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Sociocultural Competence in ESL

Sociokulturní kompetence ve výuce angličtiny

jako cizího jazyka

Master's Diploma Thesis

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Declaration

I declare that I worked on my thesis on my own and that all the sources I used are listed in the bibliography.

Olomouc May 17, 2011

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ABSTRACT

This thesis deals with the role of sociocultural competence in teaching English as a Second Language (ESL). The term ESL is often used as synonymous to English as Foreign Language (EFL). It can also refer to English as a secondary language of the country. In this thesis the term is used in the former sense – English as a Foreign Language. The aim of this thesis is to find out to what extent ESL textbooks incorporate sociocultural competence in their teachings, as well as to suggest possible ways to improve this insufficiency.

Taking into consideration the fact that language and culture cannot be separated from each other, one cannot communicate without expressing his/her culture. Thus sociocultural competence is an ability to communicate in a language appropriately, situationally and culturally. It is the knowledge of customs, rules, beliefs and principles of a given society.

The theoretical part of this thesis deals with different classifications of culture and its interconnection to language. Provided that English is a Lingua Franca (ELF) of today's world, it no longer serves merely for communication between two native speakers or between a native and a non-native speaker. Rather, English also is the most frequently used language for communication between two non-native speakers. Thus, the knowledge of the Anglo-Saxon culture seems to no longer be sufficient. The section which deals with the concept of ELF is followed by selected elements of both verbal and non-verbal communication which are necessary for efficient communication in ELF.

The practical part consists of ESL textbook analysis and suggestions for games to raise intercultural awareness in ESL classes. The results of the thesis are summed up in the conclusion. Additional intercultural activities can be found in the appendices.

INTRODUCTION

Since the seventeenth century the English language has undergone a change from a local language spoken in the British Islands to the most widely used language in the world. Most international conferences are held in English; and the vast majority of scholarly articles are published in English. Dominant broadcasting companies, film and music production use English as a primary language. English is one of the official languages of the most important international institutions and organizations such as the EU, UN, UNICEF, NATO and many others. English replaced French as the lingua franca of diplomacy after the Second World War (see e.g. Schmied 5-20). The majority of high level jobs require the knowledge of English. The importance of English cannot be equated to any other existing language. The two other widely used languages, Chinese and Spanish, are unlikely to take place of English in the future. Chinese is one of the most difficult languages in the world; therefore, it seems rather improbable to replace English as a language used for global communication. Spanish-speaking countries, on the other hand, cannot compete on the economic level with the English-speaking countries, which would be required were it to try and take the place of English as the lingua franca of the world.

English no longer serves merely for communication between two native speakers or between a native and a non-native speaker; English is also the most frequently used language for communication between two non-native speakers. Non-native speakers of English have already outnumbered native speakers at a rate of 4:1 (see e.g. Bhatt 527-550). Therefore, in real life, the student of English as a Second Language (ESL¹) is most likely to use English to deal with people from many different countries both in his/her private and professional life. English has truly become a lingua franca, a language used for communication between speakers who do not share the same mother tongue.

Even in the twenty-first century when globalization seems to be affecting the whole world, there still remains a distinct culture in every nation or ethnic group. It has become unavoidable to communicate with cultures other than one's own. Although most of this communication is achieved in English, it is necessary that one have knowledge of foreign culture he/she comes in contact with. "In the world of rapidly globalizing business, Internet proximity and politico-economic associations, the ability to interact successfully with

¹ The term English as a Second Language (ESL) used in this thesis is to be understood as synonymous to English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

foreign partners in the sphere of commercial activity, diplomatic intercourse and scientific interchange is seen as increasingly essential and desirable" (Lewis 27-28). The lack of cultural awareness may often result in intercultural misunderstandings and communication breakdowns. The student of ESL can develop language proficiency, but that does not need to guarantee him/her to become a successful English speaker.

Language is not an isolated entity; it is a part of the society which uses it. It is "a system of signs that is seen as having itself a cultural value" (Kramsh, *Language* 3). At the same time society and its culture are reflected in its language. Every proposition pronounced in a particular language contains culturally specific meaning which can be easily overlooked unless one is familiar with the culture. "There is a natural connection between the language spoken by members of a social group and that group's identity" (Ibid.). It is thus necessary to stress the importance of incorporating the "sociocultural competence" into the foreign language teaching and learning. Learning a foreign language also means learning a foreign culture because one cannot separate one from the other (see e.g. Seghers 63-71; Kramsch, *Language* 9; Sinagatullin 127).

This thesis aims to deal with the role of the sociocultural competence in ESL classes. The theoretical part deals with the concept of English as a Lingua Franca and some relevant features of sociocultural competence necessary for an effective communication. The practical part of this thesis focuses on selected textbooks of ESL. The goal is to analyze to what extent they reflect the sociocultural competence a student needs to succeed as a user of English as a lingua franca. Various suggestions, which could help to raise intercultural awareness in ESL classes, will follow the analysis.

General English textbooks for both young and adult learners do not, in particular, pay attention to this key competence. Rather, they focus on linguistic competence. They might provide the learner with some cultural background which, however, takes into account (for the most part) just the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States and perhaps also Australia. The selected textbooks for this analysis are *International Express* which is a General English textbook with Business English orientation, and *New Headway* which is a General English textbook.

I. THEORETICAL PART

1 SOCIOCULTURAL COMPETENCE IN ESL

1.1 Communicative Competence

The term "communicative competence" was coined by Dell Hymes, an American sociolinguist and anthropologist, in his book *On Communicative Competence* (1972). In the work, Hymes extended Noah Chomsky's theory of "linguistic competence". The concept of communicative competence was further developed by Michael Canale and Merrill Swain. Canale defines communicative competence as "the underlying systems of knowledge and skills required for communication" (5). He divides the communicative competence into four components: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic competence. The sociocultural competence is included in sociolinguistic competence.

Communicative competence (Canale):

1. Grammar competence: the mastery of the language code.
2. Discourse Competence: combination of forms and meanings to achieve a unified spoken or written text in different types of texts.
3. Strategic competence: mastery of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that may be called into action for two main reasons: to compensate for breakdowns and to enhance to effectiveness of communication.
4. Sociolinguistic competence: sociocultural rules of use (3-11).

1.2 Sociocultural Competence

Canale states that "utterances are produced and understood appropriately in different sociolinguistic contexts depending on contextual factors such as status of participants, purposes of the interaction, and norms or conventions of interaction. Appropriateness of utterance refers to both appropriateness of meaning and appropriateness of form" (6). Particular communicative functions, such as invitation, ask for help, expressing regret etc., or attitudes, such as politeness, may be seen as more or less appropriate with respect to the situation or to the culture. In other words what is polite in one country can be impolite in another. The latter is concerned with what is proper in

a given context. For instance, in one culture it might be appropriate to start a formal conversation with the question "How are you?" and in another it might seem too personal.

In the past, language was perceived as a system of signs translatable from one language into another. However, language is much more than just words. Every word or a phrase carries a meaning which may be the same, slightly or completely different from a word or a phrase in another language. Compare for example Czech birthday wish "Všechno nejlepší" (meaning "I wish you all the best") and the English "Happy birthday". Although the context is the same, the means and the very meaning are not.

In fact, language as a part of human behavior differs from culture to culture. It is no more important for a foreign language learner to master grammar rules than to be able to communicate effectively. This, however, does not mean that grammar should be neglected, because without the knowledge of grammar one can hardly create meaningful sentences or communicate precisely and appropriately. With respect to the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, the communicative competence becomes increasingly topical. To become a successful user of a foreign language it is necessary to consider another aspect of foreign language teaching and learning – the sociocultural competence. This aspect had been neglected in foreign language teaching for a long time; however, recently it started to attract more and more attention from linguists, textbook writers, methodologists, and ESL teachers.

1.3 Definition of Culture

There are numerous definitions of culture. Sapir states that it is, "an assemblage of socially inherited practices and beliefs that determines the texture of our lives" (207). Banks describes culture as "values, symbols, interpretations, and perspectives that distinguish one people from another in modernized societies" (qtd. in Sinagatullin 40). Ovado, based on Hall (1976), defines the "three basic traits of culture":

1. Culture is shared and exists only in relation to specific social grouping.
2. Cultural components are interrelated.
3. Culture is learned and not carried in genes" (Sinagatullin 44).

Firth notes that "every man carries his culture and much of his social reality about with him wherever he goes" (66). Although we may not be aware of our own culture, it is

embedded inside of us and we may not realize that until we encounter someone from a distinct culture. The way we act both verbally and non-verbally seems to be logical and natural, because it corresponds with the norms and laws of our society. "We smile at foreign eccentricity, congratulating ourselves on our normality" (Lewis 3). Firth adds, "throughout the period of growth we are progressively incorporated into our social organization, and the chief condition and means of that incorporation is learning to say what the other fellow expects us to say under the given circumstances" (67). If we travel and encounter people from a different society we are often unaware of their norms or habits and, therefore, we may not fulfill the other person's expectations, which may lead to misunderstanding or even a conflict.

Hofstede defines culture as "software of mind"(6). Culture should be distinguished from one's personality and universal human nature. Culture can be thus perceived as one of the factors which form one's personality in broader sense, For Hofstede's "mental programming" concept see Figure 1.

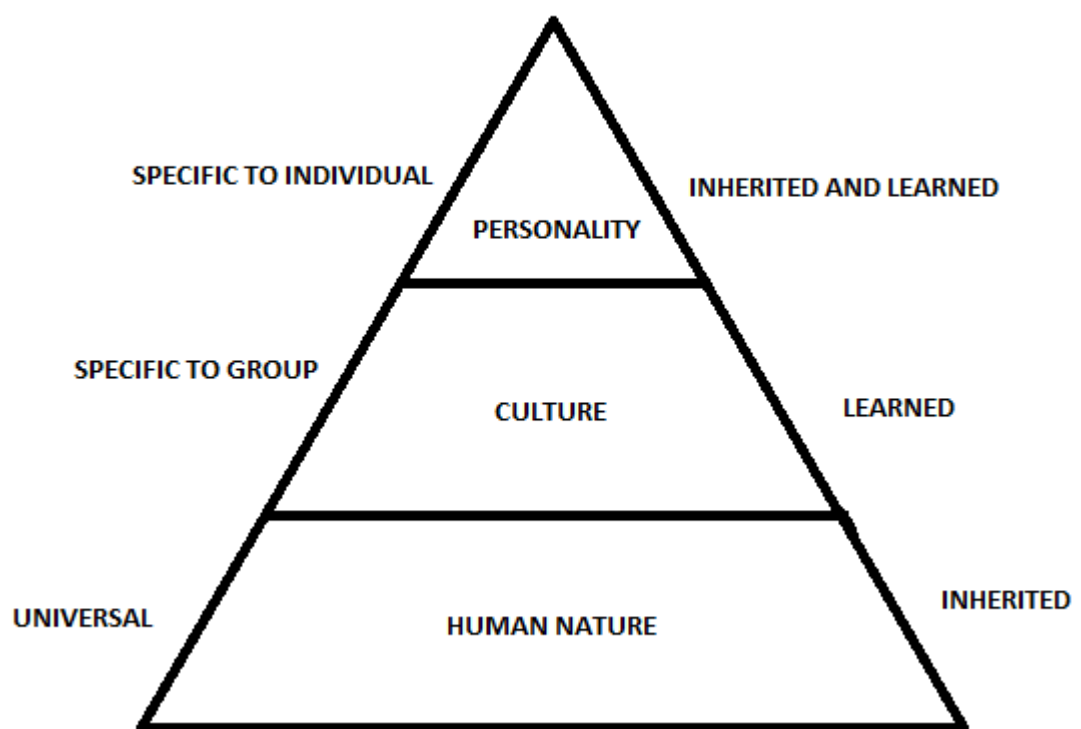


Figure 1 Three levels of uniqueness in human mental programming.

Personality and human nature are innate. Culture, on the contrary, is learned. It is, thus, possible to adapt to a foreign culture and become bi- or multi-cultural. One simply cannot insist on following just his/her own cultural rules if he/she wants to communicate politely with foreigners.

Kramersch writes that culture is a "membership in a discourse community that shares a common social space and history, and common imagination" (Language 10). She also emphasizes that culture is heterogeneous. This means members of a society cannot be seen as a single entity. They differ in many aspects. There is no typical member of a society or a nation. We can hardly find a prototypical American, Brit or Italian. However, according to Lewis, "the inhabitants of any country possess certain core beliefs and assumptions of reality which will manifest themselves in their behavior" (Ibid. xvii). Nobody behaves certain way just because he/she was born an Australian or Korean; nevertheless, growing up in a culture one accepts its norms and rules and acts according to them – he/she learns the culture (see Fig. 1).

Kramersch also adds an important aspect which is that "cultures are changing constantly" (Language 10). It is logical that the changes in society affect the language, which at the same time reflects the changes of society. It can never remain the same because it is a living phenomenon which develops in accordance with its society. Therefore, there may also be a distinct difference between generations. Other important factors which form one's personality are gender, religion, ethnicity, political orientation, class, education, and environment (geographical). Those factors are not dealt with in this thesis.

1.3.1 Categorizing Culture

Culture can be categorized into many different groups according to various criteria. In following sections several categorizations of different scholars will be discussed.

1.3.1.1 B. H. Erickson

Erickson (qtd. in Sinagatullin 45) distinguishes between "high" and "low culture," where high culture is "what is in museums, symphony halls and theater" (Ibid.), whereas low culture signifies popular culture. He also notes that some products of culture are "objective" or visible such as food, clothes, artifacts and some are "subjective" (45) or less visible such as attitudes, values or norms of behavior. The latter category, undoubtedly, has

a significant importance for communicating interculturally. One can easily acquire the knowledge of the objective culture by reading books, watching films or visiting theaters, concerts or galleries. On the other hand, to grasp the subjective culture, one has to do more. For effective communication a student of ESL needs to develop cultural sensitivity by observing and learning about beliefs, rituals a contextual behavior of the target culture.

1.3.1.2 G. Hofstede

Hofstede uses the categories of masculinity/femininity, high/low power distance, and high/low uncertainty avoidance. Hofstede's results are based on respondents (employees of the IBM Company) from fifty countries and regions.

1. Masculinity/femininity

Cultures that are high on the masculinity scale tend to differentiate sex roles more than cultures low on the masculinity scale which, on the other hand, emphasize fluid gender roles. This means that in countries which are low on masculinity scale women or men do not have prescribed place in society. According to Hofstede, Japan, Austria², Venezuela, Italy and Switzerland make up the top five countries, whereas, Sweden, Norway, the Netherlands, Denmark, Costa Rica make up the bottom ones (84). In my opinion, the Czech Republic belongs to feminine rather than masculine cultures (see also Lewis 301).

In masculine cultures, men are expected to be assertive, focus on material success, whereas women are supposed to be modest, tender and oriented towards the quality of life. On the contrary, in feminine cultures, social roles overlap – both men and women are expected to correspond with the above mentioned feminine characteristic (Hofstede 82).

The difference between masculinity and femininity cultures is apparent also in an educational context. In masculine cultures, the best students set the norm, while in feminine cultures it is average students (90). According to Hofstede, students from feminine cultures tend to cooperate more than students from masculine cultures who tend to compete with each other (Ibid.).

² It is rather surprising to find Austria high on masculinity scale. On the basis of personal study abroad experience of the author of this thesis, we cannot agree with Hofstede at this point. The male and female roles in Austria clearly overlap.

2. Power Distance

This criterion is also closely related to the school environment. Autocratic cultures (with high power distance) maintain teacher-oriented education, as opposed to democratic cultures (with low power distance), which maintain student-centered education. In cultures of the first group (the top five are Malaysia, Guatemala, Panama, the Philippines and Mexico), the teacher serves as a figure of great authority that is distanced from his/her students. In cultures of the second group (the top five are Austria, Israel, Denmark, New Zealand and Ireland), the teacher is more of an advisor, assistant or operator (26). In student-oriented education, the student is expected to ask questions and to be an active participant of the discussion, unlike in teacher oriented cultures where student listens and only answers teacher's questions (34-35).

This often causes problems in cases where the students come from a high power distance culture and the teacher from a low power distance culture or vice versa. For instance an American teacher in China can get frustrated about his students who are accustomed to a different approach and who are thus reluctant to answer questions and participate in discussions (see e.g. Liu 90-97).

3. Uncertainty Avoidance³

Students from high uncertainty avoidance cultures (Greece, Portugal, Guatemala, Uruguay and Belgium) prefer structured, predictable, clear situations; whereas students from low uncertainty avoidance cultures (Singapore, Jamaica, Denmark, Sweden, Hong Kong) prefer individual, innovative learning and teaching (Hofstede 113-120). Again, if one is not aware of this aspect, it can have a negative effect on the students.

4. Individualism/Collectivism

Individualistic cultures emphasize the individual, while collectivistic cultures focus on collective (see also Martin and Nakayama 39-41). Hofstede gives the USA, Australia, UK, Italy and Sweden the top five individualistic cultures in contrast to Guatemala, Ecuador, Panama, Venezuela and Columbia, the top five collectivistic cultures (67).

³ Information in this section is based on research in summer school for international teachers of management – International Teachers Program in 1980.

Students in individualistic cultures are taught to think in terms of "I", whereas students in collectivistic cultures are taught to think in terms of "we" (67).

Students from individualistic cultures are more likely to be independent, used to individual work whereas collectivistic students feel more comfortable in teams. On the other hand, Liu (92), who has experience of teaching in collectivistic China, argues that "Chinese learners are more accustomed to passive, mechanical routine and independent study rather than active, creative and spontaneous cooperation with peers" (Ibid.). Therefore, it is not necessarily a given that people in collectivistic culture tend to cooperate more than people in individualistic cultures. Americans, for example, although considered to be from an individualistic culture, like to work in teams.

This difference plays an important role in intercultural communication and ESL classes as well. "Fundamental capacities of individuals to think and reason are not likely to be affected by cultural differences but different cultural groups got accustomed to using specific cognitive and learning styles" (Sinagatullin 202). Even though one can argue that every student is an individual who has his or her own specific learning style, every country tends to use certain learning strategies more than other strategies. The choice of these strategies differs internationally, and has an impact on their students, regardless on their individual learning tendencies.

In relation to culture, Sinagatullin divides students into "field dependent", who prefer to work cooperatively and perceive the subject matter as a whole, and "field independent" students, who tend to work individually and are inclined to analyze a part of the whole (204). Therefore, the students of the first group have an overall knowledge of the subject matter as opposed to students of the latter group who have deeper knowledge of a particular part of the subject matter. For field dependent cultures Sinagatullin names Africans, Hispanics, Asians, Native Americans and African Americans; and for the field independent students he points out the Americans (students of European descent) and Northern Europeans (Ibid).

1.3.1.3 E. T. Hall and M. Hall

Hall and Hall (qtd. in Sinagatullin 48-49) add another two relevant criteria – those of time and context.

1. Polychronic and monochronic.

Polychronic nations value human relationships over strict schedules. They can also focus on several activities at once; punctuality is not a priority. Monochronic nations tend to focus on one activity at a time; punctuality is expected. Hall and Hall names Latin American and Arabic countries as an example of polychronic cultures as opposed to the USA, Switzerland or Germany, which the authors consider to be monochronic cultures.

2. High/low Context

This criterion is concerned with the amount of information adequate for a conversational situation. In high context cultures, very little is explicitly said. Participants in the conversation need a certain background or knowledge of commonly used strategies. In low context, little prior knowledge is required. Hofstede classifies Japan, the Mediterranean, and Arabic countries as high context, and the USA⁴, Switzerland and Northern Europe as low context countries.

1.3.1.4 I. M. Sinagatullin

According to above mentioned criteria Sinagatullin (51-76) characterizes selected "ethnic cultures". Sinagatullin both skips and adds some more criteria that he considers typical for a given group. The author focuses on most of the major ethnic groups of the United States.

From an outsider's point of view, one could come to the conclusion that the inhabitants of the USA share the same culture; therefore, it would not be necessary to study each ethnic group separately. However, it is not that simple. Mainstream Americans who represent the core values of the American society are descendants of the British. Native Americans still maintain their unique culture which is indigenous to the geographical area

⁴ Not suprisingly, the United States are considered the lowest context country. Considering that the United States is a country of immigrants, for effective communication everything must be made as explicit and clear as possible.

of the USA. Hispanics and Asian Americans⁵ represent two out of three major minorities in the country. Even if some of them might have been living in the USA for decades or more, these groups are still influenced by their former culture to a significant extent – many of them live in ethnic neighborhoods and respect their ancestors' traditions and values. Last but not least, the African Americans, whose translocation to the USA was involuntary and violent, developed a specific culture, which is a mixture of American and various African cultures.

The USA is such a diverse country that it feels perfectly appropriate to consider at least the three major ethnic groups as well as the indigenous group (Native Americans) separately from the mainstream American group.

1. Mainstream Americans (Anglo-Saxon heritage)

- Individualistic but concerned about the welfare of the group
- High on masculinity scale
- Low power distance
- Low uncertainty avoidance
- Low context
- Monochronic
- Avoid physical contact

2. Native Americans

- Collectivistic – cooperative learning
- Observational learning – visual and special information
- Feel uneasy being singled out of the group

3. Hispanics (Mexicans, Cubans, Puerto Ricans, etc.)

- Collectivistic – cooperative learning
- Low power distance – teacher taken as a member of a family
- High context
- Polychronic

⁵ It is debatable whether the Hispanic and the Asian American ethnic group can be judged as one considering the diversity of the countries involved.

- Physical contact

4. African Americans

- Collectivistic – the importance of community, cooperative learning
- High context
- Polychronic

5. Asian Americans (China, Korea, Philippines, Vietnam, etc.)

- Collectivistic – community, cooperative learning
- High on masculinity scale
- High on power distance
- High uncertainty avoidance
- High context
- Polychronic
- Learning by observation, patterned practice

Sinagatullin does not deal only with the USA; he details also many other cultures. Some of them are listed below.

6. The Dutch

- Low on masculinity scale
- Individualistic
- Low power distance
- Low uncertainty avoidance
- Avoid physical contact

7. The Germans

- Individualistic – students do not share information
- Monochronic – punctuality
- Avoid physical contact
- When presenting they do not say what they are going to talk about

8. The French

- Individualistic
- Low power distance – lot of discussions at school
- Low uncertainty avoidance
- High context
- Body language

9. The Japanese

- The most masculine culture
- High power distance – respect for authorities
- High context
- High uncertainty avoidance

From this overview it is evident that individualistic cultures are often monochronic and low context; they have low uncertainty avoidance and low power distance. On the other hand, collectivistic cultures are mostly polychronic and high context with high uncertainty avoidance and high power distance. However, this distinction cannot be taken for granted. The French belong to an individualistic culture although the context of the conversation is high. Similarly, Hispanics are collectivistic although the power distance is low. In addition, mainstream Americans are individualistic with low context, power distance and uncertainty avoidance but remain high on the masculinity scale which stands in opposition to the Japanese who are even higher on the masculinity scale but their context, power distance and uncertainty avoidance is considered high.

1.3.1.5 J. Martin and T. Nakayana

Martin and Nakayana add the category of orientation to time. They divide cultures into future-oriented, such as United States, present-oriented, such as Spain, Greece, and Mexico, and present-oriented with strong attachment to the past, such as some European (France, Germany, Belgium) or Asian (Japan, Korea, Indonesia) countries (41-42).

1.3.1.6 R. D. Lewis

Lewis, who is engaged mainly in intercultural communication in business, divides cultures into three groups (27):

1. Linear-active: task-oriented and highly organized planners
(e.g. Germans, Swiss, White Anglo-Saxon Americans, Scandinavians, British, Canadians, New Zealanders, Australians, South Africans, etc.)
2. Multi-active: people-oriented and loquacious integrators
(Latin Americans, Arabs, Africans, Indians, Southern Europeans, etc.)
3. Reactive: introverted and respect-oriented listeners
(Japanese, Chinese, Koreans, Taiwanese, Turkish, Finnish, etc.)

Lewis (33-34) provides a detailed description of each group. Some important features are listed below (see Figure 2).

Linear-active	Multi-active	Reactive
Introvert	Extrovert	Introvert
Quiet	Talkative	Silent
Minds own business	Inquisitive	Respectful
Likes privacy	Gregarious	Good listener
Plans ahead methodically	Plans grand outline only	General principles
One thing at a time	Several things at once	Reacts
Works fixed hours	Works any hours	Flexible hours
Punctual	Not punctual	Punctual
Sticks to facts	Juggles facts	Statements are promises
Job-oriented	People-oriented	People-oriented
Accept favors reluctantly	Seeks favors	Protects face of others
Confronts with logic	Confronts emotionally	Avoids confrontation
Rarely interrupts	Interrupts frequently	Does not interrupt

Figure 2 Common traits of linear-active, multi-active and reactive categories (adapted from Lewis)

Lewis argues that it is not only one's membership in a culture that determines whether someone belongs to a linear-active, multi-active or reactive group. According to him, age, profession and field of study are other important factors. "Younger people test strongly linear-active or multi-active but both groups become more reactive as they get older" (43). Based on Lewis' results, teachers, artists and sales people should test as multi-active as opposed to engineers, accountants, and technologists should test as linear-active (ibid.). These findings sound reasonable since different professions require different qualities. For instance, teachers often have to focus on several things at the same time, whereas engineers usually focus on one thing at a time.

Lewis also classifies cultures as either data-oriented (Americans, Swedish, German, Swiss, etc.) or dialogue-oriented (Latins, Arabs, Indians). Data-oriented cultures are those that in business interaction require a lot of information that is acted on. Dialogue-oriented, on the other hand, "see events and business possibilities 'in context' because they already possess an enormous amount of information through their own information network" (48). Czechs and other Slavs are in the middle of Lewis' scale, and thus half data-oriented, half dialogue-oriented. Lewis sees a strong correlation between dialogue-oriented and multi-active people (Ibid.).

Lewis' linear-active culture corresponds to Hall and Hall's monochronic culture (see 1.2.2.3); Lewis' multi-active cultures correspond to Hall and Hall's polychronic culture. Lewis, however, adds one more group – cyclic cultures, which perceive time in cycles (Japan, China, etc.). Although members of this group respect punctuality on arrival, they "walk around the pool in order to make well-considered decision" (58). Lewis mentions an Eastern proverb which says "when God made time, He made plenty of it" (57). This view strongly opposes the Western perception of time according to which people have a feeling of not having enough time.

1.4 Culture in Business Communication

1.4.1 Interaction between Linear-Active, Multi-Active and Reactive Cultures

Intercultural awareness is particularly important in the business environment. "Apart from practical and technical problems, national psychology and characteristics frequently interfere at the executive level, where decisions tend to be more complex than the practical accords" (Lewis xvii).

Underestimation of this aspect of communication can have unpleasant consequences. For example, linear-active cultures, which are job-oriented, focus on making a deal, whereas multi-active and reactive cultures, which are people-oriented, focus on the relationship with the business partner. Thus, in Germany or the USA, the meeting starts after brief formal introduction (2-3 minutes), in Japan it can be preceded by a small talk or tea ritual (15-20 minutes), and in Italy or Spain the meeting might not start until everybody arrives and personal life or soccer is discussed which can take 20-30 minutes (Lewis 154).

For business people from linear-active countries a long delay may be irritating, while the lack of small talk could be interpreted as rudeness by business people from multi-active or reactive countries, as they like to establish a relationship before the business starts. The interaction between these two intercultural mindsets can often be problematic (see Fig. 3).

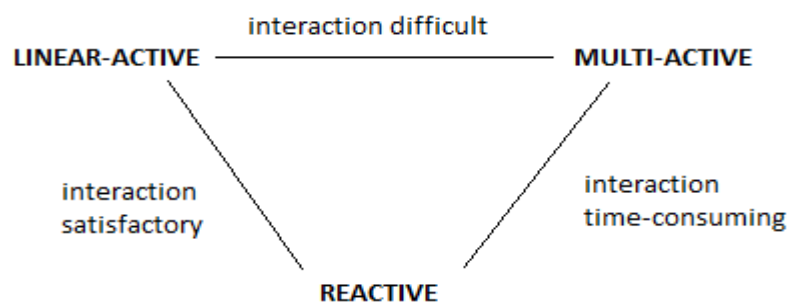


Figure 3 Levels of Difficulty in LMR Interactions (Lewis 39)

1.4.2 Czechs in Intercultural Communication

Lewis (301) characterizes Czechs as "linear active, calm, non-tactile, socially reserved soft-speakers with unique humor, who stick to rules and who are open to criticism." Certainly, Lewis' classification (179-575) of cultures could be helpful in communication with foreigners. However, following overview does highlight some areas that could be particularly problematic for Czechs.

When you deal with...

1. Germans or Arabs, do not introduce jokes in business meeting.
2. Austrians, the Dutch, Africans [or Americans], do not use criticism.⁶
3. Arabs or Iranians do not ask about women in the family and do not use your left hand.
4. Arabs, small talk is welcome, but do not discuss negative things such as death or illness.
5. Arabs and Japanese, pay them a lot of compliments; it is expected.
6. Asians, try to maintain harmony; do not let anyone lose face.
7. Americans, do not be too formal – relax and smile
8. Latin Americans, expect interruptions of your speech; it is a sign of interest not rudeness.
9. Sub-Saharan Africans, do not be surprised about maintaining your handshake while talking.
10. South Europeans, Latin Americans and other multi-active cultures, do not expect punctuality.

The list of rules for intercultural communication is infinite. It is advisable when communicating with foreign cultures, especially in professional life, to be aware of major differences between one's own and the other cultures which one is dealing. With a knowledge of basic intercultural differences one realizes that Americans are not naïve and hypocritical but laid-back and polite; that Japanese are not aloof but shy; that Spaniards are not lazy but rather have lax sense of time; and Arabs or Latin Americans are not aggressive and quarrelsome but rather passionate conversationalists.

⁶ Certainly, nobody likes to be criticized; however, those countries Lewis [and the author of this thesis] regards as hypersensitive.

Furthermore, Czechs with all their formality and academic titles obsession (see 3.1.1.2) may be regarded impolite when speaking in English with a Brit, American or Japanese. In every language, politeness is expressed differently – in Czech it might be sufficient to wish a good day, to use a correct academic title with "Vy-form" and say "thank you" and "please" often. However, the rule of politeness may differ significantly in other cultures.

"Unfortunately, there is no such thing as international etiquette, but certain mannerisms are acceptable only at home" (Lewis 82). Companies that interact with foreign-based companies should invest into intercultural training or, if they have branches in these foreign countries, they should probably consider hiring someone with local cultural perspective otherwise they run the risk of adverse business effects.

1.5 Interdependence of Language and Culture

Undoubtedly, language and culture are interdependent. Muir describes language as "one of the various cultural products" (41). Thanasoulas in his article "The Importance of Teaching Culture in the Foreign Language Classroom" states that, "language does not exist apart from culture." If a society is deprived of its language, it dies out as well. It is the language of the society which transmits the beliefs, values, rituals, traditions from generation to generation. Language constitutes the identity of society.

Language is not merely a means of communication. Kramersch claims that "language use is a cultural act because its users co-construct the very social roles that define them as a member of a discourse community" (Kramersch, *Language* 35). Language bears a significant amount of cultural and social meaning. "The way in which people use the spoken, written, or visual medium itself creates meanings that are understandable to the group they belong to...through all its verbal and non-verbal aspects, language embodies cultural reality" (Kramersch, *Language* 3).

Every nation or group of people who share one culture use different ways to encode meanings into the language. Therefore, a foreign language learner should endeavor to become not only a grammatically but also socioculturally competent user of a foreign language. He/she should undergo a kind of acculturation which Vegas Puente in his article "Different Views on Sociocultural Competence" defines as "a familiarization with and appropriation of new codes of expression, new values and, to a degree, new norms of

conduct" (n. pag.). This does not mean that the foreign language student should abandon one's own identity, but rather should seek to acquire a certain set of skills and to develop certain habits, in order to be able to participate in a different society.

1.6 Culture in Foreign Language Teaching

Thanasoulas in his article "The Importance of Teaching Culture in the Foreign Language Classroom" states that "foreign language learning is foreign culture learning" (n.pag.). He supports the idea that culture is incorporated in language. Teaching culture does not mean that the student should learn historical, geographical or political information about the target culture, however. While it is interesting to know that William Shakespeare wrote one hundred and fifty four sonnets or that Americans light jack-o'-lantern for Halloween, the lack of such information would not make the student a less sufficient member of communication in English. Learning the culture means learning to understand values, beliefs and codes of behavior. This second understanding of culture is what Sowden (304-310) calls "culture" as opposed to "Culture", such as art, music and literature (compare to 1.2.2.1). In an ideal case, the learner would have certain knowledge of both "culture" and "Culture" of the target language.

It is hard to imagine that an American would feel offended by an ESL student not knowing that George Washington was the first President of the USA; he/she is much more likely to be shocked if the student asked for help by saying: "Show me the way to the gas station" instead of "Could you please show me the way to the gas station?" or any other polite phrase. To be socioculturally competent one does not need to have an extensive knowledge about target language society, but rather have knowledge the means to communicate successfully. Thus, culture cannot be perceived as one of the skills – reading, speaking, listening and writing. Culture is a part of all the four skills, without which our communication in a target language would be insufficient. Kramsch (*Context*, 8) explains that, "culture is often seen as mere information conveyed by the language not as a feature of language." She emphasizes that culture needs to become the core of language teaching because it is an inseparable part of language.

Canale is one of the scholars who have highlighted that the sociolinguistic competence is often neglected in favor of linguistic competence. He notes that "the sociolinguistic competence is crucial in interpreting utterances for their 'social meaning'...learners will

often fail to achieve their communicate ends in the target language, and neither they nor their teachers will really understand why," (8) which can be harmful for their motivation.

Muir who researched this phenomenon in Chinese high schools notes: "lack of understanding of target culture lead to under-sensitivity...that is all because of the lack of cross-cultural awareness; therefore, they would apply their source culture predominately to meet the target culture" (39). A learner of a foreign language will naturally employ the set of communication tools and strategies of his/her own language when communicating in the target language.

This might not be merely the result of a poor knowledge of target culture, but of one's natural inclination to act according to the rules of one's own society. However, by doing so, the learner may not communicate appropriately or intelligibly. The belief that one's own culture is superior to others and the inability to see another's point of view is called ethnocentrism (Martin and Nakayama 50). This is the opposite of what a teacher should communicate.

The more distant the learner's culture is from the target culture, the greater the likelihood that communication misunderstanding may occur. Distance should not be understood merely in geographical sense; neighboring countries may feel culturally distant from each other. Consider passionate and loquacious Italians and rather cold and reserved Austrians.

It is, therefore, essential to develop awareness of the cultural difference between one's own and the target language culture, and cultural awareness in general. "At any rate, to speak means to choose a particular way of entering the world and a particular way of sustaining relationship with those we come in contact with" (Thanasoulas, "The Importance" n. pag.). The ways we do so in one culture may be strikingly different from how it is done in other cultures.

The lack of cultural awareness may easily cause early judgments or even cultural stereotyping which is always misleading and causes intercultural faux pas or even antagonism. For communicating in English as an international language it is crucial to develop at least basic awareness of cultural differences; and because English serves as an international language, the knowledge of the sociocultural of the countries where English

is the native language, this is no longer enough. Basic knowledge of other cultures which use English as a primary foreign language is becoming a need. This goal can be achieved via meeting people of various nationalities, lecturing about different communities and their practices, reading, watching films or even playing games.⁷

2 ENGLISH – LINGUA FRANCA

2.1 Lingua Franca

"Languages may spread far beyond their original home, invading the territory of new races and of new culture spheres" (Sapir 208). If a language starts to serve as a means of communication between persons whose native tongues are mutually incomprehensible this language is referred to as a lingua franca. Jennifer Jenkins, who has investigated this phenomenon, defines lingua franca as, "a contact language used among people who do not share a first language and is commonly understood to mean a second language of its speakers" (1).

Encyclopedia Britannica describes the original meaning of the word: "language used as a means of communication between populations speaking vernaculars that are not mutually intelligible...the term was first used during the Middle Ages to describe a French- and Italian-based jargon, or pidgin, that was developed by crusaders and traders in the eastern Mediterranean."

2.2 English as a Lingua Franca (ELF)

Unlike the original lingua franca defined above, English is not a hybrid language. It has an original territory and native speakers. However, Jenkins argues that, "ELF does not exclude native speakers (NS) of English but they are not included in data collection⁸, and when they take part in ELF interactions, they do not represent a linguistic reference point" (3). Jenkins suggests that, the "rapidly growing dominance [of English] as the world's main lingua franca is leading both to corresponding attempts to limit this diversity

⁷ Examples of games can be found in the practical part.

⁸ Jenkins refers to VOICE (Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English) research.

by the continued 'distribution' of NS norms to an ever-larger number of English speakers" (198).

Jenkins views English as an international language used by speakers from all over the world. It serves mainly for communication with non-native speakers (NNS) who may not come in contact with NS at all; therefore, ELF should not follow to the norms of NS. She points out that ELF concept is often rejected for two reasons: "a deeply entrenched attachment to NS English and prejudice against NNS English" (147). Jenkins is the advocate of the idea of ELF which is modified by both NS and NNS. She argues "many groups of English speakers in parts of Europe, Latin America, and East Asia (especially China) are both economically powerful and numerically large, and this may ultimately prove to be decisive in the 'fight' for the recognition of ELF" (198).

With respect to the number of NNSs who use ELF, there is no reason to disrespect other varieties of English. Jenkins argues that the British and American English, which are still referred to as the most desirable varieties of English, should be taken off their pedestal. Other scholars may object that there is still more English used by NS who use it in almost every conversation as opposed to NNS who only use it in conversation with a foreigner (see e.g. Trudgill, "Native-speaker" 78).

Such an argument may sound probable, however, it would be difficult to research it and actually prove it, with respect to the growing mobility of students, workers, and tourists all over the world many NNS need to communicate in English daily as well. Most NNS might not need to communicate in English every day all their life but, on the other hand, their number (as previously mentioned) has already exceeded the number of NS.

2.3 The Expansion of English

English is the most widely used language in the world. According to Crystal "around a quarter of the world's population speaks English fluently or competently" (6). No other language in history has reached the status of an international language, in the manner that English language has. Crystal (106) notes, "English is now the dominant or official language in over 75 territories and is represented on every continent and in the three major oceans – Atlantic (e.g. St. Helena), Indian (e.g. Seychelles), and Pacific (e.g. Hawaii)."

R. M. Bhatt notes that there is not just one variant of English but rather than that what we can call "world Englishes – varieties of English used in diverse sociolinguistic contexts" (527). He rejects the dichotomy of US (NS) vs. THEM (NNS) and emphasizes instead WE-ness. Bhatt perceives the spread of English in terms of two diasporas:

1. English was transplanted by native speakers.
2. English was introduced as an official language alongside other national languages (529).

Crystal (106) perceives the status of English as a result of two factors: "the expansion of British colonial power, which peaked towards the end of the nineteenth century, and the emergence of the United States as the leading economic power of the twentieth century." After covering the whole area of British Islands, the English language expanded towards North America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. English thus became one of the major languages of the world, but not yet the major one. "The global status of English became established in its second diaspora...this brought English to 'un-English' sociocultural context – to South Asia, Africa, and Latin America – which resulted in a significant alternation of the earlier sociolinguistic profile of the English language...it was this second diaspora that English came into contact with genetically and culturally unrelated languages" (Bhatt 527).

Bhatt, based on Kachru (1997), divides the English-speaking countries into three groups (see Figure 4). The inner circle refers to the traditional bases of English, where it is the primary language. The outer circle represents the spread of English in non-native context, where it has been institutionalized as an additional language. The expanding circle includes countries where English has been used primarily as a foreign language (Bhatt 530). If we considered also other countries where English is widely used as a foreign language, the list would be much longer.

According to the *CIA World Factbook*, the inner circle consists of approximately 439,000,000 speakers, the outer circle of 2,027,000,000 speakers and the expanding circle of 2,350,000,000 speakers. The number of speakers correspond with Kachru's circle, however, there are other countries which could be included in the expanding circle, especially in Europe or Africa which would require further research.

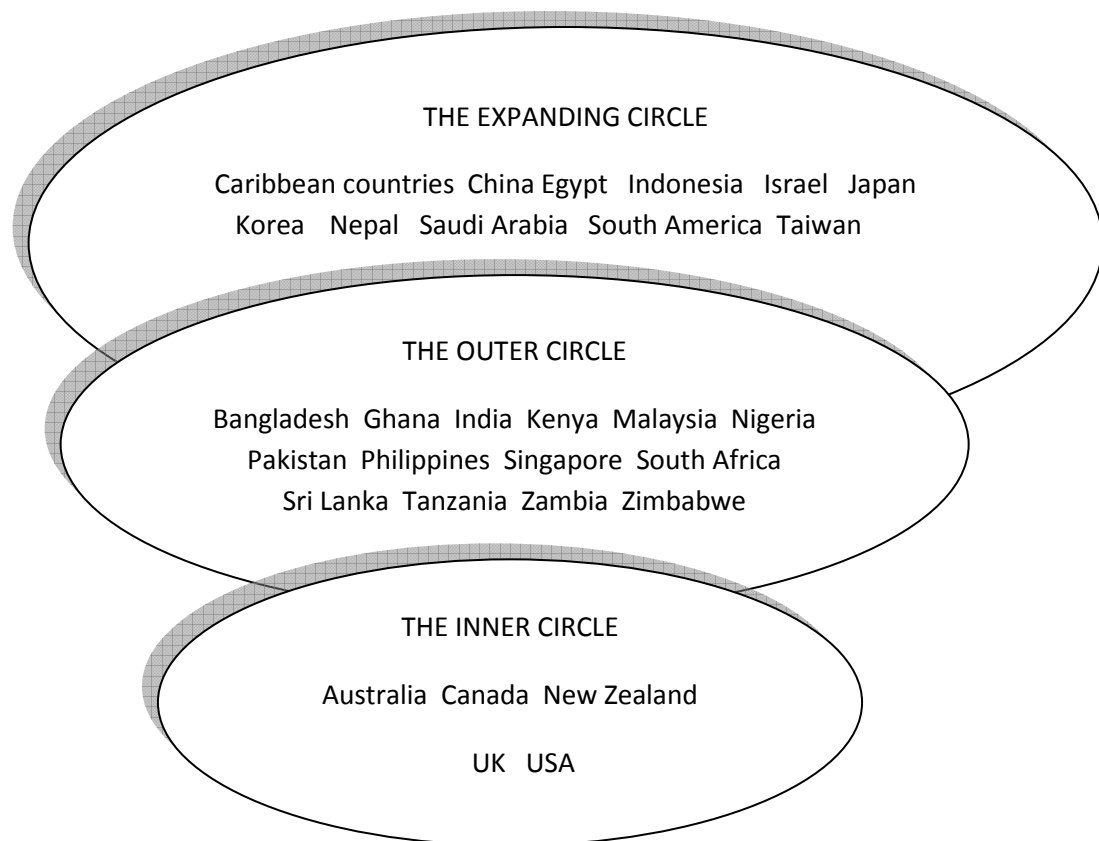


Figure 4 The concentric circle (Bhatt)

Bhatt explains the expansion of English in the second diaspora from two perspectives – the "educational", which aims to promote the position of English as an international language serving as a means of communication between people of mutually unintelligible languages, and the "econocultural" perspective which is a result of industrial revolution and colonization which ensured English the position of the "commercial lingua franca" (532).

In first and second world countries, such as the Czech Republic, English is studied for the purposes of communication with members of other nationalities while studying, working, traveling abroad, or for communicating with foreigners living in or visiting the Czech Republic. In third world countries, such as Nepal or India, English serves as the primary language of the education system and administration. English is the language in which classes are taken, whereas the indigenous language(s) are spoken at home. In countries, such as Nepal or India, where dozens or hundreds different languages are spoken, English may serve as a second common language used for communication between members of different ethnic groups. For such purposes Nepali and English are

used in Nepal while Hindi and English are used in India. Metaphorically, English can be seen as a bridge between both a local person and a foreigner, and two locals who belong to two different language communities.

2.4 Acculturation of English

In countries where it became one of the officially used languages, English has undergone a process of acculturation; it was modified in order to serve better to the needs of the community. In other words, the culture of the community left a significant trace in their language. As mentioned above, language is a social phenomenon; it changes in accordance with society. Thus, in every part of the world where English is used for communication between members of the same society it reflects the culture of the community and its development.

Crystal suggests that there are two strong tendencies in English – "internationalism, which implies intelligibility, and demands an agreed standard – in grammar, vocabulary, spelling, pronunciation, and conventions of use; and identity, which implies individuality, and wishes to preserve the uniqueness of that particular national variety of an international language"(110). Crystal does not imply which tendency he finds more probable to become dominant. The first one, however, sounds highly unlikely if we consider the cultural differences of all the nations using English as a second language, especially those of the inner and outer circle.

As Crystal further argues, "all other countries [different from the inner circle] can be grouped into those which follow American English, those which follow British English, and those (e.g. Canada) where there is a mixture of influences" (111). It has been a norm in Europe, and especially in the former colonies of the United Kingdom (excluding the United States) to follow British English. African "Englishes", in particular, are clearly mixtures of British English and local languages.

Nevertheless, in the second half of the twentieth century, due to the growing economic power of the USA, as well as the influence of American music and film industry, this inclination has been gradually changing in favor of American English. It is the case in many European countries, including the Czech Republic, that the textbooks used in EFL classes are predominantly British, whereas the majority of films and (supposedly also)

music in English that one is exposed to are of American production. This duality can, however, be beneficial for the EFL learner in the sense that he/she is not exposed to just one variant of English.

It is an inevitable phenomenon that every nation that uses English as a second language daily or very frequently adapts it to certain extent. The difference from the initial form of English (British English) can be observed on all levels of language – phonetic, grammatical, and lexical. Crystal points out, in particular, vocabulary and prosody which created the uniqueness of that particular English language variety: "the distinctive stress-timed rhythm of Indian or Caribbean English, or the rising intonations of Australian and New Zealand English" (113).

Kachru (qtd. in Bhatt 535) and Trudgill & Hannah (qtd. *ibid.*) investigated the undifferentiated use of tag question in India. They compared Indian English questions like "You said you'll do the job, isn't it?" with Standard British version "You said you'll do the job, didn't you?" (*Ibid.*) The Indian English speakers prefer the first variant because from their point of view it sounds more polite. Another reason for this innovation might be an effort to simplify the tags.

In this sense, the adoption of English thus becomes a means for expressing cultural specifics rather than a means of assimilation with the Anglo-Saxon culture. As exemplified by Indian English, via acculturation the English language, the society that adopted the once foreign language gives origin to a new variant of English which is capable of both serving for communication intranationally and internationally and to express the uniqueness of the society.

Chinua Achebe, a Nigerian novelist and professor of modern African literature, supports this opinion: "I feel the English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience...but it will have to be new English, still in communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit its new African surroundings" (qtd. in Bhatt 537). The fact that this well-recognized African author writes in English proves that Nigerian variant of English can convey African themes perceived through African eyes more accurately than Standard British English. In addition, books written in English can reach a wider audience and expand their own culture to the world.

Jingxia notes that in China there is a variant of English called "China English" (not to be interchanged with "Chinglish" which is an interference of Chinese language in English which is considered a misuse). China English "has the Chinese features unavoidably influenced by both the Chinese language and the way of Chinese thinking" (Jingxia 27).

Jingxia perceives China English as one of the World Englishes, along with African, Indian or Singapore English, which grew up through the nativization of English. Jingxia, however, does not explain according to which criteria one classifies a certain linguistic feature as a specific of China English and another as an interference or mistake.

Speaking about the variants of English, one may wonder what variant can be called Standard English. This issue is discussed by Trudgill (*Standard* 117-128) in his article "Standard English: what it isn't," and he argues that Standard English is neither a language, an accent, style or register but a social dialect. According to Trudgill, Standard English has nothing to do with the degree of (in)formality or geographical location.

Trudgill argues that, "standard English is the most important dialect in the English-speaking world from a social, intellectual and cultural point of view, and it does not have an associated accent" (Ibid). It has become the standard variety because "it was the variety associated with the social group with the highest degree of power, wealth and prestige" (Ibid.) Trudgill adds that some believe in existence of just one standard variant, whereas others respect several Standard English variants, e.g. Scottish Standard English or American Standard English. In Trudgill's view "Standard English can be found in all English-speaking countries" (Ibid.).

It is impossible to know all the cultural specifics of all the variations of English. It is, however, important to acknowledge that there is not just one variant of English but rather many different Englishes, and that for successful intercultural communication is it necessary to be aware of cultural differences at least of the countries one comes into contact with.

3 VERBAL COMMUNICATION

"Understanding across languages does not depend on structural equivalences but on common conceptual systems born from the larger context of our experience" (Kramsch, *Language* 14). People tend to use (often unconsciously) communication rules of their own language when communicating in a foreign language. Sometimes it may turn into a misunderstanding and the speaker may be perceived as impolite. Native speakers [and maybe also non-native speakers] are usually less tolerant to perceived "impoliteness" than to grammatical mistakes (Válková 153). The teachers of foreign languages should, therefore, consider paying greater attention to teaching politeness to their students.

3.1 Politeness

Politeness is a "fundamental part of culture" (O'Sullivan 47). In every utterance there is higher or lower degree of politeness. The number of situational contexts one can find him-/herself in is infinite; thus, it is impossible to write a cultural guide for all types of communicative situations. Therefore, only a small part of verbal communication skills – politeness – will be discussed. Politeness is a universal phenomenon, which is expressed differently in every culture. Politeness is the basic presumption of any social interaction, not just intercultural. Lack of the sociocultural knowledge may cause one to act impolitely, often unconsciously. "Violations of rules of speaking are often interpreted as bad manners since the native speaker is unlikely to be aware of sociolinguistic relativity" (Wolfson 62).

Foreign language teachers should introduce basic rules of polite communication of the target language. O'Sullivan mentions that in China, milder forms of insult are used in translations of English films (50). As a result, students often use words or gestures they copied from the films without knowing the real meaning (Ibid).

Politeness includes an infinite number of aspects. According to the author, for a Czech speaker following aspects may be problematic:

3.1.1 Addressing People

A lot of people are reluctant to start a conversation in foreign language, as they cannot decide the proper manner to do so. Addressing people in the informal way is not discussed, due to the fact that this area does not seem to be very problematic.

3.1.1.1 Addressing Unknown People in Public

For a Czech ESL student, it is important to know that due to the lack of *ty/vy* distinction the speaker needs to use an additional means of politeness. As compared to English speakers, Czechs have a more delicate scale of politeness that is dependent upon the Czech language system; therefore, in English they might seem impolite.

In Czech we can distinguish between formal, semi-formal and informal form of address – Mr./Mrs./Ms. + last name + plural form of verb, (Mr./Mrs./Ms.+) first name + plural form of verb, first name + singular form of verb, e.g. *Paní Nováková můžete mi poradit?/ (Paní) Dano, můžete mi poradit?/ Dano, můžeš mi poradit?* (Válková 107). In English one can only choose between formal and informal form. Czech ESL students should be taught that to sound clearly formal and polite one must use "Sir" or "Madam"⁹.

In the USA, especially in the South, it is common in service environments to address a customer (both male and female) also as "honey" or "darling" which implies friendliness and informality. For a Czech speaker, accustomed to use formal forms of address in such situation, it could be a cultural shock (Lubecka 106).

3.1.1.2 Addressing People at School

In British or American schools, students are usually addressed by their first name or a combination of Mister/Miss + last name, whereas in the Czech Republic the latter is restricted to university environment. On the other hand, a British or American teacher is addressed as Mr/Mrs/Miss¹⁰ + last name or professor/doctor + last name (Lubecka 110). This fact corresponds with personal experience of the author of this thesis during her studies at an American college. In Czech the system of address depends on the level of school. Elementary school teachers are addressed "paní učitelko/pane učitel" (literary Mrs./Mr. teacher), high school teachers "paní profesorko/pane profesore" (literary Mrs./Mr. professor) and for university teachers the exact academic title is required.

3.1.1.3 Addressing People at Workplace

⁹ Some students use Mr./Mrs. instead of Sir/Madam (**Excuse me Mr., can you help me?*) which is incorrect because Mr./Mrs. cannot stand without a name.

¹⁰ There is a tendency to eliminate the difference Mrs. and Miss. in favor of Ms. in the United States.

Americans use first names even in a professional environment, such as business meetings. From the American point of view first names do not give full identity, therefore it does not intrude upon one's privacy (Lubecka 117). From a Czech point of view this might sometimes seem too informal. Válková adds that Czech might be reluctant towards the use of first names due to the authoritative ty-exchange in previous regime (69).

In addition, Czechs tend to overuse titles. In English, titles are never used as a direct form of address, the system of Mr./Mrs.[Miss/Ms.] + last name is preferred.

3.1.2 Compliments

Compliments can also be a problematic area. In English, the natural reaction to a compliment (*You look great!*) is to accept it (*Thank you.*) or even exchange the compliment (*You too.*). In other cultures, such as Japan, China, the recipient usually downgrades the compliment (Wolfson 80). In the Czech Republic, both reactions occur. Czech women, like Japanese, especially downplay a compliment on their cooking, which is seen as a sign of modesty.

3.1.3 Degree of Directness

People in Anglo-Saxon cultures like to maintain space for personal choice, while Czechs do not always acknowledge that. Czechs who follow the national saying "dobrá rada nad zlato" (literary "a good advice is worth its weight in gold") can cause embarrassment for an American or a Brit. Vokurková's research¹¹ shows that Czechs express their advices in a form of imperative or strong suggestion, while in similar situations British person would use milder form of suggestion which ensures enough space for possible denial. From British point of view Czech seem too pushy.

Similarly, the use of imperative (combined with "please") in Czech when asking for favor, e.g. *Open the window (please)*, is not polite enough for English. Rather humorous situations occur during foreign visits in Czech (especially) Moravian homes, where foreign guest are strongly encouraged to eat and drink by the host. Vokurková (109) notes that the use of the imperative (*Take another piece of cake!*) gives just minimal space for refusal. Exaggerated Czech hospitality may be for some cultures less comfortable. On the other

¹¹ Vokurková conducted a research on expressing politeness among twenty British and twenty Czech students in 2009.

hand, Czech can spend eternity waiting for their host to offer them something in countries where hospitality works according to different rules

4 NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

In every interaction one does not communicate just verbally, but also non-verbally. "Polite interaction takes on many forms in the way people interact not only by the spoken word but also by the unspoken messages portrayed by behavior, body language, eye contact and facial expressions" (O'Sullivan 47). In intercultural communication, especially if one uses a foreign language that he/she does not speak very well, non-verbal communication can serve as a support point. On the contrary, non-verbal communication can be a trap because it is a culture specific phenomenon, too. "Non-verbal communication is a message derived from anything you can see, hear (except for actual words), smell, touch, and taste" (Young and Travis 2).

According to Kathryn Young and Howard Travis (9), there are several types of non-verbal communication: kinesics (body, gesture, face and eye communication), artifacts (personal items), proxemics (space and territory), vocalics or paralanguage (tone of voice, pitch, etc.), haptics (touch), olfactics (smell), taste, and chronemics (time). Non-verbal communication is a large topic; therefore, just some aspects of non-verbal communication which can be problematic in intercultural communication, are discussed.

4.1 Eye Contact

Whereas in some reactive cultures such as China (or Japan) it is considered disrespectful and rude to maintain direct eye contact, in both multi-active and linear-active cultures, especially in the United States, it indicates respect, sincerity and friendliness (Young and Travis 31; Lewis 159; Martin and Nakayama 168). Arabs like to look intensively into each other's eyes, which some Westerners may call staring (Lewis 405). On the contrary, Japanese sometimes close their eyes as a sign of respect or concentration, which many other cultures can interpret as tiredness (Ibid. 515).

4.2 Head Movement

It is a common fact that Japanese nod while the other participant of communication talks. Americans often misinterpret this as an agreement, but, in fact, nodding means just "I am listening" in Japan (Young and Travis 35). Combined with the Japanese use of silence as a form of disagreement (see 4.6), an American can perceive a completely contrary message to the one intended.

4.3 Facial Expressions

In collectivist cultures, people often tend to conceal their emotions in order not to harm a relationship and maintain harmony (Martin and Nakayama 32). On the other hand, in individualistic cultures people often reveal their (especially positive) feelings. A broad American smile can seem a little exaggerated to a Czech or German, while conversely, Czechs or German may seem unfriendly and rude to an American.

4.4 Gestures

Extroverted multi-cultural Italians or Spaniards gesticulate extensively, as compared to introverted linear-active Czechs or reactive Chinese. Lively gestures might make the speaker seem irritated although the opposite may be true.

Often one thinks that some gestures are international such as thumbs up, mainly due to the spread of American movies; one would expect that this gesture be utilized worldwide, however, it remains a vulgar gesture in Iran.

4.5 Time

The different ways people approach time in language are mentioned above (see 1.2.2.3 and 1.2.2.6), but for now, it is appropriate to stress that the perception of time mirrors the lifestyle of the culture. Multi-active, people oriented cultures do not let time rule them, whereas linear-active, task-oriented cultures like to follow a schedule. For dealing successfully with Germans, Chinese or Japanese one should try hard to be punctual, whereas one should exercise patience with Latin Americans, South Europeans, Arabs and Sub-Saharan Africans (Lewis 405, 492, 511, and 529).

It would certainly be useful for a student to know the difference between explicit and vague specifications of time, especially for communication purposes in the United States. Americans are particular about being nice and polite. It is not uncommon that a foreign visitor of the USA gets invited to someone's house. The real invitation which is meant may sound: *Why don't you come over tomorrow at 11 p.m.?* On the other hand, the polite phrase, which is rarely meant, may sound e.g. *Why don't you come over sometime?* (see e.g. Young and Travis). Americans feel it as a social obligation to make the impression of friendliness. They do not realize that someone could take it seriously.

4.6 Silence

Silence is often perceived as negative (except for turn-taking) in linear-active cultures – it can be interpreted as a lack of knowledge, ignorance or embarrassment. On the contrary, in reactive cultures, silence has its legitimate place in communication, which must be fulfilled – it contributes to harmony (Martin and Nakayama 133). Furthermore, in Japan it is also a form of disagreement (Seghers 69; Lewis 515) whereas in the USA or in the Czech Republic it would be most likely interpreted as the opposite.

4.7 Personal Space

Personal space is a "bubble" around a person, the importance of which depends on person's personality and culture. Judith Martin and Thomas Nakayama distinguish "contact" and "non-contact" cultures. In contact cultures, such as South Americans, South Europeans, Africans and Middle Easterners, people tend to stand closer together while talking, touch frequently and speak in louder voices. In non-contact cultures, such as North American, Northern Europeans and East Asians people prefer personal space (167).

4.8 Physical Contact

Physical contact is closely related to personal space. Latin Americans, Arabs, South Europeans, Sub-Saharan Africans and also Russians like to express friendliness and confidence by physical closeness or even touching (Lewis 402, 529, 566). People from non-tactile countries such as United States, Germany, the Czech Republic and Japan may feel uncomfortable being touched (Lewis 227, 511).

Some cultures, such as Spaniards, Italians or Greeks greet each other with a kiss and often touch a communication partner while speaking. Americans, Czechs or Austrians prefer to shake hands and rarely touch the other person. Furthermore, it is inappropriate to shake a woman's hand in Muslim cultures (Lewis 399). Chinese and Japanese would feel uncomfortable touching an unknown person, thus they usually bow, and Young and Travis (8) note that in Korea that it is inappropriate to shake hands with the other sex.

"Every aspects of language interaction that is taught must incorporate culture, context and polite appropriate language awareness in a non-intrusive manner" (O'Sullivan 47). The teacher of ESL should endeavor to cultivate his/her students to openness to new ideas and views in order to teach them respect, understanding and acceptance. "This can be further exhibited by introducing information from various countries around the world not just the target language "(Ibid. 50). It has been already mentioned that in case of English, a lingua franca of this century, introduction to only countries from inner circle seems insufficient.

II. PRACTICAL PART

5 TEXTBOOK ANALYSIS

The aim of this part is to research whether selected textbooks reflect sociocultural competence and, if so, then how and to what extent. Two textbooks – General English (*New Headway*) and General English with Business English orientation (*International Express*) were chosen to contrast each other.

5.1 *International Express*

International Express is a communication-oriented ESL textbook with a student-centered approach. The official Oxford University Press website describes it as a textbook which "combines general English with business situations, giving students the social and functional English they need to work, travel, and socialize." It is published on four levels – elementary, pre-intermediate, intermediate and upper-intermediate. Each set contains a student's book, a teacher's book, a class-CD, a student's CD, a workbook and a pocket book, which is a grammar booklet.

Every unit is divided into four parts – "Language Focus", which reviews old or introduces new grammar, "Wordpower" which focuses on new vocabulary, "Skills Focus", which practices all four skills (reading, listening, speaking, writing), and "Focus on Functions", which introduces a student to phrases useful in social interactions. The first textbook of the set (*Elementary*) is divided differently – there is no "Skills Focus", and also "Focus on Functions" is called "Focus on Communication". Since *International Express* is partly a Business English textbook it contains quite a lot of sociocultural aspects, especially *International Express Intermediate* and *Upper-Intermediate*.

5.1.1 *International Express Elementary*

5.1.1.1. Student's Book

International Express Elementary does not contain many elements of sociocultural competence. The reason might be the level of the textbook. However, in my opinion, one can deal with sociocultural competence even on the lowest level – elementary. Practically the only section that even partly deals with cultural competence is "Language Focus" in

unit nine (77). Four exercises (5, 6, 7, and 8) practice speaking about rules and customs in your and also other countries, such as travelling, meeting people, eating and drinking, clothes, queuing, and tipping. There are no countries listed, so students may wonder if the illustrative pictures of customs and rules apply to the Great Britain or other countries. This may be just a speculative exercise unless the students are given some source information from the teacher, because there is no source information in the textbook.

On the other hand, all the sections "Focus on Communication" introduce students to correct language expressions in various communicative situations, such as introducing oneself (4), leaving a message (34), making arrangements (62), invitations (80), expressing opinions (98), etc. Although it is at elementary level, it incorporates both formal and informal expressions. It is an advantage that students are exposed to polite forms from the very beginning. Since politeness in Czech is ensured predominately with the use of vy-form + singular form of the verb, conditional or the words "please" and "thank you", they often find the English polite forms too polite or too flowery, which may result in unintentional impoliteness.

It might seem unnecessary to explain when it is proper to say "good morning" or "good evening", however, it actually is very important because not all the cultures segments the day into exact same part as our culture does. Southern Italians start greeting each other "good evening" in the early afternoon. Czech students often find it troublesome that English does not have the expression for "dopoledne", the part of the day between morning and noon. In "Focus on Communication", unit 1 (11), there is a matching exercise for parts of the day expressions and their explanations (e.g. "morning = all morning until lunch").

A very welcome feature of *International Express* is that it employs wide variety of accents – not just the British or American but also French (e.g. 1.1, 1.2, 1.6, etc.), Italian (1.5, 2.10), Swedish (2.3), Japanese-American (7.1) and Spanish English (6.8, 6.9, 7.5). The non-native variations are in minority to the majority of British and American English, as one might expect. For the most part nationality of the NNS is explicitly mentioned in the text. It is beneficial that the student get used to more accents, as it improves their comprehension skills and at the same time develops tolerance to different variations of English.

5.1.1.2 Workbook

The workbook corresponds structurally to the student's book. There are almost no culture relevant elements. A few examples of cultural habits in various countries are mentioned in "Language Focus" section in unit nine (53) under modal verbs. What is, however, creditable is the incorporation of e-mail or text message jargon such as "OIC (oh, I see)" or "CUL (see you later)" in "Wordpower" section in unit eight (49) which keeps up with the actual language use nowadays. Similarly to the student's book, there are also other accents (apart from British and American) in the listening exercises such as Romanian (6), German (17), and Italian (44).

5.1.2 *International Express Pre-Intermediate*

5.1.2.1. Student's Book

The student's book contains more sociocultural exercises than the previous. The "Language Focus" section (32), in unit four, informs students about the existence of cross-cultural training but it does not discuss it. The purpose of the exercises in this section is on speaking, as well as reading and listening comprehension. More culture related activities might be found in "Language Focus" (74-77) in unit eight. The task is to discuss greetings, addressing people, punctuality, private life vs. work, and gifts for hosts in their own culture as well as other cultures. This exercise requires knowledge of some other cultures which students in monolingual classes may not have. On the other hand, this could certainly be an interesting activity for multilingual classes where students come from different cultural environments. The section also includes reading exercise in the form of a cultural quiz – there are three extract describing communication in a particular culture and three possible answers (countries) that the student should choose from.

Following grammar and speaking exercises (1, 2, 3) combine the topic of cultural differences with modal verbs (might, may and should). The aim of exercise four is also to practice grammar. In addition, it serves as a reflection of one's own culture, which is an important part of developing intercultural awareness.

The "Wordpower" section (79), in unit eight, provides just three speaking exercises (6, 7, and 8) on culture. In this section students learn new adjectives. Traditionally, this

gives space to nationalities and the adjectives associated with them. Exercise eight, however, asks an important question "Do you think descriptions of national characteristics help us to understand other nationalities better, or are they too general to be helpful?" (79). The teacher should make clear that characteristics are certainly helpful, however, one should not slip into stereotyping.

The "Skill Focus" section provides some more sociocultural features. The complete section in unit one (12) discusses English in the world. It is important for students to realize that English is a global language. In exercise nine, students are given an interesting question to discuss: "The governments of some countries are against the use of English words. What do you think? Are you for or against the use of English in your language?" (12). Students may realize that English has entered their language to a greater extent than they have previously thought. A teacher may assign homework such as to bring an example of English word or phrase in their native language (e.g. "Škoda. Simply clever" is an English slogan in a Czech media advertisement for a Czech car company).

The "Skill Focus" section in unit eight (80) is based entirely on R. D. Lewis' book *When Cultures Collide* (29-38, see 1.2.2.6), particularly on his categorization of cultures as linear-active, multi-active, and reactive group (shortened version). The section is comprised of listening and speaking activities. Students first put given countries and continents (South-East Asia, Finland; Southern Europe and Latin America; the USA and Northern Europe) into correct categories and then listen to check their answers. In the following exercises (5 and 6) students discuss both their own and other cultures (verbal and non-verbal communication), and talk about possible cultural misunderstanding based on their personal experience.

Similar to *Elementary* there are different accents of English – a lot of British and slightly less American. *Pre-Intermediate* contains a lot of French English because one of the protagonists who appear repeatedly is French. There are however also Italian (1.1, 1.7, 4.6), Japanese (2.1) and Swedish (2.5) accents.

5.1.2.2 Workbook

In fact, there are only a few exercises on sociocultural competence in "Language Focus" section (42-43), in unit seven. To practice modal verbs "must, mustn't, needn't, etc.," students fill in gaps in short paragraphs from an American guide to international

etiquette and guess which country is talked about. They are given four options – France, Japan, Norway, and Turkey; it is great source of information on intercultural communication. The key information is on greetings – body language and addressing people, dress code, visiting someone's home, prejudices (against Americans) and conversation topics. One can use information of this sort whenever he/she travels and not merely for business purposes.

In the "Language Focus" section (48-50) in unit eight, there are several useful exercises – a dialogue on German business etiquette from British point of view, an article on doing business in Japan, and a fill-in-gaps exercise on doing business in America. All exercises primarily serve to practice modal verbs "might, may, should, and have to"; however, the content is not purposeless. Listening exercises in workbook are in the same accents as those in student's book with one additional – German (8. 3).

5.1.3 *International Express Intermediate*

5.1.3.1 Student's Book

The student's book contains quite a bit of sociocultural exercises. In unit seven, in the "Language Focus" section (68), students express their ideas in the form of choosing topics for an international conference "Doing business in different countries and cultures". In the subsequent exercise, students discuss or make guesses about the Chinese-American cultural differences in business environment. The topics are listed (e.g. speed of negotiation, making decisions, periods of silence in meetings, etc.), then they listen to a dialogue between an American and a Chinese businessman and check their answers. At the same time students practice modal verbs, e.g. "must, need, have to," etc.

In the "Language Focus" section (110-111) in unit eleven, while discussing cross-cultural problems in both professional and personal life, students practice modal verbs and the third conditional. The activities are very well structured – students first express their opinion on the topic in groups, then they discuss specific questions in pairs. This is followed by case examples of cross-cultural problems to read. Again students are asked to give advice to avoid these problems, after which they listen to possible answers. In the second part of this section, there is an additional exercise on this topic to learn about more cultural specifics (111).

The "Wordpower", or the vocabulary section, gives attention to the differences between American and British English (21), including body language (30), although it is limited to mainly Anglo-Saxon context. In unit eleven, the whole section (114) focuses on culture and cultural shock. Students can practice new vocabulary in the mainly speaking activities.

The "Focus on Skills" section (12) in unit one, deals with national branding. It contains several very interesting activities, e.g. student are to match countries with adjectives they associate them with and then compare it with other students; to think of a country (both foreign and one's own) and adjectives and products which are typical for that particular country; to think about possible cross-cultural misunderstandings and subsequently to make a list of cultural tips for visitors of one's own country including for instance greetings, tipping, eye contact, etc. This section is both very entertaining and useful. It also requires a lot of self-reflection because it is not always easy to define one's own culture.

The section "Focus on Function" does not deal with foreign cultures, rather, it focuses on the use of English in various situations. Students learn which forms they should use while introducing themselves (14), making a phone call (24), or writing e-mails (98) in an Anglo-Saxon context. It introduces students to the polite ways of communicating – formal, informal and neutral. For instance, in unit one, the topics are introduction and greetings. Students match the phrases with corresponding situations; therefore, they come to know what expression is appropriate for meeting friends and which is more suitable for meeting a new person in business environment, etc.

Also this level *International Express* contains not only British but also American (listening 1.3, 1.4, 2.2, 2.6, etc.), Canadian (1.4), Australian (5.1) as well as NNS variations – Dutch (1.1, 1.3, etc.) Spanish (4.3, 6.1, 10.7, etc.), Brazilian (5.2), Taiwanese (5.2), and Chinese English (7.1). As mentioned in the theoretical part, it is important for an ESL student to listen to NNS, too, because the number of NNS of English is much higher than NS.

5.1.3.2 Workbook

The workbook is meant to be used for homework; therefore, it focuses on grammar. The structure is similar to Student's Book. The only real cultural activity is in unit eleven,

in the "Language focus" section (66). Similar to the one in student's book, it contains three case studies of cultural problems. It would be incomplete to deal with verbal communication across cultures without its counterpart; thus, in the workbook, non-verbal communication (handshake, touching, eye contact, and personal space) is also discussed. In grammar exercises, the students practice the third conditional and learn about body language in different countries (e.g. Northern Europe, USA, Latin America, etc.). There are no significant differences in listening exercises, as compared to those in the student's book.

5.1.4 *International Express Upper-Intermediate*

5.1.4.1 Student's Book

In *International Express Upper-Intermediate* the emphasis on sociocultural competence is greater than with the lower levels of this textbook. It is perfectly suited to the concept of ELF because it includes a lot of cross-cultural elements. Key sections are "Focus on Functions" and "Skill Focus".

Again, "Focus on functions" deals with typical phrases used in specific situations such as greeting (8-9) or calling on the telephone (18-19) but also on phrases and strategies to fulfill one's various intentions such as arranging a meeting (31), interrupting someone (41), offering or requesting something (97), wishing someone well (107), etc. It serves to not only revise but also to broaden the student's knowledge of social conventions both in Anglo-Saxon, as well as other foreign countries. For example, in unit one (8-9), students should be able to recognize, and then also use, the proper level of formality in given situations, and also compare it with his/her own culture. Similarly, in unit ten (107), students should decide whether the particular request is more suitable for a letter/e-mail, face-to-face conversation, or a phone call.

The "Skill Focus" section in unit one (10-11) exemplifies in two short stories the differences in how the British and the Western Apaches handle silence in conversation. After a conversation between these two cultures the British speaker feels embarrassed about the silence, whereas the Apache speaker feels embarrassed about the British avoidance of silence. As discussed previously (see section 4.6), the perception of silence in linear-cultures is contradictory to that of reactive cultures. Reactive cultures see it as a

necessary part of a conversation, whereas linear-active cultures see it as negative. In the workbook students listen to dialogues, concentrate on phrases, on how participants react to each other and judge what impressions it made on them. Eventually, they act out their own dialogue.

The "Skill Focus" section in unit two (20-21), concentrates on topics for conversation – what is a good or bad topic in various countries, how to switch or maintain the topic, which is practiced by both listening and speaking. Other "Skill Focus" sections deal with handling direct and difficult questions

The "Focus on Functions" section in unit three (30-31), which focuses upon the topic of arranging a meeting, does not omit the important fact that time is perceived differently in different parts of the world. It introduces the student to the division of cultures into three groups – linear-active, multi-active and cyclical (see 1.1.2.6.) and subsequently exemplifies that in a dialogue between an American and a Moroccan on punctuality. Similarly, in "Focus on functions," in unit eight (84-85), students are asked to compare a business meeting in Brazil to one in their country, which may be particularly interesting to students who work in business. The section also gives an outline of an Anglo-Saxon view of an effective meeting, so that, students may also relate to that.

Following the "Skills Focus" section (86-87) adds the concept of prejudice which means that one often hears what he/she expects to. In the listening activity 8.11, students hear a Japanese man talking about the Western and Japanese decision-making process in meetings. He contrasts respect-oriented Japanese with the task-oriented Americans (see 1.1.2.6.). The monologue is paused after every couple of sentences for the student to predict what the speaker is going to say and then compare the actual sentence with the one they predicted.

The topic of the "Skills Focus" section (98-99) in unit nine is visiting people and hospitality. Not surprisingly, it is not limited to only practicing polite phrases one uses at the arrival, departure or during the visit. Inspired by reading an entertaining abstract on hospitality in Russia, students should think about social habits and manners in their own country. Even in a monocultural class the answers may differ. Czech hospitality, based on stuffing the guest without taking in account any of his/her possible protests, might for many other cultures represent a complete cultural shock (see Vokurková 104-114)

In addition, *International Express Upper-Intermediate* works with a wide range of accents – even though it is a British textbook, the British and American English are in

equal parts. Other accents include German (1.7, 2.10), Irish (2.10), Australian (2.10, 6.2), Moroccan (3.5), Swedish (3.6), Italian (3.6), and Senegalese (9.7).

5.1.4.2 Workbook

The workbook, too, offers a couple of exercises on sociocultural competence. In the listening exercise 1.1, an Australian talks about types of greeting in his country. In listening 6.2 a Japanese, an American and an Englishman discuss "earnings" which is not a taboo topic in the USA but is in the other two countries. Finally, a fill-in-the-gaps exercise in unit nine (55) presents a story of Japanese who experienced a cultural shock during a dinner in the United States when he was repeatedly ask about his food/drink preferences which contrasts with Japanese deference. Equally interesting is also a comparison of American/European and Japanese emoticons (25). One might think that emoticons like any other visual means are intelligible universally; however, this is not necessarily true. As apparent from this overview, the cultural difference effects even visual symbols.

Listening exercises consists of predominantly British and American speakers with the exception of some Australian (1.1, 7.5), Chinese (4.2), Canadian (5.) and French (8.1) speakers.

5.1.5 Conclusion

International Express, with the exception of *Elementary*, contains numerous exercises to develop sociocultural competence and to raise intercultural awareness. The authors, Liz Taylor and Mike Macfarlane, take in account that nowadays English serves as a lingua franca (not only) in the business world. This fact is apparent from the choice of both topics and speakers. Students are exposed to different accents of English and although they might not notice any differences (especially on lower levels), they are getting used to the variations subconsciously.

The "Focus on function" sections teach students to communicate appropriately, both orally and in writing, in diverse social situations. From the first unit of the lowest level – *Elementary* – students learn and practice socioculturally adequate expressions. On higher levels students are expected to be able to recognize which expressions are informal, formal and neutral.

Some of "Focus on skills" and "Language focus" sections introduce students to culture-specific customs and behavior. While practicing grammar students are informed about communication rules in foreign countries (not just Anglo-Saxon). This method raises attractiveness of the task and makes it more than just another grammar drill. Linguistic and sociocultural competence is intertwined. But most of all, these cultural tips must be appreciated by anyone who likes to travel and meet people from other cultural backgrounds.

International Express goes far beyond traditional textbook information about cultures such as "Italians eat pasta", "the British like to watch soccer", or "the Japanese use chopsticks instead of a knife and fork." It gives students practical advices on how to communicate politely in English, making sure to include countries outside the inner circle.

In addition, especially speaking exercises give students space to reflect on their own culture. It does not necessarily need to be uninteresting even if all students in class are from the same culture. As mentioned above one does not often think about his/her culture but rather takes it for granted. It is only after one lives abroad for some time, he/she can see their own culture with different eyes. Comparison, although just on a textbook page, gives one an opportunity to think. Firstly, it is important to understand one's own culture in order to understand the foreign culture. Not everybody is going to have the same opinion and ideas. Thus, after all, this topic can start an interesting class discussion.

International Express' approach to teaching ELF has proved to be student-oriented, entertaining and comprehensive. It is a good preparation for both formal and informal communication with both native and non-native speakers of English in a variety of social situations.

5.2 *New Headway*

New Headway is a General English textbook for young adults and adults that practices all four communication skills. The third edition contains two additional sections at the end of the book – "Writing" (which was originally included in every unit) and "Pairwork activities" which focuses on speaking (there are some speaking activities in every unit, as well). Each set contains a student's book, a teacher's book, a class-CD, a student's CD, and a workbook. *New Headway* also has additional publications on pronunciation, preparation

for the Maturita exam, as well as self-study activities on the Oxford University Press website.

5.2.1 *New Headway Elementary*

5.2.1.1 Student's Book

New Headway Elementary deals with sociocultural competence predominately within the "Everyday English" section. It introduces the student to phrases which should be used in a particular social situation – such as buying a coffee in a café (19), asking for directions (43), buying a shirt in a clothes shop (89), etc. In unit 9 (73), the topic of this section is polite requests. In all situations it is necessary that students know how to formulate a polite question and answer. It might be useful for the students to have a commentary on the use of each phrase such as *Could you pass the salt, please?* is more formal and polite than *Can you pass the salt, please?*

Although a lot of foreign countries are talked about in the textbook, students do not get to know anything they can use in communication with people from these countries. Rather, they learn what the weather is like in Thailand and Norway (33), what people eat around the world (71), history of Buenos Aires/Havana/Seville (79), and things to do in Nepal/Brazil/etc which might be interesting but not necessarily important for intercultural communication.

On the other hand, listening exercises provide the student with a plenitude of different English variations. Certainly, British and American English prevail. Nevertheless, there are also Italian (1.1, 1.12, 4.8, 6.10, 11.10), Russian (1.6), Brazilian (1.7), Polish (2.6, 2.7), German (2.7), Australian (4.6, 4.7), Thai (Ibid.), Norwegian (Ibid.), French (4.8), Japanese (5.4), Korean (5.5), Portuguese (5.5), Spanish (9.7), and Austrian speakers (9.7).

5.2.1.2 Workbook

The workbook does not bring any new elements of sociocultural competence. Also, the listening exercises present predominately British speakers, even if there are a few other accents such as American (1.1, 1.6), Italian (1.1), Spanish (2.2), German (4.4), French (13.4) and Polish (14.3)

5.2.2 *New Headway Pre-Intermediate*

5.2.2.1 Student's Book

Even if the textbook involves a lot of speakers from various countries or, rather British or American speakers travelling abroad, the conversation topics remain too general. The people talk either about their personal lives, or give geographical information about places they visited. A Spaniard studying in England (16), a German working in England, a Englishwoman working in New York (19), a Korean, a Turk and an Nigerian working in London (51) – all of these, as well as the other participants of other topic, could share their experience of living in a foreign culture or compare their own (home) culture to the new (host) culture.

On the other hand, *New Headway Pre-Intermediate* has a lot of speakers with different accents – Croatian (1.1), French (2.1, 2.9, 9.8), Spanish (2.4), Irish (2.9), Italian (2.9), American (3.9, 4.9, 7.8, 12.2, etc.), Norwegian (6.15), Swedish (8.6), Chilean (8.10), South African (11.2) and Russian (11.2). Still, most of the speakers are, of course, British.

Similar to *New Headway Elementary*, in the "Everyday English" sections students practice phrases to be used in various social situations such as informal conversation (21), shopping (37, in fact, the entirety of unit four is dedicated to this topic), tourist office, doctor's office (69), asking for directions (77), making a phone call (85), expressing congratulations (101), saying goodbye (101). Many of these are just revision of the topics from *New Headway Elementary*.

5.2.2.2 Workbook

Even less of sociocultural competence can be found in the workbook. There is, however an exercise in unit 1 (7) which deals with ELF. in two entertaining stories it illustrates that a Korean and a Colombian can communicate even if they do not speak proper English but rather "Globish" which is a simplified version of English coined by Jean Paul Nerriere. Instead of creating a complicated grammatically correct sentence, they use just the key words, and the listener comprehends the rest from the context. The other story exemplifies that sometimes it is easier for a nonnative speaker to understand another nonnative speaker rather than native speaker. Sometimes native speakers' level of English, and perhaps accent, can be difficult to understand if one is not used to it. For instance,

a Czech may be used to communicating in English with a Brit, French or German but may find it difficult to understand American English. The tendency to simplify English for the purpose of international communication was previously mentioned in reference to Crystal (see 2.4).

Listening exercises involve fewer variations of accents than those in the Student's Book. Apart from the British English, there is an American (7.3), Indian (11.3) and Irish (12.7).

5.2.3 *New Headway Intermediate*

5.2.3.1 Student's Book

In unit four (34-35), within the "Reading and Speaking" section, there is an article suitable for developing intercultural awareness. It deals with greetings, dress code, eating habits and business etiquette in various countries which gives students some useful tips for Europe, South and North America and Asia, such as avoiding left hand contact in Middle East, taking off one's shoes when entering a house or maintaining eye contact in the USA or Canada. There is also a pre-reading activity in a form of questionnaire gives students the opportunity to reflect their own culture before they start reading about other cultures. In the post-reading activity – a group discussion – students are asked to think about some examples of bad manners in their country, as well as think of some tips for a foreigner who plans to work in their country.

The following section, "Listening and Speaking," deals with invitations and visiting people. The pre-listening activity aims at students' experience with visiting someone's home in a foreign country. The listening exercise compares the way people act during the visit in three different countries – Japan, Britain and Brazil. It illustrates e.g. Japanese modesty and careful preparations, British potluck tradition, and Brazilian informality. As a post-listening activity students discuss the topic in context of their own culture.

Listening exercises 6.7 and 6.8 in unit six give an interesting view of New York City through British eyes, as well as a view of London through American eyes. The British speaker breaks stereotypes about New Yorkers as unfriendly and busy people. The American, on the other hand, confirms the stereotype about the British as reserved and dissatisfied. This could be good chance for students to express their opinion on the subject

and compare both listening exercises with their personal experience, or even to start a discussion on stereotyping in general.

Most of the speakers on the CDs are British, there are, however, a few other nationalities represented such as Americans (2.3, 6.7, 10.7, 10.8), Australians (6.1), Japanese (4.9), Brazilians (4.9), Koreans (6.3), Argentineans (7.1), and Indians (9.3). The origin of the speaker is apparent from the context and even explicitly mentioned.

5.2.3.2 Workbook

Workbook exercises do not develop the sociocultural phenomena from the student's book but rather practice grammar, vocabulary, listening and pronunciation. Listening exercises do not present more accents than the student's book.

5.2.4 *New Headway Upper-Intermediate*

5.2.4.1 Student's Book

If there is only a little of sociocultural competence in *New Headway* textbooks analyzed so far, there is even less in *New Headway Upper-Intermediate*. In some of the "Everyday English" sections students can learn to speak English more expressively by using exclamations (25) or moans and groans (101). Like in previous textbooks, there are some social situations to practice the proper register such as visiting people (43), which include polite phrases, telephone conversation (53), and meetings, which include expressing one's opinion in an adequate manner. After students hear the examples from the tape and practice it in a matching exercise, they can act it out in a role play.

Probably the most interesting topic of the "Everyday English" sections seems to be "exaggeration and understatement" in unit seven (69). In my opinion, the level of exaggeration or understatement is interconnected to culture. Americans, for example, like to exaggerate; the British, on the other hand, tend to use understatement; a Czech without proper prior knowledge might be confused by both of them (see 4.5). A misunderstanding can also happen due to another factor – American "ultra-friendliness" – Czechs might find American exaggerated facial expression, together with excited tone of voice, rather unusual and easily yield to the impression that the person really means what he/she says.

In this exercise students are given some examples which they are supposed to use in their own dialogues. Further description concerning the usage of those expressions may be quite useful. Most Czech students will not find it necessary to employ either exaggeration or understatement even though it may be expected in some situations.

5.2.4.2 Workbook

As previously mentioned, there are no additional elements relevant for sociocultural competence in the workbook. Considering relatively wide range of accents used in listening exercises in both student's book and workbook in *New Headway Elementary, Pre- and Intermediate*, it is surprising that on the upper-intermediate level the speakers are for the most part British, and, in some cases, American.

5.2.5 *New Headway Advanced*

5.2.5.1 Student's Book

New Headway Advanced does not concentrate on sociocultural competence more than the other levels. However, it also does not omit it completely. Listening exercise 1.6 in unit one (15) deals with an important part of intercultural communication – stereotyping. Six different speakers talk about what stereotypes are associated with their countries and students are supposed to guess the name of the country. Some speakers talk about stereotypical character features such as nationalism, generosity, pessimism (Scotland), loudness, disorganization (Spain); others offer a British view of their country such as rebellious children of the United Kingdom (USA). In the subsequent speaking exercise students describe a country they know in a stereotypical way and then express their opinion based on their own experience. Finally, students are asked to discuss stereotypes of their own culture. Unfortunately, there are not any other exercises of this sort.

Not even the final section of every unit "The Last Word" (which is in fact "Everyday English") develops sociocultural skills. What is beneficial about this section is that it does prepare students for communication in different social situations via changing the register. For example, expressing emotions (54), which includes paraverbal communication (but not nonverbal), or the use of euphemisms (116) and strategies to soften the message (80) which definitely is a part of politeness. Softening the message, especially, should be

emphasized to Czech speakers, who often regard English as overly polite, which in turn makes them look almost rude from English native speakers' perspective.

New Headway Advanced, similarly to many other textbooks, uses both British and American English in listening activities which is important because British and American English differ not only in accent but also in vocabulary and also partly in grammar. "The Last Word" section in unit one helps students to distinguish between the two variations. First, they read two conversations with a similar content and try to notice the differences. Then, they listen to an American and a British speaker. In the second exercise, they are even asked to transfer other dialogues from British to American English. Using a British vocabulary in the USA and vice versa does not necessarily represent a communication barrier, but it can certainly lead to a slight confusion. Besides, the more variation of English the student is exposed to, the better.

Most speakers in listening exercises are British and American. Some nonnative speakers such as French (5.1), Dutch (5.1) or Spanish (7.4) are also included.

5.2.5.2 Workbook

The workbook supplies additional, mostly grammatical, exercises. However, there are two listening exercises (1.1, 1.2) that deal with viewing the British culture through Hungarian and American/Italian eyes. A Hungarian man living in United Kingdom describes how he adapted to the British culture. On the contrary, an American woman who long lived in Italy compares reserved Brits to friendly Italians, and then also to direct Americans and more indirect Brits. Such comparisons and experiences are not only interesting but can help the student to avoid cultural shock. Listening exercises in the workbook correspond with those in the student's book.

5.2.6 Conclusion

New Headway does not provide much emphasis on ELF. It continues the orientation of the student predominately towards the Anglo-Saxon culture. It has a couple exercises concerning sociocultural and intercultural aspects in almost every analyzed textbook, however, there is much less than in the *International Express*. There are also several relevant exercises on international etiquette, communication rules in different countries and examples of stereotypical views of chosen cultures. Nevertheless, these appear

seemingly at random, and are for the most part confined to *New Headway Intermediate* and *Advanced*.

Similar to the "Focus on Function" section in *International Express*, *New Headway* has a section called "Everyday English" which introduces and practices useful polite phrases in many different social situation such as making a call, suggestions, offers or requests, having a conversation at the airport or railway station etc. Young students especially will certainly appreciate the "Everyday English" section in unit eleven (93) in *New Headway Intermediate* which deals with informal English ("Dunno", "What's up", "No way") – which is usually the first thing they need if they study abroad.

The upper-intermediate and advanced level student certainly appreciate sections on "softening the message" (*Advanced* 80) or "expressing emotions" (*Advanced* 54), which enables them to express themselves more precisely. However, students need to learn more than just some phrases; they also need to know in which situation it is appropriate to use them. It would be advisable to include tasks such as "Convert the formal dialogue into an informal one" or "which of these expressions can you use in an essay/e-mail to a friend/application for study abroad program," etc.

New Headway employs a lot of people from all over the world. No matter if they speak about their life in Great Britain or in their own country, the potential intercultural input which they could provide remains (except a few examples) unused. Their dialogues concern their personal information or that of their country in a sense of history, geography, sports or food. Similarly, the British or American characters either talk about their life at home or countries they visited during their work abroad or vacation. Again, the information is limited to weather, sightseeing, cuisine, etc. The differences between one's own and foreign cultures in a sense of habits, manners, beliefs, and both verbal and non-verbal communication rules are hardly ever mentioned. Students would certainly appreciate if the textbook included exercises that deal, for example, with the use of silence, the perception of time (*International Express Upper-Intermediate* 10, 30) or other cultural specifics which they can encounter.

It is without doubt that information of this nature would be more practical and applicable in real life situation, as opposed to repeatedly occurring articles on life stories of famous or fictional people or foreign countries' geographies. Many of those articles or dialogues seem to be rather too general. For communication in English with people from

different cultures, students need real and applicable information. The authors of *New Headway* should consider incorporating authentic stories of intercultural encounters, including possible problems and misunderstandings rather than stories of people who travel or live abroad, facing no intercultural issues at all.

On the positive side, one of the obvious advantages of *New Headway* is that it incorporates different variations of English (especially in *Elementary*, *Pre-Intermediate* and *Intermediate*). This proves that English is an international language and that students are likely to use it in communication with not only Brits or Americans but many other nationalities as well. Certainly, it would be beneficial if those NNS were utilized for more than just foreign accent input.

New Headway does include some exercises to develop sociocultural competence in ELF, such as the reading and speaking exercise in *New Headway Intermediate* (34-35), which deals with deals with greetings, dress code, eating habits and business etiquette in various countries, etc. A few people in *New Headway Advanced* give their culture's view on the British culture, as well as the American and the British both expressing their view of each other's culture in *New Headway Intermediate* but they are just a drop in the ocean. Sociocultural elements should be incorporated in exercises throughout the textbook and on all levels.

6 GAMES FOR RAISING INTERCULTURAL AWARENESS IN ESL CLASSES

This chapter aims to suggest some ideas for raising intercultural awareness in ESL classes. The games are based on either secondary literature or ideas and experiences from study abroad programs the author of this thesis participated in.

6.1 C. Kramersch: Intercultural activities

Kramersch emphasizes the importance of creating an authentic context for communication in class. "By failing to take advantage of the full range of contextual possibilities, the teachers often unwittingly constrained classroom discourse to superficial, linguistic exchanges" (*Context* 91). Kramersch criticizes the teacher whose class she visited for requiring the students to present the outcomes of their preceding discussion, which was

rather unnatural. The goal of this activity should be the discussion itself, not a subsequent summary. Kramersch believes that the teacher should have let the students perform the discussion and also stopped concentrating on correcting grammatical mistakes (*Context* 71-75). By discussing the issue students can practice the communicative style appropriate for the given language – typical expression, turn taking, etc. instead of giving a summary of the discussion.

Kramersch (*Context* 229-231) suggests the following activities to add a contrastive cultural dimension on well-known communicative activities in foreign language class:

6.1.1 Personal Constructs [in multilingual class]

Note how every speaker has a socially or culturally different way of classifying the world while contrasting concepts. For instance, one can contrast "friendliness" with "don't like you", then contrast "don't like you" with "trust you", then "trust you" with "exclude you" etc. (Ibid. 229)

6.1.2 Role-play

Role-play is a classical foreign language class activity. Kramersch suggests several options, one of which can be describing one's school and your daily routines to a foreign student...which points you emphasize knowing what you know about schools system in this foreign student's country (Ibid.) An American student can for example explain "homecoming" to a Czech student who can, on the other hand, explain Czech "Majales". In my opinion, in a real life situation a student may oftentimes need to explain a cultural phenomenon to a foreigner, thus, this activity may a practical application.

6.1.3 Behind the Looking Glass

Put together a short brochure in the foreign language about your country for foreign students or tourists, taking into account what you know about their constructs and stereotypes of your country (Ibid.). Students can use foreign websites, guidebooks of their country published abroad or simply use their imagination. The key information students should include would be e.g. greetings, invitations, punctuality, gestures rather than factual information such as sightseeing or history.

6.1.4 Constructing a Cultural Context

Give your student a conversation between two native speakers without an ending. Let them to finish the conversation and then compare their results with the, now revealed, original ending. This exercise can serve as a situational and cultural comprehension check. This type of exercise is also called general speculative activity (see McCohany 122).

Example: Two friends meet in a cafe:

Tom: Hi Joe, how are you?

Joe: Hey Tom, how are you?

Tom: Actually, I've got something for you ...

What is going to happen next? How is Joe going to react?

A supposed (maybe a little embarrassed) answer in Czech context could be "Really? But it's not my birthday. You should not buy anything...thanks."

A supposed answer in Anglo-Saxon context could be "Oh, thank you. That's really nice of you!"

6.2 J. Schumm: A Card Game

Jennifer Schumm, an American professor in the English Department at the University of Graz, Austria, incorporates a card game into her Intercultural Communication class. The class is divided into several groups. Every group is given the same set of cards and a list of rules of the game – which are, however, different for every group. Nobody is allowed to speak. Members of the group can easily participate in the game since everybody has read the rules; therefore, everyone knows how to play. Every ten minutes one member of the group moves to the other group. Soon he/she realizes that the game rules of a new group are different from those he/she initially learnt. It is interesting to observe how the new player behaves. Some try to adapt and learn the new rules, other try to convince the rest of the players to play according his/her rules.

The point of the game is that the players find themselves in a situation in which they experience the opposite of what they expect, and they are forced to learn rules with which they are not familiar. The outcome of the game should be that the player learns not to judge

the situation just from his/her point of view but rather to adapt to new rules and the environment the target society. In monolingual classes students can use the knowledge of non-verbal communication such as facial expressions, nodding or gestures. In multilingual classes students do not need to understand each other's nonverbal communication if it differs from theirs.

6.3. L. E. Henrichsen: Cultural Assimilators and Cultoons

Henrichsen (qtd. in Thanasoulas, "The Importance" n. pag.) proposes two methods of teaching culture awareness – culture assimilators and cultoons. Culture assimilators "comprise short descriptions of various situations where one person from the target culture interacts with persons from the home culture. Then follow four possible interpretations of the meaning of the behavior and speech of the interactants" (Ibid.). Cultoons are "visual culture assimilators"(Ibid.). In these games, students are asked to analyze pictures of cultural misunderstandings.

Cultural assimilators and cultoons can be creative activities. Students can make up a story of an intercultural encounter in form of cartoon, short film, or a sequence of photographs. The story can be or does not need to be an intercultural misunderstanding. It would, however, be more interesting if the story was entertaining. At the same time it should not give space for cultural stereotyping.

For example:

An American student asks a Czech student.

American: "How are you?"

Czech (sincerely): "Well, not really well, I have a headache and I have an essay due tomorrow morning."

American looks embarrassed and confused.

What is the problem?

- A. A negative response is not expected
- B. "How are you?" is a greeting rather than a real question
- C. The American thought the deadline was next week
- D. The American thinks that he/she is asking for help with essay

(Answer: A and B)

6.4 Activities Based on Author's Ideas or Experience

There are myriads of activities a foreign language teacher might find. The following are just some ideas either invented or experienced by the author during study abroad in the USA.¹²

6.4.1 Two Societies

In another cultural awareness raising game¹³, students may be divided into two large groups separated from each other in two different rooms. Each group represents a different society with different laws and values. Students learn these laws, values, codes of behavior, and even their new language¹⁴ for about half an hour. After students learn to live according to their culture, they exchange a person with the other group. Subsequently, this person gives a report on his/her visit and tries to explain to the others how the foreign society works. Again, the students experience life in a foreign community and acquire a different perspective. Students can practice dealing with an unknown situation and test his/her cross-cultural communication skills. The discussion, which is supposed to follow this activity, can be very fervent, especially if some students take the game seriously and "play hard".

6.4.2 Fairy Tale

Fairy tales or folk tales (but also proverbs or sayings) are a rich source of values and beliefs of a society. Apart from international fairy tales such as Little Red Riding Hood, there are national fairy tales specific to every culture. Incorporating foreign fairy tales can serve as an interesting comparison with one's own culture. Kramsch claims that "understanding a foreign culture requires putting that culture in relation with one's own" (*Context* 205). Fairy tales and folk tales are great materials for that. Students can collect fairy/folk tales from various cultures, compare them with their national fairy/folk tales and find some common or distinctive features.

¹² University of Graz, Austria; Spelman College, Atlanta, USA.

¹³ Game performed at the *2010 Georgia International Leadership Conference* in Eatonton, Georgia, USA.

¹⁴ The language is usually based on very simple rules. It can for example consist of only vowels and numbers

6.4.3 What would you think/do if...

Students are given a short description or a picture of a situation that they are supposed to interpret. For example, "What would you think if you saw two people of the same sex kissing on the cheek?/What would you do if your friend came two hours late to your party?/ What would you respond with if someone asked you how much you earn" This activity can show different points of view especially in multicultural class.

Example 1:

You are talking to a Chinese person. He/she keeps moving away from you. How would you feel?

- A. He/she does not like me and wants to keep distance.
- B. He/she is worried I might spit on him/her.
- C. Chinese prefer more personal space.

Example 2:

How would you feel, if you had a speech and your African-American friend keep interrupting you with comments such as "that's right", "O.K.", etc.?

- A. He/she is rude.
- B. He/she wants to express his/her approval.
- C. He wants to make you laugh.

This section consists of only a few suggestions for intercultural activities that would support the development of intercultural awareness. The choice of appropriate activity depends on many factors, thus, the teacher should consider following questions.

Is the teacher a NS or NNS?

Do the students come from the same country?

Is the class taking place in inner/outer/expanded circle country?

Why are they learning English?

The teacher should not let himself/herself be limited by the textbook and use extra materials. Some more examples of intercultural exercises or activities can be found in the appendices.

III. CONCLUSION

It has been more than thirty years since Dell Hymes introduced the term "communicative competence" which is nowadays seen as the goal of foreign language education. This thesis deals with its integral part – the sociocultural competence.

The theoretical part defines sociocultural competence and how the language is interconnected with culture. Even if one uses a foreign language he/she cannot step out of his/her own culture. Sometimes applications of our norms into communication in a foreign language may turn into a misunderstanding and the speaker may be perceived as impolite. Therefore, it is essential to develop intercultural awareness and become not only a linguistically but also a socioculturally competent speaker of a foreign language.

In the case of English, the sociocultural competence includes much more than the knowledge of the culture in countries where English is the native language; English has become a lingua franca of the twenty-first century. It was previously mentioned that the number of English non-native speakers significantly exceeded the number of English native-speakers.

Considering the growing number of people traveling, working and studying abroad, many people are forced to use a foreign language, which is very often English. In many of these situations it becomes inevitable to communicate with someone from completely different cultural background. Even though a person may speak in English it does not necessarily mean that the person will act according to the rules of Anglo-Saxon culture. Thus, it becomes necessary to develop basic intercultural awareness to avoid misunderstandings and faux pas.

Sociocultural competence is a comprehensive skill; it consists of many aspects. For the purpose of this thesis only some of the more important aspects are dealt with. The section on verbal communication deals addressing people, compliments and degree of directness that deserve attention. The section on nonverbal communication discusses eye contact, head movement, facial expression, gestures, time, silence, personal space, and physical contact.

In the practical part is based on ESL textbook analysis. The aim is to discover to what extent the textbooks incorporate sociocultural competence. The selected textbooks

are *International Express* which is a General English textbook with Business orientation and *New Headway* which is a General English textbook. All levels of the Student's Books and Workbooks (including Student's and Class CDs) are analyzed in detail.

The results show that *International Express*, even while being partly a Business English textbook, incorporates sociocultural competence to a significantly greater extent compared to the *New Headway*. *International Express* adheres to the idea of English as a Lingua Franca and incorporates a number of sociocultural and intercultural exercises and activities. Students learn to speak adequately using appropriate register in various social situations. They acquire knowledge of different customs and communication rules, both verbal and nonverbal, in English speaking countries as well as countries with another first language.

New Headway, on the other hand, promotes the concept of English as a Lingua Franca by including a great number of non-native speakers and at the same time helps students to get used to various accents. Unfortunately, *New Headway* does not employ those non-native speakers to provide the students with some intercultural differences (in contrast with *International Express*).

It is not just in business, but also in any communication with people from foreign cultures, that one needs to be at least interculturally aware if not competent. If one learns from a textbook that focuses only on Anglo-Saxon sociocultural context, he/she may fail in communication with someone from outside this context. To maintain successful communication between cultures, one has to be able to switch not just the language code but also try to employ rules of the other culture rather than follow automatically one's own norms.

This thesis points out that sociocultural competence is incorporated to a certain extent in Business English textbooks but it is rather neglected in General English textbooks. The last chapter contains suggestions for improving sociocultural competence and intercultural awareness via interactive games or various cultural exercises. These ideas come from secondary literature, other textbooks as well as imagination of the author of this thesis or experience from study abroad programs. Perhaps some of these ideas can inspire teachers to use intercultural materials in order to prepare their student for using English as a Lingua Franca.

RESUMÉ

Před více než třiceti lety přišel Dell Hymes, americký sociolingvista a antropolog, s pojmem „komunikativní kompetence“, jež se dnes považuje za cíl jazykového vzdělávání. Tato diplomová práce se zaměřuje na její nedílnou součást – kompetenci sociokulturní.

Teroretická část se zabývá pojmem sociokulturní kompetence a vztahem jazyka a kultury. Ani v případě, že používáme cizí jazyk, není možné, aby se člověk zbavil vlivu své vlastní kultury. Pokud při komunikaci v cizím jazyce aplikujeme normy a zvyklosti našeho rodného jazyka, může dojít k interkulturnímu nedorozumění a v důsledku toho můžeme na druhého účastníka komunikace působit nezdvořile. Proto je nezbytné, abychom měli určité povědomí o kulturních odlišnostech, a stali se tak nejen jazykově, ale i sociokulturně kompetentními uživateli cizího jazyka.

V případě anglického jazyka se tato kompetence nevztahuje jen na země, kde je angličtina rodným jazykem. Angličtina se skutečně začíná používat jako lingua franca dvacátého prvního století. Jak již bylo zmíněno v úvodu, počet nerodilých mluvčích anglického jazyka už značně přesáhl počet rodilých mluvčích.

Vezmeme-li v úvahu rostoucí mobilitu obyvatel – ať už se jedná o dovolené, studijní pobyty nebo práci v zahraničí, jsme nuceni používat cizí jazyk, kterým je stále angličtina. Někdy je potřeba se dorozumět s někým z naprosto odlišného kulturního zázemí. Ani pokud si pro tyto účely vybereme angličtinu, nemůžeme čekat, že se náš komunikační partner bude chovat podle zásad anglosaské kultury. V takovémto případě se základní znalost kulturních rozdílů jeví jako nezbytná.

Sociokulturní kompetence je velice komplexní dovednost, skládající se z mnoha aspektů. Pro účely této práce byly vybrány jen některé. V oblasti verbální komunikace je to oslovení, komplimenty a míra přímocnosti. V oblasti neverbální komunikace se jedná o oční kontakt, pohyby hlavy, mimiku, gesta, vnímání času, užívání pauz a mlčení, osobní prostor a fyzický kontakt.

V praktické části je provedena analýza vybraných učebnic anglického jazyka. Cílem bylo zjistit, do jaké míry je sociokulturní kompetence v učebnicích obsažena. Jedna z vybraných učebnic, *International Express*, je napůl obecná a napůl obchodní angličtina,

druhá, *New Headway*, je pouze obecná angličtina. Analýza byla provedena na všech úrovních. Předmětem analýzy byly učebnice, pracovní sešity, studentská i učitelská CD.

Z výsledků vyplynulo, že *International Express*, snad protože je se jedná částečně o učebnici obchodní angličtiny, klade na sociokulturní kompetenci o poznání větší důraz než *New Headway*. *International Express* obsahuje řadu sociokulturních a interkulturních cvičení, čímž propaguje myšlenku angličtina – lingua franca. Studenti se učí používat jazyk adekvátně v běžných společenských situacích a zároveň získají znalost mnoha různých komunikačních zvyklostí a pravidel, verbálních i neverbálních, používaných jak v anglických mluvčích, tak i v jiných cizích zemích.

Na druhou stranu, *New Headway* propaguje myšlenku angličtina – lingua franca tím, že do poslechových cvičení zahrnuje celou řadu nerodilých mluvčích z celého světa, čímž zároveň umožňuje studentům, aby si zvykali na různé akcenty. Je ovšem škoda, že tyto mluvčí nevyužívá učebnice také k nějakým interkulturním aktivitám, jak je tomu v případě *International Express*.

Podle mého názoru by povědomí o kulturních rozdílech nemělo být jen součástí učebnic obchodní angličtiny. Tuto znalost je možné uplatnit při jakékoli komunikaci. Jestliže student používá učebnici, která vychází jen z anglosaského prostředí, může se stát, že neuspěje v komunikaci s někým mimo tuto kulturní sféru. Pro úspěšnou interkulturní komunikaci je potřeba změnit nejen jazykový kód, ale také aplikovat jiná kulturní pravidla namísto automatického dodržování pravidel vlastní kultury.

Tato práce se snaží poukázat na fakt, že sociokulturní kompetence je do jisté míry zastoupena v učebnicích obchodní angličtiny a značně zanedbána v učebnicích obecné angličtiny. V poslední kapitole jsou navrženy některé aktivity, které by mohly přispět k rozvoji sociokulturní kompetence a zvýšit povědomí o interkulturních rozdílech. Zdrojem těchto návrhů je sekundární literatura, autorčina představivost a osobní zkušenosti ze studijních pobytů v Rakousku a Spojených státech. Některé z těchto aktivit by mohly inspirovat učitele angličtiny k používání více interkulturních materiálů, aby ze svých studentů vychovali schopné uživatele angličtiny jako mezinárodního jazyka.

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APPENDIX NO. 1:

Gill, S., Čaňková, M. *Oxford basics. Intercultural Activities*. Oxford: OUP, 2002. 6. Print.

1 Greetings and introductions

LANGUAGE	Nice to meet you; Pleased to meet you. How are you? – I'm fine, thanks, and you?
CULTURE FOCUS	Different ways of greeting people using body language (non-verbal greetings) and expressions
ACTIVITIES	Group activity, pair work
MATERIALS	Board
TIME GUIDE	45 minutes – 1 hour
PREPARATION	Slips of paper with a type of greeting
LEVEL	Elementary to lower intermediate

- 1 Hand out one slip of paper to each group of three or four learners. Do not use any non-verbal greetings that you think may be too embarrassing for your class. Explain *nod*, *bow*, *hug*, and *slap* if necessary.

TYPES OF GREETINGS

<i>nod</i> (Scandinavia)	<i>bow</i> (Japan)
<i>kiss on side of the face</i> (Turkey)	<i>hug</i> (Russia)
<i>shake hands</i> (USA)	<i>slap on the shoulder</i>
<i>hands together and bow</i> (Thailand)	(north Canada)

Explain to the class that these are traditional forms of greeting and the country they come from is in brackets.

- 2 Go round and check each group understands how to perform their greeting. Write this exchange on the board. Demonstrate it with a group.

GROUP *Welcome to Turkey.* [greeting]
TEACHER *Thank you.* [greeting]

Position the groups around the classroom. Tell the class to mingle and visit each other's groups. At least two people should remain to welcome visitors. Let each person from every group visit three or four other groups.

- 3 Ask the class if they can remember the countries and greetings. List the types of greeting and places/people on the board. Discuss what kinds of greetings the learners usually use. Ask which greeting was the most/least comfortable for them and why, for example, *I don't like hugging because in my country we don't usually touch when we greet.*
- 4 Write this on the board:
A *Nice to meet you. I'm* (first name, family name).
B *Pleased to meet you. My name's* (first name, family name).

APPENDIX NO. 2:

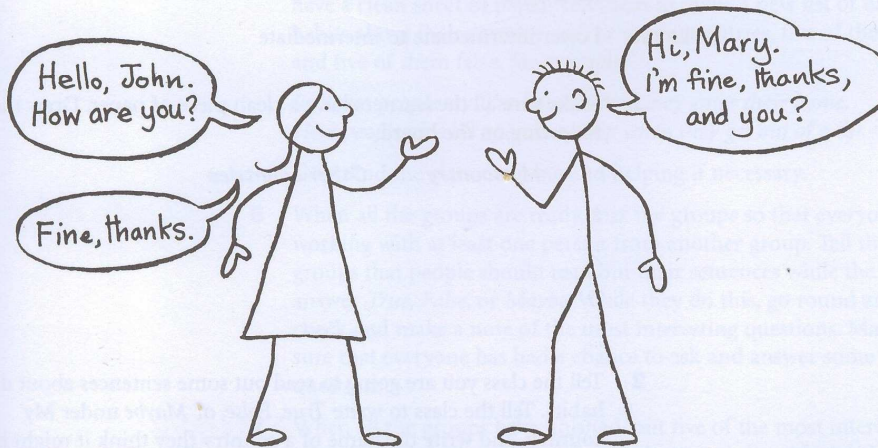
Gill, S., Čaňková, M. *Oxford basics. Intercultural Activities*. Oxford: OUP, 2002. 7. Print.

Greetings and introductions

1

Introduce yourself to a few people in the class using this short exchange. Shake hands at the same time. Then ask a few pairs to practise in front of the class. Explain that this is a polite way to introduce yourself to someone in an English-speaking country. Now ask the whole class to move around the classroom introducing themselves using the expressions and shaking hands. Stop the activity when everyone has introduced themselves.

- 5 Draw these figures and bubbles on the board.



- 6 Ask the class if the people in the picture are strangers or friends and ask them to explain their answer. (Answer: they are friends because they use first names.)
- 7 Practise the exchange with a learner in front of the class. Then ask a pair to practise in front of the class, then another pair. When they are ready ask the class to walk around and greet each other (not shaking hands this time).
- 8 Rub out the names *John* and *Mary* from the bubble and write *Peter Ryan* and *Bob Ellis* under A and B. Explain that A is much younger than B. Ask the class what you should write in the bubbles (A – *Mr Ellis*; B – *Peter*). Explain that it is more polite to say 'thank you' than 'thanks' and change A's second bubble. The class practise as in stage.6. For further practice, change B to *Jane Ellis* and go through the same stages. This time the learners should use Ms instead of Mr.

Follow-up activity

The class can write or act out a short conversation between two people meeting for the first time.

APPENDIX NO. 3:

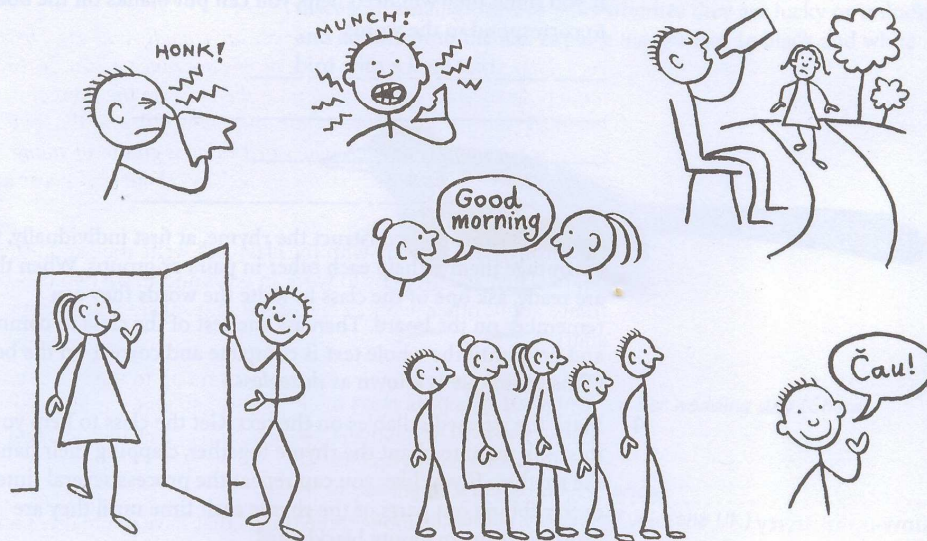
Gill, S., Čaňková, M. *Oxford Basics. Intercultural Activities*. Oxford: OUP, 2002. 52. Print.

24 Politeness and social behaviour

LANGUAGE	should, shouldn't, needn't
CULTURE FOCUS	Politeness and social behaviour in different societies
ACTIVITIES	Discussion, listening—
MATERIALS	None
TIME GUIDE	45 minutes – 1 hour
PREPARATION	None
LEVEL	Lower intermediate

- 1 Ask the class how they address various people – people in their family, people they don't know, friends, etc. Ask them why it is important to address someone correctly.

Draw the following pictures on the board and ask the class to work in pairs and discuss what the pictures represent:



When the pairs have had a chance to discuss all the pictures, ask the class what they think the pictures represent and how they relate to good/bad behaviour. Then write up these sentences on the board and ask the class to work in small groups to discuss them:

Do you blow your nose in public?

Do you make a noise when you eat your food?

What do you think of people who drink alcohol in public?

APPENDIX 4:

Gill, S., Čaňková, M. *Oxford Basics. Intercultural Activities*. Oxford: OUP, 2002. 53. Print.

24

Politeness and social behaviour

Do you open doors for other people?

Do you wait in a queue for a bus or train?

Do you speak at the same time someone is speaking to you?

Do you say 'Good morning' to your neighbour?

When you visit a foreign country do you try to learn a few phrases of that language?

When the groups have finished, discuss which types of behaviour are acceptable in the learners' country and if they are acceptable or not in other countries, for example, in many parts of the USA drinking in public is not acceptable; in Japan making a noise eating noodles is acceptable but making a noise blowing your nose is not; in the UK not queuing is unacceptable, etc.

2 Tell the class they are going to hear a person talking about things they like and dislike about public behaviour. Ask them to list the points mentioned. Read the text slowly and clearly.

I live in a small town and most people are friendly and say 'Hello'. It's very different in the big city where people are much colder. It really annoys me when people try and push their way to the front of a queue. Bus drivers are usually rude and unhelpful, and the standard of service in shops is terrible. The worst thing is groups of young people at night who have been drinking. They shout and swear and are very noisy.

3 Go through the answers with the class and write the list on the board. Then ask the class to work in pairs and make two lists of things about other people's behaviour that makes them happy or angry.

When they have finished ask them to come up to the board and write down one item from their list and talk about it in more detail. Continue till all the learners have had a chance to speak.

Follow-up activity The class can write about some things that have made them angry recently.

53

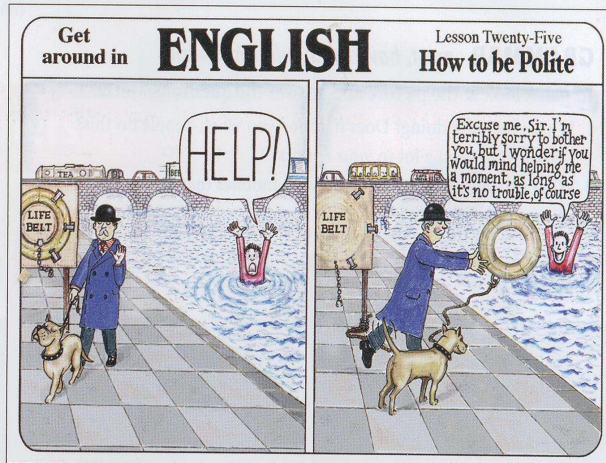
APPENDIX NO. 5:

Lathan-Koenig, C., Oxenden, C. *New English File Intermediate*. Oxford: OUP, 2006. 8.

Print

4 READING

- a Look at the postcard. What does it say about the English?
- b Read *Culture shock* and tick (✓) the sentence which says what the article is about.
- The English have very good manners.
 - The English and Russian idea of good manners is different.
 - The English are polite but insincere.
 - The Russians are very rude and unfriendly.



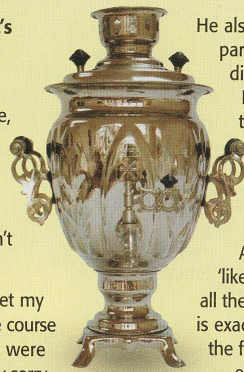
Culture shock

Good manners are always good manners. That's what Miranda Ingram, who is English, thought, until she married Alexander, who is Russian.

When I first met Alexander and he said to me, in Russian, '*Nalei mnye chai* – pour me some tea', I got angry and answered, 'Pour it yourself'. Translated into English, without a '*Could you...?*' and a '*please*', it sounded really rude to me. But in Russian it was fine – you don't have to add any polite words.

However, when I took Alexander home to meet my parents in the UK, I had to give him an intensive course in *pleases* and *thank yous* (which he thought were completely unnecessary), and to teach him to say *sorry* even if someone else stepped on his toe, and to smile, smile, smile.

Another thing that Alexander just couldn't understand was why people said things like, 'Would you mind passing me the salt, please?' He said, 'It's only the salt, for goodness sake! What do you say in English if you want a *real* favour?'



He also watched in amazement when, at a dinner party in England, we swallowed some really disgusting food and I said, 'Mmm...delicious'. In Russia, people are much more direct. The first time Alexander's mother came to our house for dinner in Moscow, she told me that my soup needed more flavouring. Afterwards when we argued about it my husband said, 'Do you prefer your dinner guests to lie?'

Alexander complained that in England he felt 'like the village idiot' because in Russia if you smile all the time people think that you are mad. In fact, this is exactly what my husband's friends thought of me the first time I went to Russia because I smiled at everyone, and translated every '*please*' and '*thank you*' from English into Russian!

At home we now have an agreement. If we're speaking Russian, he can say 'Pour me some tea', and just make a noise like a grunt when I give it to him. But when we're speaking English, he has to add a '*please*', a '*thank you*', and a smile.

Adapted from the British press

- c Read the article again and mark the sentences T (true) or F (false). Correct the wrong sentences.
- 1 Miranda got angry because her husband asked her to make the tea.
 - 2 Miranda had to teach him to say sorry when something wasn't his fault.
 - 3 Her husband thinks English people are too polite.
 - 4 Alexander wasn't surprised when people said they liked the food at the dinner party.
 - 5 The food was delicious.
 - 6 Miranda didn't mind when her mother-in-law criticized her cooking.
 - 7 Alexander thought his mother was right.
 - 8 In Russia it isn't normal to smile all the time when you speak to someone.
 - 9 His Russian friends thought Miranda was very friendly because she smiled a lot.
 - 10 Alexander never says thank you for his tea when he and Miranda are speaking in Russian.
- d Now cover the text. Can you complete the phrases with the missing verbs?
- 1 _____ on someone's foot or toe (by accident)
 - 2 _____ some wine into a glass or tea into a cup
 - 3 _____ a noise, like a grunt
 - 4 _____ food (so that it goes from your mouth to your stomach)
 - 5 _____ a word from English into Russian
- e Are people in your country more like Miranda or Alexander?

ANOTACE

Jméno a příjmení:	Denisa Drlíková
Katedra:	Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky FF UP Olomouc
Vedoucí práce:	PhDr. Sabina Pazderová
Rok obhajoby:	2008
Název práce:	Sociokulturní kompetence ve výuce angličtiny jako cizího jazyka
Název práce v angličtině:	Sociocultural Competence in ESL
Anotace práce:	Teoretická část se zabývá pojmem sociokulturní kompetence, propojeností kultury a jazyka a pojetím angličtiny jako jazyka mezinárodní komunikace. Praktickou část tvoří analýzy učebnic a návrhy na interkulturní aktivity pro učitele angličtiny jako cizího jazyka.
Anotace v angličtině:	The theoretical part deals with sociocultural competence, interconnection of culture and language and the concept of English as a lingua franca. The practical part consists of textbook analysis and suggestions for intercultural activities for teachers of ESL.
Klíčová slova:	Sociocultural competence, language, culture, intercultural communication, English as a lingua franca.
Přílohy vázané v práci:	Materiály z jiných učebnic, které mohou posloužit pro rozvoj sociokulturní kompetence v hodinách angličtiny pro jako cizího jazyka.
Rozsah práce:	75 stran + 5 stran příloh
Jazyk práce:	Anglický jazyk