S1: My name is Edita. What's your name?
Line 2	S2: Hi, I am Petra. Nice to meet you.
Line 3	S1: Nice to meet you too. How do you enjoy this party?
	S1: I think that the party is --- er - I think that this is a normal party - with drinks and …
	S2: Do you like parties?
	S1: Yes, some sometime. It depends on situation and on people.
	S2: And you are from London?
	S1: Yes,yes. er I'm from London. And where are you from?
	S2: I am from Czech Republic and this is my first visit in London.
Line 10	S1: Er, and what kind of job. Oh, sorry. Sorry. Er – Er - moment, - er - what kind of job do you do?
	S2: I'm interested in sports. I'm tennis player, professional tennis player.
Line 12	S1: Oh, really?
	S2: Yes, now I'm, I'm preparing I prepare for competition in London

Line 14	S1: Uhm.
	S2: We will have match next week.
	S1: Ok, and what what kind of match do you have --- do you will have?
Line 17	S2: There will be Olympic games, you don't know it?
Line 18	S1: No, no. I don't know it, because I'm singer.
	S2: Oh, singer.
	S1: Yeah.
Line 21	S2: And where are you from? Jo, London.
Line 22	S1:Yeah.
Line 23	S2: I'm drunk a lot. And what is your the nowest song?
	S1: Now, I'm making a new record and my new song --- is is marked as the best song on the world. Do do you know this song?
	S2: I'm afraid not. And what kind of music do you practice.
	S1: Pop music and some sometime rock music.
Line 27	S2: And what is your name?
Line 28	S1: My name is Edyta.
Line 29	S2: Jo, Edit Piaf! That is not rock music.
Line 30	S1: But I come from London and not not Paris.
Line 31	S2: Ah, you are her daughter, I think.
Line 32	S1: Maybe. --- OK, fine.
	S2: See you later.
	S1: And pleasure to meet you.

Recording 3

Recording 3 analysis

The communicativeness of the two participants was on a congruent level. Neither of the students displayed eloquence significantly surpassing the other. Nonetheless, this recording was a contributive example of the difference between a prompt speaker and one who needs a longer **formulation phase**. As we can see in line 10 Student 1 projects her hesitation and reflects the ongoing formulation process in a verbal manifestation. By saying "Oh, sorry, sorry. Moment." she explicitly states that she is preparing her utterance and needs time to do that. Asking form time to formulate an utterance is not very common. Students usually simple make a long pause. Those who attempt to sound fluent use **pause fillers**, **repetition**, **discourse markers**. Student 1 used this technique repetitively beyond the recording. It is an interesting way to buy time which serves the purpose of maintaining the floor and informs the interlocutor about the intention of speaking again in a short while. A long pause can not only degrade fluency, it can also lead to the interlocutor intervening and assuming control of the discourse. By signaling that the speaker is processing the language and does not wish to be interrupted she made sure her position in **situation**

management was not disadvantaged. It is a rather extraordinary device, nevertheless, it is functional.

As regards **adjacency pairs**, or rather **three-part structures**, lines 1 through 3 are an immaculate example of the language function of *introducing oneself*. Students are generally familiar with this pattern and master it quickly and flawlessly. Lines 17 and 18 are similarly an adjacency pair of implying surprise at lack of knowledge and responding with an excuse. Lines 21 through 23 show students' inattentive approach toward information gathering, perhaps caused by lack of interest in the activity. As Speaker 2 realizes she has asked the same question for the second time, she **switches** to her mother tongue using a discourse marker. This is a sign of her automated reaction to realizing she recalls the information from previous discourse. She has apparently not had sufficient exposure to an expression with the same meaning in L2 and unintentionally uses Czech. In line 23 she puts herself back into the position of a role play participant and provides an explanation for her mistake in TL. The same situation occurs in line 27 through 30 when Student 2 asks about her partner's name and place of origin again, although she has obtained this information at the beginning of the dialogue. Student 1 is understandably puzzled and reflects it in her intonation. As the situation becomes too convoluted and unclear to her, she is unable to deal with a humorously intended remark that she must be Edit Piaf's daughter (line 31). Even in a role play where students are forced to take up a secondary identity, one should be able to decide on the spot whether to reject or accept a suggestion of this scope. By replying "Maybe." she distinctly implies that she has no further interest in following that line of conversation. Speaker 2 acknowledges this shift and utters a conclusion phrase. The dialogue is effectively but fairly abruptly ended.

3.2 Concerning (ii): Small talk dialogue

3.2.1 Task description

Students practice an everyday activity related to work environment and social communication in general. Students represent themselves and engage in a

short small talk conversation with their colleague. The background situation is meeting a colleague on Monday morning and asking and answering questions concerning the passed weekend and possibly any other topic that might come up. The activity does not have a time limit. Grammar to be applied are questions in present and past simple tenses, statements using past simple tense.

Students' cards:

It is Monday morning and you have just come across a colleague of yours at the office coffee machine. Ask him/her about their weekend and answer any questions they ask you. Think about some questions you might ask a colleague when you see them on Monday.

3.2.2 Teacher's presumptions

This activity does not require students identifying with an external role whose characteristics or features they would need to study and memorize before task completion. It therefore does not pose extensive pressure on their imagination, memory or creativity. As **language functions** such as *greeting someone you know*, *talking about one's weekend activities* and *obtaining personal information* are covered at the beginning of elementary syllabi, the presumption was that students know the necessary vocabulary, the grammatical rules for forming questions and statements and are familiar with conversational rules. The occurrence of **discourse markers** and sophisticated **situation management** is expected to appear more frequently with higher level students. Repeated hesitation, lulls, lapses and repair mechanisms are expected with A1 and A2 students. The amount of information gathered and mainly the **spontaneity** with which the task is performed should increase in direct proportion with the increasing language level. As in 3.1 the language to be activated demonstrates certain conformity and regularity and it can be argued that its framework constitutes a presumptive **scheme**. [44] The functions expected to occur in the following order in the dialogue are: *greeting – inquiring about one's well-being –*

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[44] Beaugrande and Dressler define a scheme as a pattern of events and states in ordered sequences linked by proximity and causality. As a result participants of a conversation are able to make hypotheses about the successive utterances (Beaugrande and Dressler 1981).

inquiring about one's weekend activities – responding to obtained information – closing phrase - saying goodbye. The content of the body of the text is naturally unpredictable and may evolve in many directions. Furthermore, discourse markers are expected to be used mainly with higher level students. In order to initiate, maintain and close a conversation, students should use discourse markers indicating starting a new topic (e.g. so, well), showing interest (e.g. Is that right?, Interesting., Really?), signalling closure (e.g. Ok, I have to …, Well, …) respectively.

3.2.3 Task completion

3.2.3.1 A1 student

	T: Good morning, Jana.
	S: Morning Bara. Good morning Bara.
	T: Good morning.
	S: How are you?
	T: I am fine, and you?
	S: I'm I'm I'm very fine, too
	T: Good. How was your weekend?
Line 8	S: My weekend was very funny. I ehm I ehm I prepared, prepared is [hostinu] I prepared - er - very good lunch
	T: Oh, OK. For your family?
	S: Yes, yes. I have birthday, birthday. - er - And my my husband, my two my two daughters, my grandson, my granddaughter came and we have celebration.
	T: Oh, congratulation.
	S: Yes congratulation. Yes, yes, yes.
	T: So, did you enjoy the - the party?
Line 14	S: Very, very good and very very good celebration was.
	T: Perfect, excellent, alright. So it must be difficult to be back at work.
Line 16	S: Yes, yes, yes very. And what about - er - with you?
	T: Ehm my weekend was also ehm fine. Not so interesting as yours. Ehm, it was not my birthday, but we went on a trip with my husband and the weather was ehm ok, so it was nice and relaxing.
Line 18	S: And we were in Frydek-Mistek?
	T: No, we were in Prague.
Line 20	S:Yes, yes. And - er - your - er - your friend - Hanicka has a children?
	T: Oh, yes, ehm, she does.
	S: Very small child?
	T: Yes, she has a child, but I did not see her this weekend.
	S: Yes, Yes
	T: I am meeting her next weekend.
Line 26	S: hm, hm. And - ehm - sunny [teda] --- Yesterday evening visited me my my friend ehm my friend David. David is - er - husband from my friend Jaja and he is from USA.
	T: Oh, so you spoke some English?
	S: I I must I must I must speak English - at my home, yes.

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        T:Was it OK?
        S: Yes, yes, yes. I understand all.
        T: Excellent, excellent. Alright, well, I have to go to my office, I am sorry, I am very busy today.
        So, enjoy your week.
Line 32  S: Enjoy --- Thank you very much and I enjoyed you too.
        T: Thank you, bye bye. See you.
        S: Bye, bye.
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Recording 4

Recording 4 analysis

The communicative competence of A1 students is naturally restricted by the minimal exposure they have had to TL. It is ergo not surprising to encounter **CS** as described by Tarone (in line 8 a language switch), significant grammatical mistakes (in line 14 severe word order violation), disregard of cohesion in **anaphoric reference** (in line 18 "we" is used instead of "you"), indifference to singular and plural **determiners** (in line 20 "a" is used with "children"), inaccurate use of possessive forms (in line 26 "husband from my friend Jaja" is used instead of "my friend Jaja's husband").

Throughout the first part of the dialogue we can see that **situation management** lay entirely on the teacher. I should stress that the teacher did not have the attention of assuming responsibility for the course and pace of the conversation but rather let the student take lead. In contrast, however, should there be unnaturally long pauses, the teacher offered a conversation starter or a topic shift. In lines 16 and 18 the student apparently took over the management of the discourse. Further in the dialogue the student clearly succumbed to utilizing any language she could recall. Line 20 shows how she switches to a completely unrelated and unexpected topic. Stating "And your friend Hanička has a children?" was a random **actualization** of an unrelated subject matter. There was no previous hint to discussing friends and their offspring. The **continuity of sense**, and thus **coherence**, was thereby flouted and caused some strain on the receiver's side when **recovering** the speaker's **plan**.[45] It is an interesting phenomenon with especially loquacious people who try to transfer their natural inclination into L2. The student recorded in this case is inherently communicative and it reflects in her effort to initiate and sustain long stretches of TL conversation. I considered the possibility that her use of incoherent and disrupting interjections and her digressing from assigned tasks stems from insufficient

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[45] See (Beaugrande and Dressler 1981)

linguistic knowledge. I believe it is one of the factors. But more than lack of vocabulary and grammar range I feel it is her characteristic manipulation with language.

The mistake in line 32, i.e. replying with "I enjoyed you too." to a classic farewell civility "Enjoy your week." was caused not by misunderstanding the latter sentence but by the inability to recall the appropriate response. The student nevertheless showed the effort to conclude an adjacency pair. She has clearly been exposed to the **initiation** "Enjoy your..." and the **response** "You too." The message of "I enjoyed you too." refers to past appreciation of one's company. However, as the teacher had lowered her **threshold of termination** and anticipated the intended meaning, she concluded the situation simulating achieved **meaning agreement**.

3.2.3.2 A2 student

	S: Hello Bara, how are you?
	T: I am fine and you, Vera?
	S: Thank you, I'm well. And - ehm - what about your weekend, how did you spend it?
Line 4	T: Ehm - I had lovely weekend, actually. Yes, I did some cleaning at home, but I also saw some of my friends.
	S: Yes. The same. I made - I did the same. Er - And - er- what - what kind of coffee are you – are you making?
	T: Oh, I am making an espresso. I always have espresso in the morning. And you?
Line 7	S: And I like cappuccino.
	T: Cappuccino - OK. Are you looking forward to a new workweek?
Line 9	S: No, I - I am very sad. I am very [bi]- er - I'm very busy and I - have no - I have no time to to - speak with with my friends here. So, bye, bye.
	T: Ok, Alright, I have to work as well, ok. Enjoy your day. Bye.

Recording 5

 Recording 5 analysis

Overall the conversation abided by the standards of an office small talk and its **cohesion** and **coherence** contributed to its clarity. A few hesitations, self-corrections and word repetitions occurred, the lucidity of the utterance was nevertheless not impaired. In line 4 we can see manifestation of the student's ability to respond to an offered topic and relate it to herself. The next part of the

utterance signals that the student either did not wish to elaborate on her weekend activities, did not have the necessary **linguistic competence** to talk about them (example of **topic avoidance**) or felt the next appropriate step would be to change the topic. Without giving the teacher a chance to ask for details of her weekend, she diverted the conversation to a less personal matter, the current activity of coffee making. She thus demonstrated capability to govern the discourse and took charge of **situation management**.

An abrupt and unexpected ending of the dialogue arose when the student expressed lack of time and without giving the interlocutor a chance to respond, ended the conversation by using a farewell phrase (line 9). The teacher reacted with a light-hearted acknowledgement that there indeed is a lot of work to attend to and agreed to terminate the dialogue. When talking to a stranger blunt abortion of the conversational could be considered a violation of **conversational rules** and could cause aggravation. The cause of such improper behaviour was undoubtedly not the student's unfamiliarity with conversation rules, lack of **sociolinguistic competence** or misunderstanding of the context. Nor was there a perceptible intention to offend the recipient. My assumption is that the attempt to complete the task as soon as possible and the consequent recourse in an unconventional ending stemmed from the student's anxiety associated with using L2.

3.2.3.3 B1 student

	T: Good morning, how are you?
	S: Oh, good morning, I'm fine. And how are you?
Line 3	T: I'm also fine, thank you for asking. How was your weekend?
	S: Er – my weekend was quite good because we were in er in Brno and we er er visited a [par] er a party on Friday and er er we first time left Max er alone or er we brought him to my friend because she has also er a dog and er Max was all night there and we er pick up him picked up him on Saturday and we were surprised that he was really good and he he wasn't er sad or something, he was really good.
Line 5	T: OK, so no problems at all? …
	S: No.
Line 7	T: … spending time without you? OK. That was a relief, right? [mime and demonstrative sound of relief]

S: Uhm, yes.

T: OK. … Did you enjoy the party?

S: Yes, because we er met many many friends which er who we have er common er like my friends and friends from my boyfriend and er it was it was nice nice night.

T: Right. Was that your family reunion or? You know that thing that you told me about? That big party where you saw your family and friends? --- Or that was the week…

S: That was last week. Last one week ago.

T: Uhm.

S: This weekend we were er only with with friends without family.

T: Another party?

S: Another party.

T: Alright, OK.

S: It was different kind of party.

T: OK. But still fun?

S: Yes.

Line 21 — T: OK, good. Do you think you'll be really busy this week or?

S: Yes, I think so of course because we have er er we organize some ---let's say Christmas parties but er they are, the --- This Christmas parties are not big, just for er for beer and drink, nothing nothing special. We don't we don't er do any er program for for the employees but just just the er just the opportunity to meet together and er enjoy the Christmas time.

T: Sounds lovely. OK. You're attending the party, right?

S: Yes, of course.

T: Only one or also the one in Brno and the one Krušovice?

S: We have four.

T: Four?

S: In each location. But I I I will attend just one.

Line 29 — T: OK, alright. Well, I hope you enjoy it. OK. I have to run, I'm very busy too, so, ehm, I'll see you – later.

S: Yes, thank you.

T: You're welcome, bye-bye.

S: Bye, bye.

Recording 6

Recording 6 analysis

This recording clearly involved a student whose **situation management** shrank into answering the other speaker's questions. The long stretches of speech we witness here mirror her conception of a conversation with the teacher as an interviewer – interviewee disparity. She feels that when asked a question she is required to provide a lengthy, exhaustive talk to demonstrate her language abilities. The idea of an authentic small talk was not embraced by the student. She was unable to step out of her student role and become an equal participant of the dialogue. This exposes the uniqueness of a classroom environment and its effects on the language used.

Line 3 was an **initiation** of an **adjacency pair** which, no matter how long a narrative the receiver of it wished to deliver, should have been followed by a reciprocal inquiry. As the student's response was starting to exceed the period expected by the interlocutor, a summary of it was offered as a conclusion (lines 5 and 7). As the student failed to provide any new impulses, the teacher asked a

follow-up question. Again, an acceptable answer was given, however, no question was raised by the student. The next few lines revolve around the same subject and the dialogue stagnates. Line 21 is a rather inept effort to move the conversation forward. A long stretch of the student's speech follows not resulting into a factual exchange. Line 29 is an escape strategy in which the teacher gives an excuse for terminating the dialogue and offers some personal information without being asked for it ("I'm very busy too"). The farewell adjacency pair is conducted flawlessly.

The entire exchange does not meet the standards of an acceptable and well-balanced dialogue. The situation management distinctly leans towards one of the participants. We could trace this back to several factors. The student might inherently be assuming a submissive role in a classroom environment, as suggested above. A student who is naturally taciturn would respond briefly and not elaborate on the topic at hand. Reticence is apparently not this student's problem. The incongruity could be brought up by the teacher's extensive dominance and inquisitiveness. I believe this recording can typify an example of a timid student and a dynamic teacher. Here the term student is meant to designate a person who adapts a tractable role in a classroom environment. The responsibility of the teacher in this case is to limit his/her presence in the dialogues to a minimum and encourage the student more strongly than others to assume responsibility for situation management.

Regarding **communication strategies**, the student obviously has considerable formulation periods and uses pause fillers to achieve the semblance of fluency. Instances of false starts occurred not imposing significant strain on the receiver or the plan recovery. Overall, if unnecessary pause fillers, repetition of words and false starts were extracted from the student's utterances, her speech would be both accurate and effective.

3.2.3.4 B2 student

S: Hi
T: Good morning, Tomas. How are you?
S: Good morning. I'm fine, thank you. And you?
T: I'm also fine. Well, it is Monday morning!
S: OK, so, it's always difficult.
T: Yes, it is.
S: Er - how was your weekend?
T: It was good, actually. And yours?

Line 9   S: Er - mine also. What did you do?

T: Ehm, I spent some time at home. Eh - I did some cleaning.

Line 11   S: OK.

T: But, I also finished a fascinating book.

Line 13   S: Really?

T: … so that was fun.
S: Ehm.
T: And Saturday afternoon - er - I met my friends, in town,…
S: OK.
T: … which was nice. Girls' night out.

Line 19   S: Girls out. - Big girls out.

T: Yes, yes. What did you do?
S: Er - well - er- I visited my family - er - in Frýdek. -er- I helped a little bit my mom. - er - She's reconstructing a old house and she's in middle of reconstruction so I helped her a little bit around the house - er - cleaning er various stuff - er - moving one thing from place [a:] to place b.
T: OK.
S: So this kind of stuff and I also visited my -er-father. Er. So and I has I had a big boys' out and with my friends also.
T: That's coincidental.
S: Yeah, it is coincidental and it was er really pleasant er night. I discuss a lot of - er -stuff and enjoyed great time.

line 26   T: Well, the --- Reconstructing the house sounds like a lot of work.

Line 27   S: Yeah, er, yeah, it's - er -terrible er she reconstructed it for ages. Er and er. Well, I think we are still in the middle, we're still in at the beginning of the reconstruction so it's moving very slowly, so er I think er it will never end.

T: OK. Well, I hope it does. …
S: I hope it does.
T: ...Good luck with it.
S: Yeah, yeah. OK, thank you, thank you.
T: Alright, so, see you later.
S: Yeah, see you, see you.
T: Bye.
S: Bye.

Recording 7

Recording 7 analysis

The entire dialogue had a **coherent** flow and would meet the **acceptability** standard in real life. The student demonstrated **situation management**, especially in line 9 where he rejected the teacher's attempt to shift attention toward him and instead inquired about further details about the teacher's

weekend activities. Diverting attention from oneself is an example of situation management. The student wished to avoid the topic of his leisure activities and achieved a change in discourse. The acceptability of doing so might be questioned, the ability of the speaker to handle the situation and achieve his communicative goal was, however, undoubtedly proved.

In lines 11 and 13 we can see a clear **discourse marker** signalling interest in what the other interlocutor is saying. Line 19 is an example of the student's attempt to be an equal partner in a conversation and minimize any communicative lapses. In attempting to repeat the expression previously used by the teacher he ensures connectivity and thus provides a cohesive link in the conversation. He apparently has not had sufficient exposure to the idiomatic phrase "big girls' night out" and therefore uses it incorrectly. It nevertheless does not interfere with the communicated meaning and is rendered acceptable by the recipient.

We can witness the teacher's hesitation and **repair strategy** in line 26. As reconsidered starts of texts are quite common among L1 speakers, this strategy is not assessed as a mistake or sign of L2 incompetence when demonstrated by ESOL students if it does not become too frequent and hence disruptive.

A grammatical mistake occurred in the student's utterance in line 27. Instead of saying "She has been reconstructing it for ages." he says "She reconstructed it for ages." As satisfactory context had been provided prior to this text, the receiver was able to deduce the intended message and no CS was needed.

3.2.3.5 A1 student and A2 student

	S1: Hello Jane
	S2: Hello Vera
	S1: How are you today?
	S2: I am fine. And you?
Line 5	S1: No, I am not very fine
Line 6	S2: And why?

Line 7	S1: I have a toothache.
Line 8	S2: [Ach o bože]. Hm, hm. And
Line 9	S1: And I I think I would be I have to go to the doctor.
Line 10	S2: Yesterday, did you did you go the doctor?
Line 11	S1: No, no. I --- I wasn't at the doctor. But I --- It was very bad for me. I had a strong pain.
	S2: Uhm, uhm. And.. Do you, do you. –[Ne Ne] - . Can you, can you eat a meal?
	S1: No I can't and it's the it's it's bad.
Line 14	S2: And your husband is ill too?
Line 15	S1: No, my husband isn't ill. My husband is fine and he gone – [jak bych to řekla] - he went to France, yesterday.
	S2: Yes. With your work? With her – his work?
	S1: No, with …
	S2: With school?
	S1: No, yes, yes. With school, with school.
	S2: And your daughter is in England?
	S1: Yes, she is in England, but she was…
	S2: Go to back to Czech Republic?
	S1: … she was here two two weeks ago. He visited us with her friend. And what, what your daughter Ivana?
	S2: My daughter Ivana is is in Trebon, Trebon bath, now. She is ill with with her leg, with her leg. And she go back tomorrow from Trebon.
	S1: And you wanted to go to the theatre with her.
	S2: Yes, yes, yes. Last weekend, I was in Trebon. We we we we were in cinema in Trebon.
Line 27	S1: Cinema, not in theatre?
Line 28	S2: In cinema. we saw movie "Muži v naději". This movie was very funny, very funny. And - er -in Saturday we– [šli jsme dokola]- we we we we came about about Svět.
Line 29	S1: And Svět, it's a pond?
	S2: Yes, yes, Svět is a pond in Trebon.
	S1: And what was the weather?
	S2: Weather was no no --- Was bad, was bad. Very bad.
	S1: Here in Prague was - er - rainy day too.
	S2: And in Trebon we visited, we visited coffee coffee and restaurant pub with fish.
	S1: Jo, fish. It was delicious?
	S2: I I very like fish. Very like. And you? Do you like fish?
	S1: No I don't, I like chicken meat or or pork.
	S2: Ehm, pork. I very like and my daughter very like very likes fish too.
	S1: So, bye bye
	S2: Bye bye. Have a nice day
	S1: Have a nice day too, bye.

Recording 8

Recording 8 analysis

Recording 8 includes examples of students' well performed communication exchange (lines 5 through 7 and lines 27 through 29). We can see examples of a **language switch** (lines 8, 15, 28). The exchange in line 9 through 11 reveals how students who are the ones with better communicative competence make use of **CS**. Speaker 1 used future tense in her utterance to inform the recipient about her future plans. Student 2 (A1 level) either misunderstood or was not paying sufficient attention to what was being said and shifted the planned activity into the past. Fortunately, and again on account of the artificial conditions, the misconception posed no impediment on the **meaning agreement**. Student 1 had ample communicative competence to rectify the lapse. **Situation management**

was markedly reliant on Student 1. I believe this can be partially assigned to the fact that Speaker 1 complies with CEFR level A2 as opposed to her colleague who matches A1 descriptors. Another factor we must take into account are the students' personalities.

It is not only the teacher who needs to choose an appropriate approach towards his/her students' errors and mistakes. Fellow learners, especially if they have been studying together for some time, get acquainted with their colleagues' idiosyncrasies, reoccurring errors and their communicative competence in general. They are therefore able to anticipate and hence excuse and even help rectify any misconceptions.

Along those lines, in a real life scenario concluding from one's toothache that her husband is likewise experiencing health problems (line 14) would appear nonsensical. Nevertheless, Student 1 responded with an amused laugh and treated the information as complying with the speaker's **plan**. She applied a CS to re-establish the conversation's **coherence**. She was capable of doing so as she demonstrated efficient CS. The reason Student 2 introduced the inquiry about the husband's health could be caused by her omission of discourse coherence or inability to structure her utterance logically in the short planning time she was provided. In order to maintain fluent turn-taking she felt the need to quickly initiate the next adjacency pair. What first came to her mind was a grammatically correct sentence, yet one that was incoherent in context. Reflecting on the presented **frame** and extending the conversation about illnesses is undoubtedly acceptable. Making the presumption that one's toothache affects one's spouse is, however, senseless. The degree of irrelevance was nevertheless not so high to render Speaker 2 unable to avoid communication breakdown.

3.2.3.6 B1 student and B1 student

S1: Hi Gabča, how are you today?

	S2: Fine, and how was your weekend?
Line 3	S1: I was normal normal weekend. I was normal weekend. And you? How was er your weekend?
	S2: Hmm, I was along without without boys and I - did some housework and and cleaned the cottage and visit the farm. And what about your ehm construction? What about your house? How did you… er? [Ježiš] What about your bathroom? What is --- How was your design?
Line 5	S1: I have I have problem with with my with my bathroom, because – er - because we have problem with with designing.
Line 6	S2: And what about the Friday proposal?
Line 7	S1: Yeah, yeah.
	S2: Vaclav didn't agree?
Line 9	S1: Yeah, yeah, yeah. We er, we we have to change er we had to change our first proposal and now we have now now we have – er – er- other plan … with with strips.
Line 10	S2: If I understood well we did some – er – conclu --- compromise. Yes?
Line 11	S1: Yeah, yeah, may be.
	S2: [Tak ahoj]
	S1: Hi

Recording 9

Recording 9 is a classic example of students having trouble simulating an authentic conversation in class, especially when being recorded. The language abilities displayed were significantly influenced by the students' self-awareness which resulted in conducting the task in a perfunctorily way. The problem might have also been caused by the absence of an **information gap**. The speakers knew each other beyond the classroom and had most probably discussed their weekend prior to coming to class. The lack of interest in completing a task is characteristically a great impediment in any ELT activity.

The students' CEFR level is B1. Their level was assessed several months before the research was conducted and they repeatedly demonstrated B1 level abilities in class throughout the year. Their communicative abilities, however, do not reflect it very well. They make mistakes appropriate for A2 level students. The dialogue starts with an **adjacency pair** which is carried out in an adequate way with the only deviation of Speaker 2 not reciprocating the "How are you?" civility. Instead Student 2 uses a topic shift and directs the conversation to the core theme, i.e. enquiring about the partner's weekend. We can see that **turn-taking** works flawlessly, the issues witnessed here are more of a grammatical nature (line 3 – "I was a normal weekend."). In line 3 the previously neglected reciprocation is not repeated and Speaker 1 correctly puts forward a query about the other's weekend. We can see a nice rhythm of turn-taking and equal distribution of **situation management** between both participants. The **topic shift** expression "and" is customarily used by Speaker 2 which creates a cohesive link between utterances.

No misapprehension occurs and so no **communication strategy** needs to be applied. Both speakers are familiar with the concept being discussed and are comfortable using the activated vocabulary. Lines 5 and 6 could seem incoherent as the response in Line 6 requires knowledge of context. Speaker 2 apparently knows about a bathroom design which Speaker 1 had done and thus formulates her request for clarification by implying that she had expected "the Friday proposal" to solve any bathroom design issues. Line 7 is an example of conceding to the necessity to clarify one's response. The adjacency pair was interrupted by a **side sequence** of:

Student 1: Yeah, yeah.

Student 2: Václav didn't agree?

Student 1 agreed that her statement that she is having problems with her bathroom design is incomprehensible to her colleague who knew that she had a design ready and assumed things were progressing. Student 2 had the need to clarify her surprised reaction by asking a follow-up question from which we find out that she is familiar with Student 1's partner and assumes he disliked "the Friday proposal".

Line 9 carries several examples of repetition used as a pause filler. The student evidently needed time to formulate her response. Her hesitation did not lead to rephrasing the utterance. She ended the same sentence she started out with, only distorted. Line 10, on the other hand, includes hints at phonetic **approximation**. The student was trying to actualize the word "compromise". The expression that she recalled, however, was "conclusion". I believe the similarity of the first syllable of the two words caused this near substitution.

As for **adjacency pairs** and **coherence**, the response Student 1 delivered in line 11 was somewhat inconclusive. Replying "Yeah, maybe." to "If I understood correctly, we did some compromise." implies

a) lack of knowledge whether a compromise had been reached,
b) unwillingness to discuss the topic any further,
c) topic abandonment due to anticipated linguistic difficulties.

Although Student 2 used an incorrect pronoun in line 10 and instead of "you" said "we", I believe the context was helpful enough for Student 1 to recover her colleague's plan and her response was flawed due to one of the above listed issues. Student 2 decided not to enquire about the matter further and concluded the dialogue. What is more, she performed a language switch and signaled her lack of interest in prolonging the conversation. In addition, Speaker 1 used inappropriate **functional language** when instead of saying "bye", she uttered the word "hi".

3.3   Concerning (iii): Manipulative instrumental function

3.3.1 Task description

In order to induce situation management involving functional language of negotiating such as *requesting*, *persuading*, *making concessions* and *compromising*, students are required to agree on a free time or work-related activity they will engage in together. They are asked to premeditate their private week and weekend plans and subsequently try to fit a mutually acceptable activity in the schedule. This activity has been chosen for the frequency with which it occurs in real life. Students have been pre-taught no negotiation language immediately before carrying out the activity.

The aim of the teacher was to make this activity as authentic and similar to **real operating conditions** as possible.[46] Consequently, the exact assignment and instructions were adjusted to fit the situation of the participants. For instance, colleagues who normally socialize outside of work were instructed to arrange a common leisure time activity. Students who customarily make no personal or work-related appointments were asked to agree on the time of English lessons, and so forth. The core activity and functional language were nevertheless maintained.

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[46] Thornbury's term for conditions which resemble real-life conditions including unpredictability, spontaneity and urgency of everyday speech events.

3.3.2 Teacher's presumptions

This exercise gives students the opportunity to utilize the language they feel comfortable with and at the same time should induce many situations in which situation management and communication strategies are required. Reaching the target should not be a major issue for students of any level. I expect the functional language to improve linearly with the increasing language level. The frequency with which discourse makers occur should rise with the level in a similar way. From upper-intermediate students higher the discourse is expected to be fluent, effective and naturally-sounding. I assume that the lower the level of participants, the more time and language items will be needed due to frequent presence of circumlocution.

3.3.3 Task completion

3.3.3.1 C1 student

	T: All right, so, maybe we could agree on another lesson for next week, for the weekend, if that's possible.
Line 2	S: I am afraid it isn't possible er because er our grandma are is staying at our house and next week we have to bring her home to Týn nad Vltavou. So, I am sorry, we are busy and my daughters are ill, so I have to rest with them at home. So, I can't go to Prague. So, can we choose er a different or another termín (Czech) or?
	T: ok, yeah, sure, let's try. You want the weekend, right?
Line 4	S: Uhm, yes. Only weekend.
	T: Only weekends are possible. Ehm, on 10th December I unfortunately have er, or unfortunately --- I have to do some exams here, international exams here in the school. So I'm not free on Saturday. And on Sunday I am supposed to be baking Christmas cookies with me mother.
Line 6	S: Aha, so in two weeks it isn't possible from your part.
	T: Yeah, it would be a bit difficult.
	S: …. Because you are busy.
	T: Kind of, yeah. But that weekend would be suitable for you, 10th or 11th ?
	S: 10th or 11th ? Yes, it could be. It could be convenience for me. So for me is better Saturday, because on Sunday I have to do some rests…
	T: OK, of course.
	S: …so maybe on Satur on Saturday the 10th --- of December.
	T: Yeah, I understand. Unfortunately I don't really see a way around that, because if I have to do the exam that takes a long time and then it's my friend's birthday in the afternoon so we have a birthday party. I would not want to miss that. But … and Friday afternoon is not an option for you?
	S: No, in the afternoon it isn't possible, but in the evening I don't know I am very tired after the whole week. So, I would prefer Saturday or Sunday, er because er I nebo it's for me more convenient and my husband er can take after our daughters.
	T: I understand. OK, well, shall we look at the next weekend then, maybe? It's 17th or 18th. I

	should be free.
	S: Yes, I am free.
	T: Yeah? OK.
Line 18	S: And both Saturday and Sunday are OK. So, maybe on Saturday on Saturday er 17th December is fine. In the morning?
	T:Yeah, sounds good.
	S: OK.
Line 21	T: At 10 o'clock?
Line 22	S: 10 o'clock. OK.
Line 23	T: Two lessons?
Line 24	S: Two lessons.
	T: All right, excellent.
	S: So from 10 to 12 o'clock.
	T: Uhm, all right, perfect. So, in the meantime maybe I will send you some more tasks or you can just work on on the things you have at home.
Line 28	S: Or can we try one lesson per [nebo] via Skype?
	T: Yeah … That's a good idea.
Line 30	S: So, please, can you write me your Skype name?
	T: Uhm, I will do that.
Line 32	S: And send the time.
	T: Ok, you mean sometime in the week or weekend again?
	S: At the weekend.
	T: Weekend, some - all right. Some of the previous weekends via Skype. All right, excellent. So, I'll send you the contact information and we can arrange it via email, right?
	S: Ok, thank you very much.
	T: Thanks, ok, perfect.

Recording 10

Recording 10 analysis

We can notice that compared to lower level students this speaker is capable of carrying out a perfectly comprehensible and acceptable dialogue and assume responsibility for its development. She does not retreat to mere situation monitoring but plays an equal role in **situation management**. Actually, in this case she initiates many of the turns in the conversation. She makes suggestions, provides explanations, and adds detailed information to the topic. In line 2 the speaker uses a discourse marker ("I'm afraid…") and goes on to provide a plausible explanation as to why she cannot accept the teacher's proposal. She also uses the expression "so" to signal a shift from explanation to making a suggestion in "So, can we choose a different time?" In line 4 the student proves the ability to use economic and efficient language. Instead of repeating the whole structure and saying something along the lines of "Yes, I want lessons on weekends only." she simply uses a fragment of "Yes. Only weekend." This corresponds to Thornbury's theory of the elliptic nature of speech.[47]

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[47] Thorbury elaborates on the fact that speakers do not use as elaborate and well-structured language as they do in writing. The limited planning time they have precludes forming pre-

Line 6 is an instance of self-reassurance and summarizing the previous utterance. It also serves as a filler needed for the student to conceptualize her next utterance and decide on discourse management. The student uses pause fillers and repeats to achieve fluency.[48] The student governs the conversation to the same extent as the teacher. We can for instance see this in line 18 where she agrees with the teacher's proposal and suggests additional arrangements. Lines 21 through 24 are a flawless example of effective and efficient language where the context is enough to compensate for elliptic spoken language.

Line 28 shows how the C1 student can govern the dialogue and initiate questions herself. The speaker aptly signals a topic shift by using the discourse marker "or" and proceeds to make a proposal. As we can see in line 30 the speaker goes on to specify the expected steps to be taken and using a interrogative sentence actually asks the teacher to do something. The **illocutionary act** of requesting is appropriately and elegantly handled. Line 32 displays a more direct wording of a request. Nevertheless, it is quite adequate and serves the student's goal. If we look back at Bachman's model of language use in Section 1.2.1 we can see that a C1 student is easily able to set an objective and reach it via verbal communication using various functional language. She thus proves to be aware of a range of possibilities to achieve an illocutionary act and is confident enough with using L2 to conduct a naturally-sounding outer language conversation.

3.3.3.2 A1 and A1 student

Line 1	S1: Hello Pepa, how are you?
Line 2	S2: Fine, about you?
Line 3	S1: I am fine. I am very glad to see you. … What do you do er next week? Weekend?
Line 4	S2: Next week I go to exhibition on the on the Burg Prague. Prager Burg.
Line 5	S1: And do you go alone or with your wife?
Line 6	S2: Er – [sám]. Er – of course [ala] alone.

meditated sentences. The strategy to deal with this is to form shorter sentences and simply add one to the other (Thornbury 2009, 3-12).

[48] Pause filler is a strategy Thornbury argues speakers use to achieve fluency by avoiding or filling, pauses in their utterance (Thornbury 2009, 7).

Line 7	S1: Er- I would like go with you. ..
Line 8	S2: No, I --- no.
	S1: … for this exhibition.
Line 10	S2: Ne, it's – er – yes I I, my pleasure go with you to to exhibition.
Line 11	S1: And where where can we meet?
Line 12	S2: I think that in Carl bridge and then we go to to Prager Burg.
Line 13	S1: And what what time?
Line 14	S2: I think that about 70 [tři] p.m.
	S1: 70?
Line 16	S2: [tři]
Line 17	S1: Yes, I do, I do. And er we are going in the pub, in the pub too? --- I would like in the pub.
	S2: Only three three beer?
	S1: I would like only three beer and you six beer. --- Yes? …
	S2: Yes.
	S1: … Do you understand?
	S1: And you wife is er ill or [zdráva?] Is ill?
	S2: No, it is my wife is is go at Slovak Republic.
	S1: I am so glad. And your daughter Evka er go with us?
Line 25	S2: No, Eve is is work.
	S1: She is in if at work, yes?
	S2: At work. Yes.
Line 28	S1: Yes. --- How old are you?
Line 29	S2: Mine mine daughter? …
	S1: You. …
	S2: … Old?
	S1: …How old are you?
Line 33	S2: It's you know it. Ne. You er know it.
	S1: I did it understand. --- I am 25 only. I --- when I was a child I love him. You.
	S2: Understand you. I think that er my daughter have 23 --- years.
	…..

Recording 11

Recording 11 analysis

The students involved in Recording 11 displayed the ability to carry out a fairly **coherent** dialogue. Regarding **task completion**, the students have not settled which day of the weekend to meet and would therefore run into difficulties in a real-life scenario. Turn-taking took place correctly and the distribution of time was fairly equal. Speaker I, however, initiated most of the topic shifts and was generally controlling the development of the discourse. Speaker 2 contented to **situation monitoring**. As Speaker 2 is overall a less eloquent student, this development was expected. On the other hand, if we look at sentence structure and coherence, his utterances were always in accordance with the task and followed the adjacency pairs pattern.

In lines 1 and 2 we can see that comprehensible greetings were applied within an **adjacency pair**. Speaker 2 even used efficient spoken language practice and instead of saying "I'm fine and how are you?" he attempted to actualize the phrase "Fine, how about you?". His rendition was erroneous, yet

understandable. In line 3 Speaker 1 initiates the core discussion, i.e. arranging a meeting with Speaker 2. At this stage she is in control of **situation management** and leads the discourse forward. She aptly includes a civility to create a base she could commence the negotiation from. She does make a mistake, however, thanks to self-monitoring, corrects herself speedily and thus clarifies that she is inquiring about her colleague's weekend schedule. Line 4 clearly shows that Student 2 either misheard the clarification or himself confused the expressions *week* and *weekend*. This would naturally cause major problems if the students were to actually meet. As mentioned above, they did not arrive to the conclusion which day to meet and thus failed to discover this error.

Lines 5 through 10 are a negotiation about whether Speaker 1 can join Speaker 2 and what the circumstances are. For A1 students this passage is rather exceptionally well performed. Student 2 demonstrated a relaxed approach to using L2 and inserted humour into the conversation by declining his colleague's request for permission to join him. The phrase "It would be my pleasure if you could join me." which the student implied in line 10, shows awareness of the functional language of polite invitations.

An example of a highly efficient exchange requiring a single adjacency pair is perceptible in lines 11 and 12. Lines 13 and 14 are a functional adjacency pair concerning asking about time and a relevant, albeit incorrect, reply. Student 2 clearly had problems expressing the time. The inaccuracy induced a clarification question from Speaker 1 carried out by repeating the problematic part and adding a rising intonation. Student 1 thereby demonstrated the ability to use the communication strategy of a questioning repeat. As Speaker 2 was not capable of correcting his utterance, he turned to a **language switch** (line 16) which was accepted by Student 1 by acknowledging comprehension (line 17).

Line 28 signals the deviation from the subject matter and extensively incoherent inquiries. Student 2 was puzzled by this and did not recognize a topic shift. As he focused on task completion, i.e. arranging a time and place to meet, he was incapable of handling the situation. We can clearly see in lines 29, 33 and 25 that he persistently tried to relate the other speaker's questions to the given theme. Assuming he misunderstood the question, based on his lack of language

confidence, he interpreted the questions as relating to his daughter who was mentioned before. A topic shift towards asking about someone's children in a conversation which started off as negotiating is not unacceptable. Student 2 probably supposed the topic had moved toward family matters. Student 1's inquiry about her colleague's age was, however, incomprehensible to him. Line 33 is an example of the lack of information gap as the students have known each other a long time and are familiar with their personal data. Student 2 therefore disregards the question and implies that it is irrelevant. Speaker 1 goes on to convolute the situation further by expressing her affections for Speaker 2. He, on the other hand, rejects this topic shift and returns to the theme of his daughter which he probably finds more sustainable. This recording has demonstrated how incoherent digressions from the prescribed topic cause misapprehension and communication breakdowns. Student 2 was not capable of asking for clarification or managing the discourse himself. Toward the end, Student 1 digressed from the topic dramatically rendering it incoherent.[49]

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3.3.3.3 A2 student and A2 student

	S1: So, hello Edita. How are…
	S2: Hello Hana. How are you?
	S1: I am glad to see you again.
Line 4	S2: Ehm --- I er I haven't er haven't see you er long time. I'm happy that you are OK.
Line 5	S1: Yes. I am. And what about er some drink? Have you time enough?
	S2: Er we can talk together on this weekend. Do you have a free time?
Line 7	S1: And when?
	S2: Maybe on Saturday.
Line 9	S1: And what time?
	S2: I think that for for me is the best at 7 p.m.
	S1: Oh, what a pity. I am going to a live concert. I have no time. And what about er at 4 p.m.? Before my concert. Have you time?
	S2: At 4 p.m. I am er I am listening a live concert. (laughter)
Line 13	S1: And what about Sunday?
	S2: Sunday is better for me. I am free. You can choose the time.
	S1: And what about at 7 p.m.
	S2: At 7 I am free also at 7 p.m.
Line 17	S1: So, we meet together?

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[49] As the dialogue turned towards a completely different matter, I did not transcribe the last few lines.

	S2: We meet together. We can go the pub for example.
Line 19	S1: Yes and where does we meet?
	S2: I think that it will be best to meet on Wenceslas square, it is the cent --- in the middle of the town. And we will plan to go anywhere around this place.
Line 21	S1: So it's fine. I er have there a metro line. --- So, …
	S2: I'm I'm looking forward on er Saturday.
	S1: I am looking, too.
	S2: Sunday.
Line 25	S1: So, see you on Sunday.
	S2: See you on Sunday. Bye bye.
	S1: Bye

Recording 12

Recording 12 analysis

The text was overall comprehensive and relevant. Students were able to perform **illocutionary acts** of *inviting*, *making suggestions*, *accepting or rejecting a suggestion*. Both participants were on an A2 level and were thus expected to play a comparable role in **situation management**. Student 1, nevertheless, seemed to be the one who drove the conversation ahead. As witnessed in line 5, Student 1 made the suggestion to meet. Similarly, in lines 7 and 9 she inquired about the location and time of the meeting thus fulfilling the plan of finding mutually convenient conditions. Line 13 indicates that the initiative of suggesting the day likewise lay on Speaker 1. All in all, **turn-taking** was conducted naturally and in logical sequences. Although, we can say that Student 1 was slightly more active and controlled the whole situation whereas Student 2 mostly settled for responding to direct questions and confirming proposals. I do not assign this to Student's 2 insufficient **communicative competence**. I believe that the dominance of student 1 stemmed from the participants' personalities.

As far as **naturalness** is concerned, the conversation shows that even A2 level students are capable of and feel comfortable applying **discourse markers**. Especially Speaker 1 displayed great proficiency in using the expression "so" to introduce new topics or indicate **topic shifts** lines 1, 17, 21 and 25). Speaker 2, on the other hand, does not use discourse markers at all. Student 1 is apparently also more competent as regards the functional language of making suggestions demonstrating it with the expression "And what about…?" which is used repeatedly is an efficient and effortless way to present proposals. The variety is not broad, the **functionality** is, nevertheless, adequately accomplished.

In line 4 we can see a classic example of misused **functional language**. "I'm happy that you are OK." implies that the recipient has undergone some difficulties, most probably health problems. The intonation used by the speaker intensifies this implication. If Student 2 intended to hint at some background information of the role play, Student 1 apparently did not comprehend and did not accept this direction of the discourse. Lines 4 and 5 consequently come out as rather unnatural as the response to "I haven't see you long time. I'm happy that you are OK." being "Yes, I am. And what about some drink?" sounds quite rash. Similarly, lines 7 and 9 demonstrate haste and abrupt language. Again, we could argue that this phenomenon is caused by the personality features of the speaker.

3.3.3.4 B2 student and B2 student

	S1: Hi Josef.
	S2: Hi Jitka.
Line 3	S1: Hi. Josef, you know what? We have to speak er together about our lessons, more English lessons, yeah? When we, when we can start have a lessons. Like on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday. What is better for you? Er-
Line 4	S2: Er for me [be] the best er one is Friday.
Line 5	S1: Actually for me too.
Line 6	S2: Really?
Line 7	S1: Yeah, you know er usually on Friday my boss is er out of office. He he's in Brno, you know. And …
Line 8	S2: I don't know.
Line 9	S1: You don't know? You don't know? I think three months ago, two months ago he started work at Brno.
Line 10	S2: I remember.
Line 11	S1: Yeah, because he's not just er sales director, he's also regional manager for Moravia. So he spends er most of the time in Brno, in Moravia. So that's why the Friday is perfect for me also. Because he's out of office and usually it's not too much work at office. So for me …
Line 12	S2: Yes, so Friday is OK er …
Line 13	S1: So, OK. What about, think about what about time?
	S2: Er I prefer to start at seven o'clock in the morning.
Line 15	S1: Oh, no way, no way ...
	S2: Of course.
	S1: … You know I'm living out of office, out of Prague….
	S2: Me too.
	S1: … I'm living out of Prague. You know, I have to I have to wake up at five o'clock to be here at seven. No way…
	S2: Yeah, yeah, no problem, yeah.
	S1: … no way. No way for me.
Line 22	S2: OK, so 7:30.
Line 23	S1: No, no way. OK. I can't. What about, what about after lunch around one o'clock?
	S2: Oolalah. I have I have serious problem because er, no [t], special on Friday after after lunch I

have to take a little bit break just to sleep for one hour. Yes, yes, sorry.

S1: OK.

S2: So, so, maybe …

S1: You're specific guy. OK. What about, what about, OK, nine o'clock, ten o'clock in the morning?

S2: Nine o'clock sounds reasonable.

S1: Yeah?

S2: Yes.

S1: I think it's just for one hour. One and half.

S2: One and half hour.

| Line 33 | S1: Yeah, nine o'clock? Nine o'clock. |
| Line 34 | S2: Yes, I think that we can agree on nine o'clock. |

S1: So, we agree nine o'clock.

S2: Yes

S1: OK. So, …

| Line 38 | S2: Agreed. |
| Line 39 | S1: Agreed. |

S2: Yes.

Recording 13

Recording 13 analysis

This dialogue manifests how one's eloquence, readiness to be drawn into a classroom activity as if real operating conditions were in place and one's experience of being exposed to TL in real life contributes to one's communicative competence. Student 1 controls the course of the dialogue to a great extent. She produces long stretches of speech and is hesitant to give floor to Student 2 (lines 3 and 4). **Situation management** is not radically shifted to either side, however, through her loquaciousness Speaker 1 achieves a slight lead. Lines 11 through 13 and 22 and 23 clearly demonstrate how she intends to manage the situation. Student 1 traces most of her SLA experience to working in an English speaking country. Her emphatic verbal rejection of her colleague's proposal in line 15 points to her familiarity with everyday language which coursebooks often fail to provide. Her **communicative competence** is extraordinary. Assessed with respect to linguistic knowledge, her performance does not match that of Student 2.[50] Student 2, on the other hand, is not as assertive as his partner and experiences trouble gaining the floor. We must be careful, though, not to evaluate his reticence as underdeveloped communicative competence. Analyzing his lines I could see that his language is concise, accurate, follows adjacency pair patterns and is altogether effective. The fact that the student is able to communicate with minimal effort proves his high level of communicative competence. His line "Nine o'clock sounds reasonable." is precisely the comprehensible, brief, naturally-sounding and

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[50] This fact does not necessarily emerge from the recording above, it was, nevertheless, repeatedly verified by the teacher throughout the course.

highly effective language one expects from students with a sound communicative competence.

Both speakers are able to use discourse markers (lines 5 and 6). Lines 7 through 10 are an example of an **adjacency pair** split by a side sequence. The reason for entering a side sequence, however, is not misapprehension but rather an effort to clarify a extralinguistic fact. Lines 33 and 34 and again 38 and 39 represent **functional language** of confirming details. The occurrence of this function attests that the participants possess speaking skills adequate for real-life operation

3.4   Concerning (iv): Adjacency pairs

3.4.1 Task description

As a complement to the three activities above which serve as a great research tool to assessing students' communicative competence, I included an adjacency pairs exercises. It is based on the presumption that in language, as in other areas of human behaviour, people behave habitually. I believe that when we are exposed to certain language we tend to respond within a limited range of acceptable wording. We react in a particular way when greeted, for instance. Being able to activate a predefined chunk of language contributes to language efficiency and requires diminished effort. This rule applies to L2 just as it does to our mother tongue. As students are exposed to standard expressions and sentences they learn how to respond to them in the most effective and efficient way.

As Thornbury says, prefabricated chunks of language reduce the time one needs in the stage of formulation (Thornbury 2009, 6). Being able to retrieve an automated segment of language facilitates communication. In task 3.4 I will look at how students of different levels react to the same initiation of an adjacency pair. I will monitor the automaticity demonstrated (not traceable in transcripts, but audible in recordings), acceptability, appropriateness of adjacency pair response completing a language function, the application of communication strategies.

Students were informed about the aim and format of the activity. Participants knew the language they will be required to react to will not constitute

a coherent dialogue but merely isolated lines. They were given the liberty to respond as they found suitable, including longer stretches of text. The number of turns in an exchange, however, was limited to one per participant.

Students were not pre-taught any language. Students were asked to restrain from using their L1, even when encountering misapprehension. They were given an example of an adjacency pair in greeting, i.e. the initiation "How are you?" and response "Fine, and you?".

3.4.2 Task completion

3.4.2.1 A2 student

	Teacher	Student
	Good morning.	Good morning Bara.
	Tired?	Yes, I am.
Line 3	(Pretend spilling coffee on student) I'm so sorry.	Oh, it's horrible for me, because I have a meeting. I must make with that something. Clean.
	Please sit down.	Thank you.
Line 5	How are you today?	I am fine, thank you.
	So, what's your plan for tonight?	I have night with our colleague from our work.
Line 7	I forgot my wallet at home.	I can borrow you some money.
Line 8	I think my boss is a bad person.	My is better, I think.
Line 9	Would you mind opening the window?	Yes, you can.
	Can I use your car this weekend?	Yes, of course, because I stay at home.
Line 11	Do you like your home?	Yes, I like.
Line 12	I'm bored!	--- I am sorry.
	Why don't you come to my house tonight, we can play poker?	I can go to your home, but I dislike play poker.
Line 14	Do you like movies?	Sometimes yes, I like.
	Sorry, was that your foot?	Oh, it's a problem.
	Barbora, nice to meet you.	Edita, nice to meet you.
	Hi.	Hi.
Line 18	Do you have a family?	Yes, I have.
Line 19	Want 2000 crowns?	Yes, I I have.
Line 20	Do you have any holiday plans for this winter?	No, I haven't holiday plan yet.
	I'm not feeling very well.	I am sorry. Can I help you?
	Go away, please.	Why?
Line 23	You have a spot on your shirt.	It's a - stupid thing, I must er change my dress.

Recording 14

Recording 14 analysis

The student apparently did not experience trouble responding to the initiations. She reacted promptly and coherently. Her reply in line 3 shows that she imagined to be in the required situation and reacted accordingly. Line 5 demonstrates automaticity of the language chunk in the response. The student responded instantly and manifested outstanding communicative competence, though brief and minimal in scope, for an A2 level student. The incorrect choice of vocabulary in line 7 can be found in C1 students' texts as well and is therefore not regarded a major mistake. It, by no means, impedes comprehension.

Lines 8 and 9, on the other hand, are amiss. The responses provided would cause some level of confusion in an authentic environment. Likewise in line 19 the reply "Oh, it's a problem." to "Sorry, was that your foot?" served neither the purpose of expressing aggravation, nor accepting an apology. Lines 11, 14, 18 and 20 are mere examples of the student's inability to use ellipsis.

The initiation "I'm bored" (line 12) confused the A2 student to the extent that she was unable to react to it and after a lengthy pause apologized for not providing an answer. Her confusion might have been caused by misunderstanding the sentences or simply by failing to immediately formulate a suitable response and consequently ceasing to try. If she did not understand the initiation, a CS should have occurred. In my opinion though, not applying a communication strategy in this case does not convey communicative incompetence. The situation was artificial and the student could have felt it inappropriate to detain the recording.

3.4.2.2 B1 student

Teacher	Student
Good morning	Good morning
Tired?	Ehm. Yes, I am little bit tired.

Line 3	(Pretend stepping on student's foot) I'm so sorry!	Oh, no problem.
	Please sit down.	Thank you.
	How are you today?	I am fine, thank you very much.
	So, what's your plan for tonight?	I would like to go out with my friends.
Line 7	I forgot my wallet at home.	Ah, it's --- crucial.
Line 8	I think my boss is a bad person.	Why do you think?
Line 9	Would you mind opening the window?	Yes, er yes, it would be great.
	Can I use your car this weekend?	No, I am sorry, I need it.
Line 11	Do you like your home?	Yes, I like my home.
	I'm bored!	Why?
Line 13	Why don't you come to my house tonight, we can play poker?	It's good idea. I will come, I come, I will come.
Line 14	Do you like movies?	Yes, I like.
Line 15	Sorry, was that your foot?	Yes, it was mine.
	Barbora. Nice to meet you.	Nice to meet you, Renata.
	Hi.	Hi.
Line 18	Do you have a family?	Yes, I have.
	Do you want 2000 crowns?	Yes, why not?
Line 20	Do you have any holiday plans for this winter?	Yes, I have holiday plans.
Line 21	I'm not feeling very well.	Why don't feel very well?
	Go away, please.	It's not nice from you.
Line 23	You have a spot on your shirt.	Oh, thank you for your attention.

Recording 15

Recording 15 analysis

This student reacted fairly quickly and provided coherent **responses** to the offered adjacency pair **initiations**. We can see, however, that she has not mastered ellipses to the extent that she would automatically retrieve them in her speech (lines 8, 11, 14, 18, 20, 21).[51] Regarding **self-monitoring** and **repairs**, the student hesitated several times. In line 7 the word "crucial" was chosen inappropriately. The student, nevertheless, did not feel the need to correct her mistake, perhaps because she was not aware of it. The language function of a polite request phrased "Would you mind…" evoked some trouble. This is not surprising, though, as this initiation is frequently responded to incorrectly also among fluent speakers.

Line 13 is a nice example of a running repair, although it is de facto not successful in the end. The student's response in line 15 ("Sorry, was that your foot?" – "Yes, it was mine.") would be perfectly acceptable if the sentence stress in the initiation was put on "your". What was intended by the teacher, and appropriately reflected in the intonation, was an apology. The student's response would point to clarifying whose foot the initiator stepped on. The student might

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[51] Extralinguistic knowledge can heavily influence spoken language. One of the ways this knowledge is reflected in speech is the characteristically elliptic nature of spoken language (Thornbury 2009, 12).

not be aware of the difference in meaning the shift of intonation brings or she planned to respond with "Yes, it was." but again failed at actualizing an ellipsis. The student's reaction to "Do you want 2000 crowns?" sounds very natural and, I believe, shows her ability to handle the initiation with ease and the same way she would in her mother tongue. As opposed to other recordings I abandoned ellipsis and used a complete question. This was caused by anticipated misapprehension of the elliptical form. Similarly, lines 22 and 23 include logical and naturally-sounding responses.

3.4.2.3 C1 student

	Teacher	Student
	Good morning.	Good morning.
	Tired?	No.
Line 3	(Pretend stepping on student's foot) I'm so sorry!	And why? What's happened?
	Please sit down.	Oh, thank you.
	How are you today?	I am fine thank you and what about you?
	So, what's your plan for tonight?	Tonight I would like to stay at home and read an interesting book.
Line 7	I forgot my wallet at home.	Oh, it doesn't matter I have got enough money on me.
Line 8	I think my boss is a bad person.	Really? Why? Why do you think so?
Line 9	Would you mind opening the window?	No, it's hot, so we can open the window, please.
	Can I use your car this weekend?	No, I am sorry, it's broken.
	Do you like your home?	Yes, I like my home and I like decorating my home.
	I'm bored!	Oh, and why?
	Why don't you come to my house tonight, we can play poker?	Well, I'm sorry, I don't play poker.
	Do you like movies?	Yes, I do.
	Sorry, was that your foot?	No, it wasn't.
	Barbora. Nice to meet you.	Zdena, nice to meet you.
	Hi.	Hi
	Do you have a family?	Yes, I have.
	Want 2000 crowns?	No, thank, no thanks I have enough money.
	Do you have any holiday plans for this winter?	Yes, I would like to stay with my family and I would like to enjoy this time.
	I'm not feeling very well.	Oh, really and why? What's the matter?
	Go away, please.	No, I want to stay here.
Line 23	You have a spot on your shirt.	Oh, I'm sorry. So, excuse me. Can I go to the bathroom, please?

Recording 16

Recording 16 analysis

The initiations did not pose much challenge to the student. The same initiations were used with all levels intentionally to enable a comparative research. Not surprisingly, the C1 student's responses to the initiations were markedly more elaborate than those of the previous two speakers in all the lines. Notice the frequent use of discourse markers which contributes to the flow of the speech and its fluency. Intonation was also used to add or emphasize meaning. In contrast to lower level students, the C1 student used prosody in general to convey meaning. A significant shift can also be seen in the indication of situation management. Albeit brief, the student's answers outlined a possible further exchange in which both participants would play a similarly active role. Many of the responses are followed by a subsequent question drawing the teacher into a potential conversation.

3.4.3 Summary of adjacency pairs recordings

I believe the comparison of the three recordings of adjacency pairs could be used as a demonstration of communicative competence development across CEFR levels. It is a clear illustration of how one's L2 competence can be measured on a single adjacency pair.

In general, students experienced some difficulties with line 3 where they were to react to an apology. Because the reason for the apology was simulated and hence inauthentic, students needed time for conceptualization. The reactions varied from a simple acceptance to asking for clarification and evaluating the situation and contemplating further steps. The responses could be considerably different in a real situation when emotions are involved.

The response to "I forgot my wallet at home." (line 7) was mostly offering help. I think this is an apt example of the transference of L1 knowledge of managing talk I mentioned in Section 1.1. The students are aware of the sociocultural appropriateness and if their L2 knowledge and their confidence using the language allow, they translate the appropriate phrase into TL. The B1 student nevertheless had problems processing this initiation. She probably

intended to express her sympathy but was unable to actualize a suitable language chunk in the short planning time she had. ¨

Line 8, on the other hand, caused some perplexity with the A2 student. The sentence "I think my boss is a bad person." includes neither advanced grammatical structures nor vocabulary. Its uncommonness was perhaps the core of the problem. The student misunderstood the illocutionary act of complaining or initiating gossip and offered a comparison instead. The higher level students, by contrast, responded with a request for more detailed information allowing the dialogue to develop as expected.

The language function of polite requests is incorporated in many modern coursebooks. [52] The line "Would you mind + -ing" is a frequently covered language yet the responses to "Would you mind opening the window?" (line 9) were not precisely accurate. In a real-life situation the act of opening the window would have fallen on the enquirer. The speaker's goal would not be achieved and the verbally expressed request would not be satisfied. I believe the problem lies in the students' insufficient exposure to the language prior to the research resulting in the inability to decipher it correctly within the limited time they are given in spoken interaction.

The students' handling the initiation "Go away!" varied, yet all examples were acceptable. Ranging from a simple "Why?", via "It's not nice from you." to "No, I want to stay.", the responses displayed three possible reactions to a single initiation. *Demanding explanation*, *expressing disfavour* or *refusing to obey the order* present diverse language functions, all efficiently performed. The degree of assertiveness increase as we move from one student to another. This initiation was chosen to slightly consternate the students and observe their reaction to an unusual classroom situation. Although unrehearsed ever before in a lesson, students of all three levels handled the situation well.

Likewise, line 23 initiation has never, to my recollection, occurred in classroom language of any of the three students before. Yet when informed about an imperfection on their clothing, the students were capable of formulating fully acceptable responses. One of CLT principles is teaching students to cope in

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[52] See Section 6 Bibliography for list of up-to-date coursebooks.

unrehearsed situations. I believe this research item demonstrated that if the situation is comprehensible to the student, he/she manages to transfer L1 knowledge and, providing needed L2 language is available, renders an appropriate response.

4 Conclusion

Several phenomena can be derived from the research. Students of all levels were indeed capable of completing the assigned tasks with a higher or lower degree of **effectiveness** and **efficiency** while sustaining comprehensibility. Some complications occurred with accuracy. As Thornbury says, the students' mistakes and slips do not necessarily stem from lack of knowledge but may be caused by unavailability of the particular grammar or vocabulary. In other words, if the targeted language has not yet become a fully integrated part of the student's language knowledge and is thus difficult for him/her to retrieve, mistakes arise (Thornbury 2009, 28). The fact that students' **linguistic competence** surpasses their **communicative competence** was therefore not a surprising outcome of the research. An A1 student misusing personal pronouns (Recording 4, line 18), an A2 student making mistakes in present simple tense questions (Recording 12, lines 5 and 19), a B1 student experiencing difficulties retrieving a future tense structure (Recording 15, line 13), a B2 student failing to use present perfect tense where appropriate (Recording 7, line 27), a C1 student not recognizing that "Would you mind opening the window?" is a polite command not a request for permission (Recording 16, line 9) are all examples of students not actualizing the linguistic knowledge they possess when speaking. It has transpired, therefore, that communicative competence of the students involved in the research needs to be further deliberately and thoroughly trained in L2. Transference of L1 speaking skills into L2 ones is, indeed, not automatic. Especially examples of distorted **situation management** when students withdraw from assuming any responsibility for managing the discourse and instances of unexploited communication strategies in communication lapses led me to believe there is great space for improvement. For this purpose I feel students need to be instructed on the CLT and the related methodology applied in ELT. I agree with Thornbury that although many current ELT materials claim to be following the communicative language approach, speaking activities still vastly aim at practicing selected grammar, vocabulary or language functions (Thornbury 2009, 28). Rather than coaxing students into enhancing their speaking skills, these activities strengthen their linguistic competence.

As for communication predicaments, when a mistake or error leading to misapprehension occurred in the recordings, **communication strategies** were used. Questioning repeats were one of them (e.g. Recording 2, line 26 or Recording 5, line 5). There was no case of a complete and irrecoverable communication breakdown. There was merely one instance of a failure to complete the task in all its aspects and one example of the language switch CS solving the key problem of miscomprehension. Both of these occurred in one task conducted by A1 level students (Recording 11). With respect to assisted CS it is not an uncommon phenomenon for students to correct their colleagues in class. Peer assistance is a correction technique welcomed by teachers. In the case of the recordings, however, speakers restrained from ameliorating the other speaker's utterances.

Numerous **communication strategies** were applied, yet not every time there was a communication predicament. Circumlocution is, to my surprise, not as customary in the dialogues analysed as I presumed (see Section 3). On the other hand, lower level students often resorted to a **language switch,** as expected. Deciding whether to use L1 or finding the line of acceptability is an eternal struggle second language teachers undergo. In the Introduction I mentioned using L1 for conducting **outer language** communication, giving instructions and explaining new grammar points and how it is perceived by teachers. With respect to both the outer language and communication strategies, I again stress the need to limit L1 to a minimum, ideally eliminate it altogether. To argue that using L1 to introduce new targeted language is faster, clearer and thus more efficient and effective is purely giving priority to **linguistic competence** over the communicative one. Language can be presented, understood and mastered without using the mother tongue as a mediator. It is challenging and imposes considerably bigger strain on both the teacher and the learners but at the same time it represents more exposure to TL and encourages using **functional language** of explaining, checking comprehension and asking for clarification on the students' side. Let me expand on the last point. The ability to ask for clarification is precisely the CS I lacked in the recordings. A spontaneous L2 reaction to misapprehension and a strategy which would help the interlocutor **recover** the other speaker's **plan** did not emerge.

Many students also showed a lowered **threshold of termination** towards their colleagues which facilitated mutual understanding. On the contrary, though, it reduced the level of authenticity. In Section 1.2.1 I described a beginning of a lesson when a student offers the teacher a beverage. The reason why a teacher might consider the sentence "Do you like tea or coffee?" satisfactory and pretend he/she was in actuality offered a choice of drink could be the effort not to burden the student with grammar correction at that point of the lesson. Later on, possibly after the warm-up activity, it could be brought up again and explored. The next lesson, though, an accurate rendition would be required unconditionally. If we look at some of the definitions of **communicative language teaching**, we will find the argument that the key feature of this approach is to focus on carrying the message across. It is not difficult to deduce that when someone says "Do you like tea or coffee?" on your arrival that he/she is not actually asking about your drinking preferences but is performing the act of offering something. According to CLT this utterance should therefore suffice as effective communication. Nonetheless, a mistake like this one is unlikely to be left unremarked. I assert that the aforementioned situation provides an ideal ground for introducing **language functions** and should therefore be taken advantage of. The fact that outer language was involved, language easily imaginable in context by the student, contributes to the student's ability to associate it with a speech act and hence eventually store it in his/her long-term memory. The importance of finding out about our students' close environment, occupation, interests, etc. lies in our subsequent ability to set the taught language into a realistic context and facilitate retention of this language. This research has supported my opinion that it is often the **outer language** which is the most authentic and most resembles real-life language. We naturally treat students with utmost respect and choose discussion topics which are not confrontational, taboo, too personal or in any other way problematic. Likewise, when conducting a textbook speaking task we try to achieve task completion with minimal obstacles, avoiding differences of opinion. This approach, however, makes it impossible to simulate real-life situations with the inherent urgency and pressure they represent. Students are therefore unlikely to practice situations like these which they will, with high probability, face in practice. It is when you, for instance, miss a flight that you need to garner all your language abilities and effectively communicate with L2 speakers. And it is

situations like these that cause stress, impatience, desperation and render students mute. I do not propose that teachers create stressful atmosphere in lessons. I do think, however, that demanding situations should be used in role plays to get maximum out of students. And only when the participants truly agree on meaning should the activity be terminated. Any L1 tools must be rejected.

Regarding **situation management**, the research proved that some students become less assertive when communicating with a teacher. A lucid example of this phenomenon is Recording 6 above. As mentioned earlier, in situations like these the student needs to be constantly asked to initiate the activity and the teacher must learn how to provide coherent and acceptable response while limiting his/her teacher talking time to a minimum and being disposed to **situation monitoring**. When students of the same or similar CEFR level converse among themselves, the ones who are naturally more eloquent in their mother tongue tend to hold situation management firmly in their hands. As a result, they appear to be more prominent in communicative competences. We can witness this phenomenon in Recording 13. I reiterate, however, that articulate students are by no means necessarily more competent in L2 communication. As the aforementioned recording showed, efficiency plays a key role and as Tarone argues, one's L2 production strategy is an attempt to utilize one's language knowledge with minimal effort (Tarone 1981, 289). Recording 13 is a fitting example of different approaches to language and mainly diverse learning histories. While one student had gone through the ELT system in the Czech Republic and displays linguistic competence on a B2 level, the other leant her English primarily in an English-speaking work environment. Her experience with the language was therefore mostly practical. This is reflected in her extraordinarily developed communicative competence. The student reacts immediately, produces naturally-sounding language and is capable of handling difficult situations using various types of CS. Her colleague, on the other hand, shows better linguistic knowledge and produces more accurate language but needs longer formulation time.

A turn in the distribution of situation management occurred in the recordings with B2 and C1 level students. Whereas minor differences in the speakers' previous exposure to TL and their inherent approach to communication,

i.e. their reticence or loquaciousness, influenced situation management distribution with lower level students, with higher levels an approximate balance was established. The scales started to tip towards equality.

What I see most crucial with respect to **situation management,** is for teachers to choose or suitably adjust those tasks which will ensure an **information gap**. Students who are not interested in obtaining information will hardly make effort and devote sufficient zeal to carrying the task out diligently. Recording 3 and Recording 9 support this assumption. Recording 10, on the other hand, shows how outer language with real-life connectedness and consequences boosts the student's commitment to the task. I maintain that if the students engaged in Recording 11 had the intention to meet and go to an exhibition together in real terms, they would pay more attention to making the arrangements and would consequently not fail to agree on a day. Teachers must therefore bear in mind that classroom environment does not vastly contribute to authenticity. Inconceivable situations which require extensive imagination and role playing cause stress and anxiety in students and result into unwillingness to participate. On the other hand, retrieving information one already has is an activity in futile and sparks no interest in students either. The presupposition that things that are known to students are easy to talk about and should thus be preferred in ELT is valid under the condition that the facts are known only to individual students. Teachers are trained to show interest in anything and everything students say. Students, on the contrary, are not and since the task of speaking a foreign language is strenuous enough, they lean towards withdrawing from any activity which imposes further exertion.

Another factor influencing situation management is the inherent attitude some students adopt. Assuming a passive and submissive role towards the teacher or a more advanced learner is a habit many students have. In the recordings we could observe differences in the Role play activity compared to the Small talk activity. When students were given a specific task in a role play which required asking questions and thus acquiring information about the other, they followed the instructions and took turns asking and answering questions. When performing small talk, on the other hand, the more advanced student often gained control over the course of the conversation leaving the other to resign to **situation**

monitoring. This development occurred essentially when the scenario was teacher – student. As I have mentioned before, this is not a surprising fact due to the aforementioned factors. I drew the conclusion that one of the responsibilities of a language teacher is not only to keep his/her teacher talking time limited but at the same time train the students to perceive the trainer as an equal conversation partner. One way we can elicit questions from students in a dialogue is to deliberately and openly assume the role of the interviewee. In other words, become comfortable with being passive, responding only to immediate impulses, remaining silent when a lull occurs. Some students, like one of my A1 research students in Recording 4 and Recording 11, might introduce an incoherent digression from the core topic thanks to ineptitude, hastiness or uneasiness caused by silence, rendering the discussion adrift. I maintain though, that when students get accustomed to this technique, they will benefit form it and become more aware of situation management in a conversation and the manner in which they can steer communication.

In the Introduction I mentioned how the teacher's input as well as the student's approach influence SLA. I have come to the conclusion that students' awareness of communicative competence issues and deficiencies would help remedy the problems discussed in this paper and hence lead to students' progress in speaking skills. Using a recording device and subsequently scrutinizing the texts can, in my opinion, raise the student's awareness of his/her mistakes and facilitate further acquisition of communicative competence. Showing students the unnatural situation management pattern they tend to follow, lack of discourse markers, failure to listen and aptly react to adjacency pair initiations or their habit of using insufficient amount of pauses will bring another level to their SLA. Furthermore, hearing oneself in retrospect gives learners the chance to assess their vocabulary and grammar range and alerts them to imperfections they can consequently eliminate. As opposed to children, adult learners, in my opinion, benefit from minute evaluation of their demerits which they can knowingly try to dispose of.

As for determining the turning point in which a teacher should be bringing more attention to communicative and away from linguistic competence discussed

in Canale's and Swain's work[53], I maintain it should occur early on in the tuition. I feel it is accessible to focus on both aspects of the language simultaneously. Linguistic competence will undoubtedly develop faster in the first stage, basic speaking skill, however, may be formed in close succession. Ultimately, effective communication is the aim of SLA in the majority of cases.

Analyzing recordings of classroom language was a unique technique which elucidated the way ESOL students handle L2 speaking. A minute analysis of a transcript is incomparably more enriching than class monitoring. It gave me the chance to observe, in detail, the patterns students use, how their communicative competences differ according to the CEFR level, what causes communication breakdowns and how capable or incapable of solving them students are. It thus provided a vast material to consider in my future ELT practice. A rather unsettling outcome was the realization that my language has, through several years of teaching, adjusted to classroom requirements perhaps to an unfavourable degree. I have come across a few instances in the recordings in which I had facilitated the situation for the students by assuming responsibility for situation management, offering solutions to communication breakdowns, using typical inner language unsuitable for authentic communication. Furthermore, as an ELT professional I have learnt that if I desire my students to enhance their communicative competence I must be more consistent in teaching functional language of asking for clarification and raise my threshold of termination in order not to alleviate students' communication.

Regarding the activities used in this research they were chosen for the variety of situations they presented, i.e. a role play providing students with core information and a character they needed to further develop, small talk to give them the opportunity to work with their personal experience and data, a manipulative task to coax them into negotiating, adjacency pairs to observe their immediate reaction to a context-free line. The outcome presented a valuable and varied material to analyze and draw conclusions from.

Role plays are undoubtedly a useful tool in CLT and one which should be exploited extensively. Nevertheless, to achieve students' full commitment to the

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[53] See Section 1.2.1 in this thesis or (Canale and Swain 1980, 18).

task the teacher needs to pay close attention to instructions and lead the students in carefully and thoroughly. Role plays are often accepted unfavourably, in my experience, especially by students who are naturally reticent and unimaginative. This research has helped me realize that their disfavour is well grounded if the role play is artificial and inauthentic to the extent that students are incapable of conceptualizing the situation. The failure to image the text one would produce in his/her L1 increases stress levels students experience and may result in inability or unwillingness to complete the task.

Small talk activities, on the other hand, face the danger of insufficient information gap, notably when students are familiar with each other and meet regularly. Swiftly coming up with presentable ideas might seem easy for teachers or advanced eloquent speakers, it is rather challenging, though, for lower level learners. Formulate their utterances in L2 is strenuous enough and adding the requirement of imaginative thinking demands extra effort. I would ergo recommend utilizing outer language as much as possible. Asking students at the beginning of a lesson how their week went may appear uncreative, tedious and repetitive. It nevertheless serves the purpose of giving and obtaining information under real operating conditions. Teachers should take advantage of their ability to show interest and encourage students to engage in small talk. Furthermore, as the research has established, students should be taught to reciprocate and conduct a balanced conversation with proportional situation management.

Instances of manipulative instrumental tasks are recurrently present in case studies in coursebooks.[54] The difficulties teachers may encounter when assigning case studies are the complexity of the situations which often require an elaborate context description, time-consuming preparation, the lack of students' ardour and the differences in enthusiasm and commitment among students. As with role plays, I reiterate that lead-ins are crucial when introducing case studies or other forms of manipulative tasks. The benefit of these tasks is their resemblance of real-life scenarios and the activation of functional language students face. Unfortunately, apart from discussing homework, arranging successive lessons and

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[54] For instance the textbook series Business Result (see Bibliography 6) includes a case study at the end of each unit giving students the chance to practice the newly acquired language in a simulated real-life situation.

communicating schedule changes, there are not many authentic situations which come up throughout the course and the teacher must fabricate them purposely or utilize published materials.

As far as the adjacency pairs activity is concerned, it pointed to deficiencies in several areas of functional language. Certain initiations require or at least expect certain responses. L2 learners, providing they understand the initial line, should not be confronted by predicaments selecting an appropriate and acceptable response as it should match the one they would provide in their L1. Students know how to react to an offer, command, apology, invitation, etc. The struggle should therefore be limited solely to L2 production. The crux of the problems, I believe, inheres either in the unfamiliarity with the language or its unavailability, i.e. students are unable to retrieve the required language in speech due to limited planning time. This activity was an efficient tool for monitoring the students' language skills. Both communicative and linguistic competence may be assessed this way.

To summarize the impact of the research on my future ELT briefly, it has shown me that discourse actions, either situation management or monitoring, play a vital role in L2 communication and must not be taken for granted. The teacher's duty is not only to monitor the accuracy and functionality of the language, but also to study students' discourse management, exchange structures and use of discourse markers. Secondly, a teacher must look out for students whose natural inhibitions force them to perceive L2 conversations as one-sided and assume the role of an interviewee. Thirdly, L2 communication strategies need to be strongly supported by the teacher with the prospect of enhancing students' overall communicative competence.

4.1 Future directions

Further research connected to students' communicative competence could concern:

a)   monitoring second language learners' confidence in speaking L2, what influences it, how it develops and activities which enhance it. The question to what extent one's confidence in producing L2 is given by one's innate characteristics would undoubtedly be an interesting

one to examine. The outcome of the research could comprise of guidelines intended to help teachers encompass relevant confidence boosting activities in ELT.

b)   drawing students into the theoretical aspect of SLA by providing thorough explanations of ELT activities substantiation and monitoring the students' reception of them. Involving students directly in SLA techniques, consulting their preferences and the justifications of these preferences might reveal stimulating information to ELT practitioners. It would be interesting to examine the outcome of extensive use of awareness-raising activities.

c)   monitoring how systematic and consistent incorporating of sophisticated case studies into regular tuition contributes to students' production and communication strategies. Case studies are present in many ELT materials nowadays. I feel that they are, however, frequently used as complementary material and merely to enliven lessons. Studying the outcome of a course based mainly on authentic case studies could bring some interesting results.

d)   observing the effect of repeated viewings of a single authentic video item on students' retention of previously unknown vocabulary and sentence structures. Students encounter classroom material in the majority of cases when they are exposed to L2. Authentic video would support their awareness of the L2 as it is nowadays used in practice. This project would, by my assumption, appeal mostly to audio learners.

5 Resumé

Nedílnou součástí **osvojení si cizího jazyka** je bezpochyby nabytí schopnosti v daném jazyce komunikovat. Z vlastní zkušenosti vím, a myslím, že by mi to potvrdil nejeden lektor, že studenti rychleji zvládnout **receptivní jazykové dovednosti**, tj. porozumění textu a poslechu včetně pasivní znalosti gramatiky. **Produktivní dovednosti**, tj. psaní a mluvení, ve většině případů za receptivními zaostávají. Podíváme-li se na produkci jazyka, orální komunikace pak bývá často pro studenty z mnoha důvodů nejnáročnější. V této práci se nezabývám těmito důvody, ale **komunikativní kompetencí** dospělých studentů angličtiny. Komunikativní kompetence je široký pojem a zahrnuje mnoho oblastí vhodných k výzkumu. Omezila jsem se proto na **situační management** a **komunikační strategie**. Situační management odkazuje na řízení diskurzu, tj. angažovanost účastníků rozhovoru v navigování komunikace určitým směrem, který vede k dosažení komunikačního cíle. Komunikační strategie jsou nástroje, které student používá ke kompenzaci nedostatků svých znalostí cizího jazyka.

Komunikativní kompetence studentů zahrnuje schopnost se v cizím jazyce efektivně dorozumět. Doplňuje tak **lingvistické znalosti** o daném jazyce, bez kterých by komunikace nebyla možná. Jedním z problémů výuky cizích jazyků, se kterým se lektoři setkávají, je ale převaha lingvistických znalostí nad komunikativními. Jinými slovy, studenti mají často široké znalosti o daném jazyce, jejich schopnost ho v praktické komunikaci využívat je ale slabá. Rozhodla jsem se podívat na tyto nedostatky hlouběji a pomocí kvalitativního výzkumu analyzovat úskalí, do kterých se studenti dostávají, a jak jim čelí. Do výzkumu byla zahrnuta skupina studentů anglického jazyka pokrývající pět jazykových úrovní stanovených podle **Evropského referenčního rámce**. Studentům od úrovně A1 po C1 byly předloženy čtyři typy úkolů a studenti byli následně nahráváni při jejich plnění. Jednalo se vždy o komunikaci dvou lidí, a to buď studenta s lektorem, nebo dvou studentů. Výše zmíněné úkoly se lišily obsahem i cílem.

První úkol, tzv. **hraní rolí**, zahrnoval dialog fiktivních osobností účastnících se večírku v Londýně. Cílem každého studenta bylo seznámit se s druhým studentem, získat o něm nějaké osobní údaje a rozhovor ukončit.

Studenti museli tudíž ztvárnit roli nějaké osobnosti, doplnit postavu osobními informacemi a v této roli vystupovat v dialogu. Situace vyžadovala, aby studenti využívali funkční jazyk pozdravů, kladli otázky a na otázky kolegů reagovali a opět funkčním jazykem rozhovor ukončili a rozloučili se.

Druhý typ úkolu byl krátký **společenský rozhovor** situovaný do pracovního prostředí. Studenti byli v pozici kolegů, kteří se potkají po víkendu v práci, pozdraví se, pohovoří o víkendových aktivitách a rozloučí se. Situace tentokrát nevyžadovala výraznou imaginace, pouze sdělování faktů. Od studentů se očekávalo, že předvedou koherentní a autentický rozhovor. Situace byla vybrána právě pro svou autentičnost a častý výskyt v běžné každodenní komunikaci. Náročnost předpokládaného textu nebyla vysoká. Účelem cvičení bylo zjistit, jak studenti zvládají běžný rozhovor zahrnující iniciaci, kladení a zodpovídání jednoduchých otázek a ukončení rozhovoru.

Třetí úkol se od předchozích dvou lišil tím, že se nejednalo o komunikaci interaktivní ale **transakční**, tj. takovou, ve které je účelem účastníků od druhého něco získat či ho přimět, aby něco udělal. V našem případě se jednalo o domluvení si schůzky a s tím spojené vyjednávání času a okolností. V tomto úkolu jsme předpokládala, že studenti využijí funkční jazyk vyjednávání, kompromisů, ústupků, potvrzování výroků, apod. Situace byla vždy přizpůsobena jednotlivým párům studentů tak, aby co nejblíže simulovala jejich autentické prostředí.

V posledním typu úkolu měli studenti reagovat na izolované věty, které zahajovaly **sekvenční páry** bez kontextu. Nejednalo se tudíž o plynulý rozhovor. Délka ani struktura odpovědi nebyly definované. Iniciace sekvenčních párů byly vybrány tak, aby pokrývaly širokou škálu funkčního jazyka. Jejich náročnost se neměnila lineárně, ale fluktuovala. Účel toho řazení byl ten, že studenti by při lineárním navyšování obtížnosti mohli být od určitého bodu demotivování a dokončení úkolu by tak bylo ohroženo.

Na všech výše zmíněných úkolech, které byly nahrávány, přepisovány a následně analyzovány, jsem sledovala, jak studenti zvládají **situační management**. **Střídání mluvčích** v rozhovoru je pravidlo, které si student převezme ze svého mateřského jazyka. Nemusí se mu tudíž učit. Předpokládala

jsem proto, že předávání slova bude v rozhovorech více či méně rovnoměrně rozdělené. Co se týče řízení dialogu, zajímalo mě, jaké faktory budou toto ovlivňovat a zda bude možno výstup zohlednit ve výuce. Z běžné výuky mám zkušenost, že studenti

a) mají tendenci zaujímat spíše pasivní roli v rozhovoru s lektorem,

b) často nevyvíjejí snahu stát se v rozhovoru rovnocenným partnerem, natož komunikaci ovládat,

c) musí být vyzváni k převzetí iniciativy a pokud jsou, prokáže se, že jsou do určité míry schopni kontrolovat situační management.

Mám pocit, že prostředí jazykové učebny nepřispívá k autentičnosti jazyka a studentům tak neumožňuje cvičit cizí jazyk tak, jak ho následně používají v praxi. Spoléhat se na lektora, že převezme veškerou kontrolu nad situačním managementem v komunikaci je do jisté míry logické a vyplývá z rozvržení autority ve skupině, nicméně neodpovídá skutečným podmínkám mimo učebnu. Vypozorovala jsem, a mnozí studenti mi to potvrdili osobně, že v okamžiku, kdy se student zvyklí na toto rozvržení sil dostane do cizojazyčné situace, není schopen iniciovat komunikaci a má dokonce potíže stát se jejím účastníkem.

Z výzkumu vyplynulo, že studenti skutečně nevyužívají svých lingvistických dovedností v maximální možné míře a spíše mají tendenci omezovat se na pasivní roli a **situační monitoring,** tj. pouhé komentování zřetelných dat. Vliv na to mělo jednak to, zda daný student komunikoval s lektorem, nebo s jiným studentem, jednak osobnost studentů, která se projevila v míře výřečnosti obecně. Hraní rolí se ukázalo být v tomto směru nápomocné tím, že studenty nutí být aktivními účastníky komunikace. Úkoly s volnějším zadáním, které nechávají průběh a rozsah komunikace na studentech, dávají mluvčím prostor vymezit si vlastní rámec angažovanosti. Situační management proto často přestává být vyvážený a hovornější a sebevědomější účastník přebírá kontrolu nad vývojem situace.

Co se týče **komunikačních strategií**, jejich pojmenování se mírně liší mezi autory, nicméně koncepty jsou převážně stejné. Na nahrávkách jsem se snažila sledovat, jaké komunikační strategie studenti nejčastěji používají a proč.

Následně jsem zvažovala, zda a jak tyto nejfrekventovanější strategie podporovat či eliminovat ve slovním projevu studentů. Předpokládala jsem, že nejčastěji budou studenti uplatňovat **přejití do mateřského jazyka**. U vyšších jazykových úrovní jsme pak očekávala častý výskyt **opisu** či **aproximace**. Jedním z důvodů tohoto výzkumu byl právě můj pocit, že studenti nepoužívají komunikační strategie v dostatečné míře a příliš často se spoléhají na přejití do mateřského jazyka, opuštění tématu, či žádost o pomoc u lektora. Podle mého názoru je schopnost mluvčího předcházet komunikačnímu selhání a dostat se z komplikovaných situací výhradně pomocí cílového jazyka je klíčová pro efektivní komunikativní kompetenci. Z dosavadní praxe mi vyplývá, že studenti si toho nejsou vědomi a že ani lektoři na to neberou dostatečný zřetel. Maximální využití byť omezených lingvistických znalostí by mělo být jednou z priorit v komunikativním přístupu k výuce.

Studenti nižších jazykových úrovní využívali, podle očekávání, přejití do mateřského jazyka jako nejčastější **komunikační strategii**. Podle mého názoru je tento jev třeba eliminovat nebo alespoň minimalizovat a to převážně z důvodu jeho neefektivnosti v praktickém životě. Fakt, že studenti málo využívali opisu a aproximace mne výrazně nepřekvapilo, ale nasvědčuje o nevhodných návycích studentů a zároveň poukazuje na nedostatečný důraz, který je na komunikační strategie v cílovém jazyce kladen ve výuce. U studentů B2 a C1 úrovně nedocházelo k častým jazykovým obtížím a komunikační strategie nebylo potřeba ve velké míře uplatňovat. Zajímavou skupinou se ale ukázala být úroveň B1. Dalo by se očekávat, že studenti na této úrovni budou schopni řešit problémy pomocí jiných komunikačních strategií než je přepnutí do češtiny. Fakt, že tomu tak nebylo, opět poukazuje na nedostatek povědomí o jiných strategiích, které by byly účinnější či na jejich nedokonalé zvládnutí.

Z výzkumu lze vyvodit několik doporučení pro lektory cizích jazyků. Věřím, že většina lektorů by uvítala, kdyby se komunikativní kompetence jejich studentů vyvíjely rovnoměrně s nabýváním nových znalostí lingvistických. Doporučila bych soustředit se na situační management, tj. sledovat míru do jaké studenti participují na řízení komunikace a v případě pasivity studenty usilovněji povzbuzovat. Dospělí studenti, oproti dětem, vstřebávají jazyk vědomě a často velmi systematicky. Z tohoto důvodu je pro ně upozornění na nedostatky v jejich

komunikaci a jejich následný rozbor prospěšný. Jinými slovy, pokud lektor shledá, že student má sklon k přílišné pasivitě v komunikaci v cizím jazyce, doporučuji na to studenta otevřeně upozornit a soustředit se v následné výuce na odstranění tohoto nedostatku.

Co se týče komunikačních strategií, věřím, že je třeba tyto představit jako jednu z prvních oblastí funkčního jazyka na začátku kurzu. Společně s vytrvalým odmítáním přepínání do mateřského jazyka je třeba studenty učit alternativním komunikačním strategiím a nepodceňovat jejich smysl.

Jako zásadní také vidím snahu lektora zprostředkovat studentům co nejautentičtější a nejpřirozenější jazyk. K tomu lze využít mnohé publikované materiály a moderní učebnice, ale také na míru připravované materiály. U navozování realistických situací je třeba dbát na jejich praktičnost a zasazení do studentům blízkého prostředí. Dále bych doporučila používat techniku nahrávání a analyzování diskurzu, která byla použita v tomto výzkumu, v běžné výuce. Analýza nahrávek je obohacující jak pro lektora, tak pro studenty.

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