Application of communicative approach principles
in English language teaching

Diploma Thesis
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Declaration

I declare that I have worked independently on this thesis and used only the sources listed in bibliography.

Prohlášení

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Abstract

Since students at vocational schools are very often considered to be behaving inappropriately, absent from classes, unmotivated and unwilling to cooperate with the teacher and classmates, this thesis aims to confirm, or disprove, the author’s beliefs that communicative approach can affect motivation of students at a particular vocational school and their approach to the language. Also, by creating lesson plans based on principles of communicative approach, the author means to prove that efficiency of English language teaching can be improved and students’ interest in the language can be raised. The theoretical part of the thesis presents communication itself, discusses the principles of CLT and new roles that both teachers and students acquire. The empirical part then contains research conducted in two stages – a questionnaire and lesson plans piloted at the Private vocational school in Břeclav. The lessons are evaluated by students as well as the teacher and conclusions that may affect the author’s further teaching practice are drawn.

Key words: communication, communicative competence, Communicative language teaching, principles, mistakes

Anotace

Studenti odborných škol a učilišť jsou často demotivováni a neochotní pracovat jak s učiteli, tak se svými spolužáky. Dále bývají kritizováni za nevhodné chování a absenci ve škole. Tato diplomová práce se proto pokusí potvrdit nebo vyvrátit autorky domněnky, že komunikační výuka jazyků může ovlivnit motivaci studentů a jejich přístup k výuce. Sestavením vyučovacích hodin na základě komunikačního přístupu se autorka také pokusí zjístit, zda by tento přístup mohl mít vliv na efektivitu výuky a stupeň zájmu studentů o anglický jazyk. Teoretická část představuje pojem komunikace, zkoumá základní principy komunikační výuky jazyků a nové role, které si s komunikačním přístupem osvojí jak učitelé, tak žáci. Praktická část sestává ze dvou částí – dotazníku a plánů výuky aplikovaných na Soukromé střední odborné škole v Břeclavi. Výuka je hodnocena studenty i učiteli a závěry, které mohou ovlivnit autorku další učitelskou praxi, jsou zpracovány a vyhodnoceny v poslední části práce.

Klíčová slova: komunikace, komunikační kompetence, Komunikativní výuka jazyků, principy, chyby
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Introduction

Teachers at vocational schools face several challenges that affect their work seriously. Students at this kind of schools are very often considered to be behaving inappropriately, absent from classes, unmotivated and unwilling to cooperate with the teacher and classmates, too. The author of the thesis is curious about whether this situation is inevitable or if the students’ approach may be changed. Therefore, this thesis aims to confirm, or disprove, the author’s beliefs that communicative approach can affect motivation of students at a particular vocational school and their approach to the language. Also, by creating lesson plans based on principles of communicative approach, the author means to prove that efficiency of English language teaching can be improved and students’ interest in the language can be raised.

Since it is one of the most common procedures in society’s everyday lives, the term communication itself is understood by the society, however, the first chapter discusses communication from the scientific point of view and several definitions are provided as not a single one would fulfil all scholarly and scientific purposes. The chapter then continues with communicative competence and its models, which the communicative language teaching should be based on. For the purposes of this thesis three models were chosen to outline the development of communicative competence.

The second chapter of the theoretical part of the thesis focuses on communicative approach itself. Aims and principles of communicative language teaching are discussed in great detail and commented on by the author of the thesis in the first subchapter. The aims are then followed by presentation of various types of classroom activities. The greatest emphasis is placed on the distinction between pre-communicative and communicative activities which is based on whether or how
the exercises help with developing communicative competence. Specific examples of pre-communicative and communicative activities are then discussed in connection with Littlewood’s continuum linking pre-communicative and communicative activities.

The third subchapter deals with the role of the teacher in the Communicative language teaching. Some scholars believe that communicative approach was introduced as a reaction to the traditional grammar-translation method. Therefore, for better illustration of the changes, the role of the teacher in both teaching methods is introduced.

Introducing new teaching methods usually comes with problems teachers may potentially encounter and despite the impossibility of generalization due to every teacher’s and student’s uniqueness, there are several aspects that appear throughout the English classrooms. These features are presented in the last part of the theoretical thesis and the author comments on their causes and consequences.

The empirical part of the thesis contains a research conducted as a qualitative research, more specifically an action research and employed in two stages at the Private vocational school in Břeclav; the reasons for carrying out the research at this particular school are predominantly personal. In the first stage, a questionnaire was designed by the author and distributed among students in the third year of studies of a 69-41-L/01 Cosmetic services course at the vocational school. Its aim was to discover their feelings in the classroom and the attitude towards English language. The findings of the questionnaire served as a background for the second stage.

The second stage consisted of five lesson plans designed by the author according to several principles of the Communicative language teaching that were chosen by the author of the thesis based on the findings of the questionnaire and exploration of the sources. These lesson plans were designed in correspondence with the aims of the thesis
to confirm or disprove the author’s beliefs that communicative approach may influence students’ motivation and overall attitude towards the English language and consequently confirm or disprove the author’s assumption that Communicative language teaching applied in English classes at the Private vocational school in Břeclav can be beneficial for both students and teachers.

Although speaking is only one part of the communicative competence, the thesis focuses mainly on the development of students’ speaking skills. That is due to the fact that majority of students at the vocational school are reluctant to speak in the target language, however, they do not seem to have problems with the practice of reading or listening skills.

In the last part of the empirical part of the thesis the lesson plans piloted at the vocational school are evaluated both from the students’ and the teacher’s point of view and conclusions that can be drawn from the research and influence of the Communicative language teaching are presented and discussed.
THEORETICAL PART

1 Communication

Without any doubt, communication is one of the most common and most important actions or procedures in society’s everyday lives. Considering people communicate not only by spoken word but also by facial expressions, gestures and clothes, it can be claimed that it is basically not possible to find a human being who does not communicate in today’s world.

From etymological point of view, the term communication is believed to be derived from Latin words communis and communicare. The noun communis in Latin means sharing or common and the verb communicare make something common.

The word communication is nowadays widely used in variety of contexts and various fields. Many disciplines, such as linguistics, pedagogy or psychology, focus on theories of communication and its definitions, although the establishment of a universal definition that might be applied in all scientific fields appears to be impossible. Clevenger claims that “the continuing problem in defining communication for scholarly or scientific purposes stems from the fact that the verb ‘to communicate’ is well established in the common lexicon and therefore is not easily captured for scientific use.” (Clevenger, 351) The paragraphs to follow present different definitions of communication by scholars and scientists.

Morreale, Spitzberg and Barge state the general communication to be seen as a process “in which a message is sent by a source through a channel to a receiver.” (7-8) The source is the one producing the message whereas a receiver is “the ultimate audience for this message,” (Morreale Spitzberg, Barge, 8) The channels then represent a variety of ways how to transmit the message from the source to the receiver.
Following types of channels are distinguished by Morreale, Spitzberg and Barge: written (e.g. letters), oral when verbally communicating face-to-face, non-verbal (e.g. facial expressions) and mediated by usage of modern technologies (e.g. emails).

Canale provides us with a more of linguistic point of view when he claims a communication to be “the exchange and negotiation of information between at least two individuals through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, oral and written/visual modes, and production and comprehension processes.” (Canale, 51) Compared to the above-mentioned definition describing communication as a one-way process, Canale highlights the interaction between communication parties and is conscious of necessity to comprehend what is being communicated.

Communication is perceived as two-way action also in Revell, who believes that a new piece of information is the reason for communication and its core. “For genuine communication to take place, what is being communicated must be something new to the recipient, something that the person does not know in advance.” (Revell, 1)

As indicated previously, a large number of definitions for communication exist, thus not a single one would fulfil all scholarly and scientific purposes. However, the expression is used frequently and understood among society as the main features of communication remain the same. In accordance with the definitions provided above, the communication can be understood as a dynamic process with the goal of information exchange between people by using various means and codes.
1.1 Communicative competence

For better understanding of the term *communicative competence*, the term *competence* as such should be defined first. The expression has not been used only in the context of education; in general competence can be defined as “the ability to do something successfully or efficiently” (Oxford dictionary). Thus the communicative competence can be understood as the ability to communicate in an effective way. Although the basic meaning of the expression is agreed on by theoreticians, various definitions exist.

The first scholar to connect the term with language learning was Chomsky. He distinguished between two concepts, competence and performance. According to Chomsky, competence is “the speaker-hearer’s knowledge of his language” and performance then “the actual use of language in concrete situations.” (Chomsky, 4)

The term communicative competence was used in 1972 by Hymes. By his definition it is a needful grammatical competence together with the ability to apply the competence in different communicative situations. Hymes states that children “acquire competence as to when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner. In short, a child becomes able to accomplish a repertoire of speech acts to take part in speech events and to evaluate their accomplishments by others. (Hymes, 277)

Canale and Swain (1980) present communicative competence as a combination of knowledge of conventions and skill to use the knowledge in communicative situations. Widdowson (1983) sees these concepts as separate and thus distinguishes between the term competence, i.e. the knowledge, and capacity, i.e. the ability to apply this knowledge.
1.1.1 Models of communicative competence

Assuming that communicative language teaching should be based on some model of communicative competence, existing models by Canale and Swain, Bachman and Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor will be presented in following paragraphs.

The first model of communicative competence was created by Canale and Swain (1980) and later further elaborated by Canale (1983). Into their original model, Canale and Swain posited three components of communicative competence: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence. During further elaboration, Canale added fourth component, the discourse competence. Grammatical competence, later labelled linguistic, is perceived as the knowledge of the language code, i.e. grammatical rules, vocabulary, pronunciation, spelling, etc. Sociolinguistic competence is understood as the mastery of the socio-cultural code of language use, meaning suitable usage of vocabulary, register, politeness and style in certain situations. Strategic competence means the understanding of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that improve the effectiveness of communication. Later added discourse competence is described as capacity to combine language structures into various types of cohesive texts, e.g. poetry, political speeches.

Mainly for its simplicity, the model by Canale and Swain was criticized by some researchers. Schachter also questions the separation of sociolinguistic and discourse components for “unity of the text involves appropriateness and depends on contextual factors such as status of the participants, purpose of the interaction, and norms or conventions of interaction.” (Schachter, 43)

In contrast with Canale and Swain, Bachman (1990) presents a more comprehensive model of communicative competence, or a model of communicative
According to Bachman and Palmer, the communicative language ability consists of two broad areas – language competence and strategic competence, both of which are broken down into subcategories, and psychophysiological mechanism. (Bachman, 107)

The first mentioned component, language competence, is a complex concept further divided into subcategories, as can be seen in the picture below. Firstly, the language competence comprises of organization competence and pragmatic competence. While organization competence is then classified into grammatical competence and textual competence, pragmatic competence is divided into illocutionary competence and sociolinguistic competence.

**Language competence**

![Diagram of Language Competence](Bachman, 1990)

Organization competence is presented as knowledge of language’s formal structures enabling the speaker to “produce and comprehend grammatically acceptable utterances and organize these to form texts, both oral and written.” (Bachman and Palmer, 67) The first subcategory, grammatical competence, is assumed to be the key part of communicative competence and represents the knowledge of language
vocabulary, syntax, morphology, etc. Textual competence is described as “the knowledge of the conventions for joining utterances together to form a text structured according to rules of cohesion and rhetorical organization.” (Bachman, 88) Although the competence is called textual, it comprises spoken as well as written language.

The second significant category, pragmatic competence, focuses on the speakers of the language and contexts in which they communicate. Its first component, illocutionary competence, is defined as “the knowledge of pragmatic conventions for performing acceptable language functions.” (Bachman, 90) In real life, it means that speakers use the language in a particular way so it helps them to reach intended communicative goals. The second component of pragmatic competence, sociolinguistic competence, is the ability of speakers to choose language items appropriate for a certain context.

The complexity of Bachman’s model of communicative competence can be better seen when compared to Canale and Swain’s model described before. While Canale and Swain distinguish between three competences: grammatical and sociolinguistic competence and discourse, in Bachman’s model they are included in the language competence. Strategic competence is then more or less the same for both models. Canale and Swain’s model would now be complete, whereas Bachman adds one more component to his model – psychophysiological mechanism. This mechanism takes into consideration physiological and neurological processes connected with language use. (Bachman, 107)

The very last model of communicative competence presented in this thesis is the one by Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor. It is called the Communicative competence framework by the authors and comprises of five components. These components are
discourse, linguistic competence, pragmatic competence, intercultural competence and strategic competence.

![Diagram of Usó-Juan and Martinez-Flor's model of language competence](Usó-Juan & Martínez-Flor, 2008)

In graphic display of Usó-Juan and Martinez-Flor’s model all five elements are presented as separate with discourse competence in the centre, as it is shown in the picture above.

The authors presume that “the fact of being able to interpret and produce a spoken or written piece of discourse is the means to achieve successful communication. (Usó-Juan and Martinez-Flor, 160) Thus the discourse competence in the middle is accompanied by letters L, S, R, W that represent four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Discourse competence is placed in the centre of the framework so other elements (linguistic, pragmatic, intercultural and strategic competence) function as builders for this competence. In return, discourse competence serves to shape all the other competencies. Consequently, an improvement in one element induces improvement in
each of the other elements of communicative competence. (Usó-Juan and Martinez-Flor, 160)

The nucleus of Usó-Juan and Martinez-Flor model, discourse competence, is described as “the selection and sequencing of utterances or sentences to achieve a cohesive and coherent spoken or written text given a particular purpose and situational context”. (ibid, 161) This definition practically matches Canale and Swain’s discourse competence in their work. Linguistic competence, presented as grammatical competence in Canale and Swain and in Bachman, too, refers to understanding of linguistic language system that is essential for interpretation and production of both, spoken and written text. Pragmatic competence is understood as knowledge of functions and appropriateness in a particular context, whereas intercultural competence reckons on sociocultural habits and cultural differences that affect the communication act. Finally, strategic competence contains two components. Comparably to Canale and Swain and Bachman, it is seen as understanding of communication strategies that are used to avoid failures in communication. Moreover, it is the knowledge of how languages are learnt.

Usó-Juan and Martinez-Flor also stress the four language skills as they are seen as “the manifestations of interpreting and producing a spoken or written piece of discourse which, as previously mentioned, is the core competence of the model.” (Usó-Juan and Martinez-Flor, 161)

In this thesis, the Usó-Juan and Martinez-Flor’s framework would be used as an exemplar, since it focuses on all four language skills.
1.1.2 Communicative competence in the context of CEFR

Every theoretical concept tends to be used in reality. Therefore, the concepts and definitions mentioned above should be transferred into language teaching and assessment. For this reason, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages was established.

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment, abbreviated as CEFR, was created by the Council of Europe. It functions as a guideline to describe foreign languages learners’ achievements and aims to provide a method of learning, teaching and assessing applicable on all European languages.

“The Common European Framework provides a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe.” (CEFR, 1) The document tends to create complete, comprehensible and logical system of categories, parameters and examples, based on which can the students improve their skills. It tries to clearly define aims that are realistic for the students and provides a set of common reference levels as a tool for measuring the progress.

Although the Framework is often considered a description of abovementioned reference levels, it contains theoretical background and comprehensive definitions covering the issues of language learning, teaching and assessing. Nonetheless, one can say that the reference levels and their descriptors are the most used and known part of CEFR.

The Common European Framework of Reference distinguishes between general competences and communicative language competences. General competences are not strictly language oriented, but contain the knowledge of the world, sociocultural knowledge, the ability to learn, etc. Communicative competence are those “which
empower a person to act using specifically linguistic means.” (CEFR, 9) Both general and communicative competences are then comprised of partial competences.

From the definition and general characteristics of communicative competence it is evident that the model of communicative competence applied in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages corresponds with the Canale and Swain’s model. The model contains partial competences and its overall level depends on the improvement of those components. These components are, same as in Canale and Swain, linguistic (grammatical) competence, sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence.

### 2 Communicative Language Teaching

As said in the previous chapter, communication is a process of interaction between at least two individuals in which something new to the recipient needs to be communicated. That may be one of the reasons why communication in the second language is difficult for L2 speakers. It seems that in order to hold a conversation, reactions to what has been said by the other speaker are required. However, if the goal of communication is to pass something new, it is not possible to predict the content of conversation and thus very difficult to prepare for it. Revell claims that “it is this element of unexpectedness and unpredictability which makes communication what it is, and for which it is so hard to prepare the student by conventional teaching methods.” (Revell, 1) The teaching approach attempting to prepare students for real life communication is called Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).

The origin of communicative approach to language teaching dates back to 1970s and is linked with “communication movement” and changes in language teaching tradition. During the movement, the main aim of foreign language learning was set to
communicative ability and the results of this change were discussed in more detail than ever before. Dissimilarly to conventional language-centred teaching methods, communicative language teaching is learner-centred instead. (Hanušová, 2008)

Nowadays, communicative approach is understood as “an approach (and not a method) that aims to (a) make communicative competence the goal of language teaching and (b) develop procedures for the teaching of the four language skills that acknowledge the independence of language and communication.” (Richards and Rogers 2001, 155)

2.1 Aims and principles of CLT

Languages are not only about grammar and vocabulary but it is essential to know how to use the structures in communication events. Widdowson claims that it is not possible to “suppose that the knowledge of how sentences are put to use in communication follows automatically from the knowledge of how sentences are composed and what signification they have as linguistic units.” (Widdowson, 119) Brown later builds on this claim while defining communicative approach and his principles when saying that “classroom goals are focused on all of the components of communicative competence and not restricted to grammatical or linguistic competence.” (Brown, 266)

In spite of communicative approach focusing on development of communicative competence, the structures of language are neither suppressed nor ignored. As Littlewood claims, “one of the most characteristic features of communicative language teaching is that it pays systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language, combining these into a more fully communicative view.” (1981, 1) The
focus of communicative language teaching is thus on communicative competence, nevertheless, it reckons on the relation of language and communication.

Berns provides eight fundamental principles of Communicative Language Teaching that correspond with previously mentioned concepts:

1. Language teaching is based on a view of language as communication. That is, language is seen as a social tool that speakers use to make meaning; speakers communicate about something to someone for some purpose, either orally or in writing.

2. Diversity is recognized and accepted as part of language development and use in second language learners and users, as it is with first language users.

3. A learner’s competence is considered in relative, not in absolute, terms.

4. More than one variety of a language is recognized as a viable model for learning and teaching.

5. Culture is recognized as instrumental in shaping speakers’ communicative competence, in both their first and subsequent languages.

6. No single methodology or fixed set of techniques is prescribed.

7. Language use is recognized as serving ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions and is related to the development of learners’ competence in each.

8. It is essential for learners to be engaged in doing things with language – that is, that they use language for a variety of purposes in all phases of learning. (Savignon, 6)

Following these theoretical principles of communicative approach, Larsen-Freeman attempted to describe their impact on language learning in real classrooms. She suggests that:
➢ It is the teacher’s responsibility to create situations that promote communication.

➢ The target language is not just the object of study. It should also be used as a vehicle for classroom communication.

➢ The teacher should introduce the language as it is used in a real context. That is why students should be exposed to authentic language materials whenever it is possible.

➢ Students should be given opportunities to express their ideas and opinions.

➢ The focus should be on the process of communication rather than just the mastery of linguistic forms. Since it is possible for one function to have several different linguistic forms, students should be encouraged to rephrase and use their own words.

➢ An important part of communicative competence is to learn to use language forms appropriately in a given social context.

➢ Having students work in pairs or small groups is convenient since it maximizes the amount of communicative practice students receive.

➢ Games have a significant role in language teaching because they share certain features with real life communicative processes, particularly the need to exchange information.

➢ Errors are perceived as a natural outcome of the development of communication skills. If an activity focuses on fluency rather than accuracy, the errors are returned to at a later point.

➢ The teacher helps to set up communicative activities and works as an advisor when the activities are in progress.

➢ The grammar and vocabulary that the students learn is related to the communicative activities they perform. (Larsen-Freeman, 127-128).
Although communicative language teaching seems to be very popular these days among both teachers and students and therefore is rarely criticised, there are a few points that should be born in mind.

Firstly, from author’s experience it is very popular nowadays to abandon textbooks in classrooms and focus mainly on authentic materials. Despite the authentic materials being undoubtedly beneficial for students, I strongly agree with Larsen-Freeman who claims that they should be used whenever possible but not all the time. Teachers may often say that texts and scripted dialogues in course books are unnatural and non-communicative. Even though this might be true, it is essential to see scripted materials as useful for presenting specific language features effectively as there are only the linguistic elements the classroom focuses on, whereas authentic materials provide students with real language in use. Students exposed only to scripted materials learn basically impoverished language and then they tend to have problems with genuine communication. Students exposed only to authentic materials are unlikely to meet all language features they need to learn. Therefore it is necessary to find balance between scripted and authentic materials and not relinquish any of these.

Secondly, even though it is impossible to generalize, teachers still tend to see mistakes as something they should attend immediately, otherwise their intervention is impractical. Larsen-Freeman, however, makes a valid point that in communicative activities focusing on fluency it is important to concentrate on transmitting the message rather than on accuracy and grammatical correctness. The author of this thesis believes, that mistakes can be collected by the teacher during the activity and then discusses with whole classes after the activity is finished. This procedure may be beneficial not only for the students who made the mistakes in particular but also for the others, as humans tend to learn from other people’s mistakes. Furthermore, unnecessary intervention when
the activities are in progress may reduce the level of students’ self-confidence and prevent them from further involvement in speaking activities.

And finally, Larsen-Freeman claims that vocabulary and grammar should be related to the communicative activities applied in classrooms. Most teachers believe they incorporate communicative activities to their lessons, unfortunately, they are very often activities practicing learnt grammatical features rather than developing students’ speaking skills and promoting real communication.

2.2 Classroom activities

Since the main aim of communicative language teaching is to develop communicative competence, in-class activities differ from those used in so called traditional lesson formats that emphasize primarily teaching grammar structures and practising them by drills, memorized dialogues and other activities controlled by teachers. (Richards, 4) There is no limitation to the amount of activities and exercises that can be employed in lessons based on communicative approach as long as they “enable learners to attain the communicative objectives of the curriculum, engage learners in communication, and require the use of such communicative processes as information sharing, negotiation of meaning and interaction. (Richards and Rogers 2001, 165) Authentic and natural language occurs when using such in-class activities and students’ fluency in language use is developed.

Supporters of communicative language teaching propose a common classification of classroom activities by different types of language practice: mechanical, meaningful and communicative.

Mechanical practice refers to activities that are fully controlled by the teacher, such as repetition and drills. To perform mechanical practice, students do not need to
understand the language used in the activity. Meaningful practice is related to activities in which the teacher has a certain level of control, the students need to understand the language and use it appropriately during the activity, though. Finally, communicative practice refers to activities where students use language in a real communicative context. The “real information is exchanged and the language used is not totally predictable.” (Richards, 16)

As anticipated, it is the last type of activities that are truly communicative by definition. Nevertheless, when teaching students who have never experienced communicative approach it is essential to start with mechanical practice to remember and practice grammatical structures and vocabulary, then add meaningful practice and finally apply communicative ones.

Littlewood then provided a similar distinction of classroom activities and divided them into two groups: pre-communicative activities and communicative activities, as can be seen in the diagram below. This distinction is based on whether or not the exercises help with developing communicative competence.

![Figure 3. The methodological framework for classroom activities (Littlewood, 1981)](image-url)
Littlewood claims that pre-communicative activities are designed to encourage students to “produce certain language forms in an acceptable way”. (1981, 16) He also highlights that structural activities often take form of a structural practice designed by the teacher as for the recently studied features to be practised in a meaningful way. The teacher should encourage students to use these items according to his instructions as he aims to provide the students with necessary knowledge for later communicative activities. (Littlewood 1981, 16) In contrast, quasi-communicative activities try to connect language forms with their functional meanings. Both of these categories emphasise mastering grammatical forms, accuracy and fluency over communication of intended meaning. Naturally, built confidence in using the structures allows students to focus on other aspects of communication later on.

As for the communicative activities, there are two major types distinguished by Littlewood: functional communication activities and social interaction activities. (Littlewood 1981, 20)

Functional communication activities are established so that the students need to communicate for them to be able to solve a problem, exchange information or overcome an information gap. Resulting from this principle, students cooperate to achieve a certain solution and in order to attain the communicative goal they use “whatever language they have at their disposal”. (Littlewood 1981, 20)

Differently to controlled practice, communication exercises work with students’ creativity in using target language and demand interaction skills. Thus, such activities resemble real life communication acts. Moreover, reactions of other participants in the situation provide students with immediate feedback of their performance.

Functional communication activities represent a significant step towards creating the basis for independent communication. On one hand, different communicative aims
possibly invented for students are bounded by the nature of classroom situations and majority of functional communication activities are based on processing and sharing information only. On the other hand, the complexity of the language needed to perform the tasks by students may vary greatly due to the use of various source materials. (Littlewood 1981, 22)

Contrastingly to functional communication activities, social interaction activities calculate with more specific social context meaning that language users need to take into account both functional and social meanings of the transmitted message. That is why social interaction activities correspond more with the real life communication acts. (ibid, 43)

Creative and independent usage of the target language in social interaction activities automatically leads to error making. These errors are considered a natural part of language acquisition and therefore continual correction during the activities seems counterproductive. What students benefit the most from is the extensive experience of the target language. (Mitchell, 38)

As Littlewood believes, number of factors needs to be taken into consideration prior to applying social interaction activities in classrooms, though. The most important is the correspondence between activities’ linguistic demands and the linguistic capabilities of a specific group of students, by which the author does not mean only the linguistic forms that students are able to use, but also how independently they are capable of handling them. As anticipated, the greater linguistic competence the greater independence in social interactions. (Littlewood 1981, 49)

Richards and Rogers classified several activities as social interaction activities, namely dialogues, simulations, debates, discussions, improvisations and role-plays. (Richards, Rogers 2001, 166) Both Littlewood and Scrivener then consider the last
mentioned – role-plays, as particularly popular, although each provides readers with different reasons. Littlewood believes that role-plays are often applied in classrooms focused on communicative language learning since they force students to think about situations outside of the classroom that they themselves might encounter. In simulated situations, they have the opportunity to either act as themselves or experience a different identity but still act as if the situation was real. (Littlewood 1981, 49) Scrivener, on the other hand, sees role-plays from a more grammatical point of view. He claims that teachers fancy role-plays since by designing various sets of role cards they give students the opportunity to practice a particular grammatical feature, lexical group or other language features in a given context. (Scrivener, 156)

The same factors are applicable on a variety of pre-communicative activities as well. In case of social interaction activities these factors, however, broaden further beyond the hypothetical line between pre-communicative and communicative activities. As mentioned before, these types of activities share a variety of features. Littlewood proposed a continuum expressing the relations between different kinds of pre-communicative and communicative activities, as shown below. (Littlewood 1981, 50)

![Figure 4. A continuum linking pre-communicative and communicative activities (Littlewood, 1981)](image-url)

*Figure 4. A continuum linking pre-communicative and communicative activities (Littlewood, 1981)*
On the one hand, all of the above, memorised dialogues, contextualised drills, cued dialogues, role-plays as well as improvisation, require a certain level of simulation. On the other hand, they differ in the level of teacher control and students’ individual creativity. Therefore, while performing memorised dialogues teacher’s control is at the highest level and students’ individual creativity at the lowest. Within the continuum, Littlewood suggests the cued dialogues to be taken as “the point where role-playing becomes sufficiently creative to think in terms of communicative language use.” (Littlewood 1981, 51)

Correspondingly with the categorization of classroom activities by the type of practice (mechanical, meaningful and communicative), Littlewood’s plan also proposes that pre-communicative activities represent a fundamental practice of grammatical forms that are necessary to acquire before one can proceed to independent communicative activities and therefore cannot be ignored. These factors were taken into consideration when created lesson plans for the empirical part of the thesis.

2.3 Role of the teacher

According to Nillson, „communicative language teaching (CLT) was introduced in the 1970’s as a reaction to the old traditional grammar-translation method.” (Nillson, 7) For better illustration of the changes, the role of the teacher in both teaching methods will be introduced.

The traditional grammar-translation method, as the very name reveals, is a teaching method that contains exclusively the grammar teaching and translation from and to the learners’ mother tongue. It derived from the method of teaching Greek and Latin and no particular initiator of the approach is known. Grammar-translation method
is based solely on reading and writing and almost none attention is placed on pronunciation or communicative aspects of the language. Thus, students have no opportunity to produce their own language and the teacher, as Larsen-Freeman claims, is “the authority in the classroom.” (Larsen-Freeman, 17) Furthermore, Mukalel proposes, that “any average teacher can teach through the grammar-translation method”. (Mukalel, 55) The reasons behind his claims are that grammar explanation is made in learners’ mother tongue and the translation only needs to be supervised. In terms of illustration or demonstration, the teacher is not expected to be active in any way. (Mukakel, 56)

The existence of new teaching method introducing different types of in-class activities implies new roles for both students and teachers. Richards claims that in communicative learning teaching the in-class activities apply cooperative principle rather than individualistic one. (5) Therefore, students are often asked to work in pairs or groups and the teacher is not considered as a model as much as in the grammar-translation method. That is also the reason why in communicative approach students obtain a higher level of responsibility for their own learning. (Larsen-Freeman, 129)

Breed and Candlin established two main roles of the teacher. Firstly, the teacher acts as a facilitator of the communication process among all participants and between the participants and different activities. The second role of the teacher is to become and independent participant within the learning-teaching group. “These roles imply a set of secondary roles for the teacher; first, as an organizer of resources and as a resource himself, second as a guide within the classroom procedures and activities. (Breed and Candlin, 99)

Three more roles were then added by Richards and Rogers, particularly need analyst, counsellor and group process manager. In the role of need analyst, the teacher is
responsible for discovering and responding to their learners’ needs connected with language learning. As a counsellor, the teacher is anticipated to become “an effective communicator seeking to maximize the meshing of speaker intention and hearer interpretation, through the use of paraphrase, confirmation, and feedback.” (Richards and Rogers 1991, 78) Finally, as a group process manager, the teacher should minimize teacher-centred instruction and rather promote communicative situations during which they can monitor students’ performances, answer their questions and encourage them.

Even though many may consider the teacher’s role in communicative language teaching less dominant in comparison with abovementioned grammar-translation method, it is certainly not less important.

2.4 Potential problems

Despite the impossibility of generalization due to every teacher’s and student’s uniqueness, there are several aspects that appear throughout the English classrooms. The first aspect worth mentioning is that it is nearly impossible to find two students in a particular class whose abilities, knowledge and skills are on the same level. These dissimilarities affect various areas of students’ lives, communication included. Speakers exhibit diverse levels of fluency and diverge in other aspects of speech even in their mother tongue.

Thornbury claims that dissimilarities between students are even more conspicuous when speaking in a foreign language. The unavoidable lack of fluency also makes them feel embarrassed, frustrated and anxious. Tsui then further proposes that students understand language learning not only as a procedure in which they acquire grammatical rules and participate in communicative acts but also as a process of
“constantly putting themselves in a vulnerable position of having their own self-concept undermined.” (Tsui, 155) The frustration and vulnerability lead to reluctance to speak.

These negative feelings might be eliminated by teachers who according to Hedge have the power and responsibility to oppose the anxiety development by building students’ self-confidence through positive experiences and reassuring feedback. (Hedge, 21) Thus, the teacher is bound to create learning environment which students would feel comfortable in and which would positively affect their anxiety level. Thornbury then adds that despite the contemporary methodologies being communication-oriented, activities focused on speaking are frequently used only to rehearse linguistic items or functional expressions. (Thornbury, 28) Speaking is considered to be a priority, it is usually used as a way to practise grammar, though. This lack of genuine speaking opportunities is seen as the main reason of speaking failure and it makes students believe that “however much grammar and vocabulary they know, they are insufficiently prepared for speaking in the world beyond the classroom. (ibid, 28) Consequently, it is of high importance to incorporate communicative activities into teachers’ lesson plans and to provide students with as many opportunities to practise the speaking skills as possible to increase their self-confidence and to prepare them to use the target language in real-life situations.

As mentioned in the first chapter, communication is one of the most common and most important processes in people’s everyday lives. Nevertheless, for many people communication is related only to the mother tongue for the grammatical structures and vocabulary of a target language are hardly ever as established as in the native language.

Students, and other second language users, attempt to deal with communication difficulties in various ways. Quite frequently, students have the tendency to formulate their thoughts in the mother tongue and only then try to translate them into the second
language. This procedure is a demonstration of students’ effort to avoid making mistakes but is undoubtedly time-consuming and it also negatively affects students’ fluency. Some other strategies include structure repetition, creating non-existent expressions or using too many words for describing something possibly described by one word. However, usage of these strategies might help students to reduce the level of uncertainty and students who are skilled in appropriate usage of these strategies may, according to Littlewood, “communicate more effectively than learners who are considerably more advanced in purely linguistic terms.” (Littlewood 1996, 86-87)

As mentioned in the previous subchapter, both students and teachers acquire new roles in classrooms where communicative language teaching is applied. On one hand, it is the newly gained level of students’ responsibility that may prevent success of the lessons. In communicative activities, teachers give instructions and begin the activity, yet it is the students’ responsibility to do the performance and interact with others to reach a desirable outcome. This level of responsibility might be unknown for many groups of students and a sudden transition to activities that are not controlled by the teacher could possibly cause tension, undermine students’ confidence and even discourage them from participating. (Littlewood 1981, 18)

On the other hand, it may be the teacher that did not acquire their new role successfully who prevents the lessons’ success. In communicative language teaching, the teacher should function as a source of support and guidance, observe and determine the strengths and weaknesses of their students and try their best to facilitate the learning process. Hence, they should not appear as the dominant person in the class. However, there are teachers who may, by their unnecessary intervention during communicative activities, “prevent the learners from becoming genuinely involved in the activity and thus hinder the development of their communicative skills.” (ibid, 19)

31
3 Conclusions for the empirical part

The aim of the theoretical part of the thesis was to introduce the most common process in society’s everyday lives – communication from the scientific point of view. Then the communicative competence, its models and application in context of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages was described.

The second part was concerned with the Communicative language teaching itself, its main aims and principles and also presented the roles both teachers and students acquire. The knowledge gained from various scholarly sources will be used in the empirical part which includes five lesson plans designed according to aforementioned principles of the communicative approach.

Among the main aspects that will influence the lesson plans created by the author of the thesis belongs the fact that the teacher should introduce the language as it is used in a real context and expose the students to authentic language materials and situations whenever possible, as proposed by Larsen-Freeman. Thus, the students may see the relevance between the school curriculum and life outside of the classroom and the level of motivation and willingness to participate may increase.

Another important aspect of the Communicative language teaching that the author will bear in mind is that the target language is not just the object of study but should be also used as a vehicle for classroom communication. Students in English lessons should communicate in the target language also in between activities and the teacher should promote such communication. The biggest issue expected by the teacher are the early finishers that are usually restless when waiting for the other students. Therefore, the teacher will try to prepare extra set of conversation questions connected to the lesson’s topic to keep the students actively engaged.
Also, the focus ought to be on the process of communication rather than just the mastery of linguistic forms. The more independency students gain in the process, the more mistakes they are probable to make. However, mistakes are perceived as a natural outcome of the communication skills’ development and should be presented to students in that way.

When designing the lesson plans and employing communicative activities in the lessons the author of this thesis will frequently include the work in pairs or small groups. Not only it might influence the level of students’ comfort and confidence, it also maximizes the amount of communicative practice students receive.

Last but not least aspect of the Communicative language teaching that will affect the lesson plans designed by the thesis’ author is the significant role of games in the language teaching. Games are an important feature of the communicative approach since they share certain aspects of real life communicative processes, particularly the need to exchange information.

Apart from the main principles of the Communicative language teaching, various types of classroom activities were presented in the theoretical part of the thesis. To be able to distinguish between pre-communicative and communicative activities, based on in the level of teacher control and students’ individual creativity, is necessary for the teacher to employ the activities appropriately and successfully in the lessons. According to Littlewood, pre-communicative activities represent a fundamental practice of grammatical forms that are necessary to acquire before one can proceed to independent communicative activities and therefore cannot be ignored. These factors were taken into consideration when created lesson plans for the empirical part of the thesis.
EMPIRICAL PART

4 Research

The theoretical part of this thesis provided definitions of Communicative language teaching and its main principles, various types of classroom activities that promote meaningful communication and described roles that both students and teachers acquire when the communicative approach is applied in the classroom. This knowledge is applied in practice at real English classrooms at the Private vocational school in Břeclav where the author of the thesis is teaching at the moment.

4.1 Characteristics of the research

The reasons for carrying out the research of the thesis at the Private vocational school in Břeclav are predominantly personal. The author of the thesis has worked at this particular school as an English teacher since September 2018. The research, therefore, provided the author with an opportunity to reflect on the main problems that have been encountered during the teaching experience and consider possible ways of improving the quality and efficiency of English language teaching at this school in particular.

From the various fields of study that the vocational school offers, the author of the thesis decided to concentrate on the field 69-41-L/01 Cosmetic services that is usually attended by most students, specifically at a group of students in the third year of study. At the time of the research, cosmetic services was the only four-year field of study finished with a school leaving exam called Maturita.
The research itself was conducted as a qualitative research, specifically the action research, and applied in two stages. In the first stage, a questionnaire was designed by the author and distributed among students in the third year of studies. Its aim was to discover their feelings in the classroom and the attitude towards English language. The findings of the questionnaire served as a background for the second stage.

The second stage consisted of five lesson plans designed by the author according to several principles of the Communicative language teaching that were chosen by the author of the thesis based on the findings of the questionnaire and exploration of the sources. These lesson plans were designed to confirm or disprove the author’s beliefs that communicative approach may influence students’ motivation and overall attitude towards the English language and consequently confirm or disprove the author’s assumption that Communicative language teaching applied in English classes at the Private vocational school in Břeclav can be beneficial for both students and teachers.

4.2 Profile of the school

The Vocational school in Břeclav is a private secondary school established in 1997. The school offers education in two four-year courses finished by a school leaving exam called Maturita, several three-year courses finished by a final exam after which the students receive a vocational certificate and one extension study course for students who already have the vocational certificate and would like to sit for the Maturita exam. Moreover, there is a possibility of a shortened study course for those who have either the vocational certificate or Maturita exam but would like to acquire education in a particular study field offered by the Private vocational school in Břeclav.
Additionally to theoretical subjects, the students perform practical training since the very beginning of their studies in various workplaces, both at school and external establishments. Consequently, the curriculum is divided between theoretical and practical subjects. Usually, the students alternate between the school and external workplaces on a one-week basis.

Considering the language education, all students are instructed to study two foreign languages. The students sit their Maturita exam of school leaving exam in the first and main, the second language is included in none of the school leaving exams. The only foreign languages the students at the Private vocational school in Břeclav are offered are English and German. A greater number of students take English as the main language for they commonly studied it during their previous education.

4.3 Description of the class

As indicated earlier in this chapter, the questionnaire designed for the purpose of the thesis was distributed among students in the field of study 69-41-L/01 Cosmetic services. The total number of respondents was 15, which is also the total number of students in the class, and the average age was 18 years. This particular group of students was chosen because it fits the purposes of this thesis the best and both parts of the research were conducted in this particular group.

First issue that teachers often encounter in this particular class is students’ inappropriate behaviour. Many students tend to chat during the lessons, play with their mobile phones or simply pretend they are not present in the class. Students’ behaviour in general is one of the most burning issues associated with teaching at all educational stages and it can be assumed that the problem may become even worse with time.
However, in order to deal with the issue it is necessary for the teacher to identify possible reasons for ill behaviour. In case of this particular class, the most probable motive for misbehaving, apart from antipathy for the teacher, is the fact that students cannot influence what they are taught and required to do and they do not see any relevance with the real life.

The lack of understanding also negatively affects the students’ motivation. Motivating students to participate in lessons is increasingly difficult not only for the author of the thesis. The students are unwilling not only to participate in the classroom, but also to prepare for the lessons and do assigned homework. Nevertheless, application of learner-centred approaches raises the question, whether students’ motivation is in fact the teacher’s responsibility. After all, especially in the Communicative language teaching students are supposed to take a great degree of responsibility for their performance and motivation.

Last but not least, the group that participated in the research contains students of mixed abilities. This phenomenon may be caused by two different factors. Firstly, the initial level of the vocational school students’ language skills seems to be rather low and the progress made by the students in the first year of the studies, or in the second one, respectively, is deeply individual. Secondly, in this particular group there are two students who terminated their studies at different secondary schools and then started studying at this one. These students have studied English for longer time than others which naturally leads to a slightly higher level of English. The low level of English the majority of students in the group have demonstrates by reluctance to speak or using the mother tongue most of the time. Usually, students tend to translate teacher’s questions into Czech and then answer the questions in Czech and wait for the teacher to provide the English equivalent. Students with higher knowledge of the language are reluctant to
speak as well only for the reason not to stand out. They get bored easily since they need less time to complete set assignments and even get very impatient with their colleagues and start providing them with correct answers.

5 Questionnaire

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the research consists of two stages. The first stage is conducted in a form of a questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed by the author of this thesis and distributed among students at the author’s workplace. The questionnaire was designed to provide the author with sufficient background to prepare the second stage of the research.

The questionnaire itself is divided into four parts, each of them concentrating on a different factor of the lessons. By this strategy, the author reaches satisfactory amount of information about students’ attitudes, preferences and obstacles in order to be able to design lesson plans appropriate for the class participating in the research.

All four parts of the questionnaire were formatted as a Likert scale which allows the respondents to express to what extent they agree with the statements included in the questionnaire. To collect undistorted data and avoid confusion or misinterpretation, the questionnaire for students was distributed in Czech language. A copy of the Czech version of the questionnaire can be found in the Appendices at the end of the thesis (see Appendix 1).

The first part of the questionnaire focuses on students’ feelings about speaking in English language in the classroom. The statements deal with producing the language as well as communicating both with the teacher and the classmates.
The second part of the questionnaire deals with students’ participation in classroom activities. The statements allow students to express their preferences of speaking partners which may greatly influence the second stage of the research.

Statements in the third part then concern the teacher’s behaviour in the classroom. Students have the opportunity to indicate their concern with teacher’s instructions and feedback.

The final part of the questionnaire focuses on reasons why the students are reluctant to speak in the foreign language. The answers may help the teacher and the author of the thesis to determine the obstacles students need to overcome in order to be able to speak and communicate successfully in the classrooms.

Findings of the individual parts of the questionnaire will be described in great detail in the following subchapter.

5.1 Findings of the questionnaire

The first part of the questionnaire was designed to provide the students with an opportunity to express the feelings they have to deal with during speaking parts of the English lessons. Based on the Likert scale, students chose a number between 1 to 5 according to how strongly they agree or disagree with the statement. For better orientation in the results of the questionnaire, all statements’ responses were recorded into a chart\(^1\). Statements that were included in the first part of the questionnaire can be seen in the Appendices\(^2\).

The first part of the questionnaire clearly showed that students in the third year of the Cosmetic services study field are not comfortable with speaking English inside or

\(^1\) See Appendix 2.
\(^2\) See Appendix 1.
outside of the classroom. The students feel nervous when they have to speak without preparation, the only exception can be seen in communicating with their fellow students, where majority of the class indicated positive attitude towards it. The biggest obstacle students need to overcome is the fear of making mistakes that should be attended by the teacher. These issues should be acted on when applying the lesson plans as it is necessary for the students to acknowledge mistakes as a natural part of language acquisition.

The second part of the questionnaire was designed to provide the students with an opportunity to express their attitude towards the speaking activities in the English lessons. Similarly to the first part, the second one was based on the Likert scale in which students chose a number between 1 to 5 according to how strongly they agree or disagree with the statement. All students’ responses to the statements were recorded into a chart[^3] and the statements that were included in the second part of the questionnaire can be seen in the Appendices[^4].

From the results, it is obvious that students are reluctant to participate in speaking activities for previously mentioned reasons, such as the fear of making mistakes or the lack of vocabulary. However, they acknowledge the importance of speaking practice and so they might be more than willing to cooperate when speaking activities are applied in the classroom and presented and organised in a suitable way. More importantly, the second part showed the teacher that students prefer to cooperate with a partner or in small groups, which will be taken into account when creating the second stage of the research.

The third part of the questionnaire was designed to enable the students to express the feelings they have to deal with during the time in the lesson when the teacher is in

[^3]: See Appendix 2.
[^4]: See Appendix 1.
charge. Again, their task was to choose a number from the Likert scale to indicate how strongly they agree or disagree with the statements. Their responses were recorded into a chart\textsuperscript{5} and the statements that were included in the third part of the questionnaire can be seen in the Appendices\textsuperscript{6}.

In the third part, the students indicated their discomfort in communicating with the teacher and stated that it is not easy to understand the teacher’s spoken word when they provide the students with instructions for subsequent activities, which often negatively affects their feelings in the classroom. Therefore, the teacher ought to try to modify the language of instruction to better accommodate the students. Furthermore, the students expressed their preferences in terms of correction and feedback which should take place at the end of students’ speech. This desire is in conformity with the teacher’s beliefs, since interrupting the student’s speech and correcting their mistakes during the spoken production might lead to decrease in self-confidence and consequently to a higher level of reluctance to speak. Also, although the teacher frequently inquires whether students need more time before proceeding further, some students feel that the amount of provided time for the activities is not sufficient. Based on the results, the teacher should reflect their time management connected to activities.

The final part of the questionnaire focused on the obstacles that prevent students from participating in speaking activities in English lessons. Same as the previous parts, students chose the answer which best describes the level of their agreement or disagreement with the statements. Their responses were recorded into a chart\textsuperscript{7} and the

\textsuperscript{5} See Appendix 2.
\textsuperscript{6} See Appendix 1.
\textsuperscript{7} See Appendix 2.
statements that were included in the third part of the questionnaire can be seen in the Appendices.

The final part of the questionnaire focused on reasons why the students are reluctant to speak in the foreign language and it revealed some of the obstacles students need to overcome in order to speak freely in the English lessons and communicate successfully both inside and outside of the classroom. The fear of error making appeared repeatedly throughout all parts of the questionnaire and, therefore, may be considered the biggest issue followed by the lack of vocabulary. Whereas the lack of vocabulary is relatively easy to improve, the fear of making mistakes is very hard to get rid of, especially at such a high stage of education, but it is not impossible.

By using various strategies of correcting mistakes, the teacher can make sure that the students are not stressed and the level of their self-confidence does not decrease because of making mistakes while using the target language. The most important questions the teachers need to ask themselves, however, are when to correct the mistakes and how to correct them.

As proposed by various authors (Ur (1996), Scrivener (2005), Edge (1997)), the important aspect of mistakes from the teacher’s point of view is to realize when it is necessary to correct the mistake and when it can be ignored. Language teachers frequently focus on the form of what students are saying rather than paying attention to the content. Thus, they should be able to distinguish between activities concentrating on fluency and those focusing on accuracy. In activities concentrating on fluency the focus should be on what the students want to say and the correction is not necessary, whereas in activities focusing on accuracy it is necessary for the students to be reminded of the correct forms.

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8 See Appendix 1.
Considering the ways of how to correct mistakes, Edge (1997) proposes various strategies. To avoid the teacher’s interference, self-correction or peer correction may be employed. People in general feel better if the mistakes can be made right by themselves rather than by others, but the biggest advantage of self-correction is the fact that it is easier for the student to remember since they made it right in their own head. Peer correction, on the other hand, is closely connected to the claim that people learn from other people’s mistakes. This strategy promotes cooperation between students and by listening to the classmates, the students may learn from each other.

If both aforementioned strategies fail, the teacher needs to provide the students with help but not necessarily the correct answer right away. By stressing the problematic part of the utterance, he or she can lead the students to the proper form. Whatever strategy the teacher employs when correcting the mistake, they should always remember that correction ought to be in a form of a constructive feedback and never used as a criticism or punishment. (Edge, 19-27)

During the teaching practice, the author of the thesis has mostly worked with peer correction, which will be the main strategy of dealing with mistakes in the research, or teacher correction. However, in order to strengthen the skills, the teacher will try to employ self-correction whenever possible.

Another obstacle for the students seems to be the topics included in the school curricula that are regarded boring. Such topics contain e.g. education, social issues, environment or science and technology and since they are included in the school’s curriculum it is nearly impossible to transform them. The lack of factual knowledge connected to these topics in the students’ mother tongue makes it even harder to talk about them in a foreign language. Therefore, it is necessary to provide the students with
basic vocabulary and facts connected to unpopular topics that may enable them to express their own opinions and viewpoints.

For the students to be able to overcome their fears and insecurities in general, it is necessary to create a so-called non-threatening learning environment. The teacher can greatly influence such environment by various strategies. Students need to feel that their opinions and thoughts matter and that somebody, in this case the teacher, listens to them. Thus there should always be space for the students to freely express themselves and their contributions should be acknowledged. Also, both-sides respect should be established in the classroom. Although the teacher is an authoritative character in the class, they should never pretend to be more than a human. For the teacher to show insecurity, doubt or weakness and share personal information, to a certain extent, is the way to connect with the students and create a bond. This greatly affects the environment in which the students grow and learn.

6 Communicative language teaching in practice

The generally known principles and advantages of the communicative approach together with the author’s teaching experience at the vocational school led to the conclusion that employment of Communicative language teaching principles in English lessons might affect motivation of students at this particular school and their approach to the language. Moreover, the author intended to confirm or disprove that by communicative approach the efficiency of English language teaching can be improved and students’ interest in the language can be raised.

The theoretical part of this thesis provided definitions of Communicative language teaching and its main principles, various types of classroom activities that promote meaningful communication and described role that both students and teachers
acquire when the communicative approach is applied in the classroom. Later, the first stage of the research in the form of a questionnaire was applied at the Private vocational school in Břeclav to provide the author of this thesis with sufficient background to prepare the second stage.

Practically it means that theoretical knowledge obtained from various scholarly sources was combined with the results of the questionnaire and applied in the process of creating the lesson plans that were then piloted at the vocational school, in the third year of the study field Cosmetic services, respectively.

The lesson plans created for the purpose of the thesis are presented and accompanied with a commentary in the following subchapter. Each of them should reflect the findings of the abovementioned questionnaire as well as the main principles of the Communicative language teaching described in the second chapter in the theoretical part of the thesis.

6.1 Lesson plans with commentary

Various sets of guidelines for teachers that should be followed when designing the lesson plans are presented by different scholars. For instance, Ur proposes that teachers ought to write notes about their lessons but maintain them abridged. He also believes that teachers should be conscious of the aims of the lessons, however, it is not necessary to write them down expressly. (Ur, 225)

On the contrary, novice teachers who prefer more solid form might use the lesson plan in the form of a table provided by Scrivener. This version of a lesson plan contains e.g. teacher’s name, class name and room, date and the time when the lesson
starts, length of the lesson, both lesson aims and personal goals, used materials and also potential problems. (Scrivener, 410)

For the purpose of the research, a template that the author of the thesis uses in her teaching practice is employed. The creator of the template is unknown, therefore any resemblance with scholarly sources is purely random. The blank template is included in the Appendices\(^9\), and since some of the items, such as language level and age of the students, remain constant they are mentioned only in the first lesson plan. Moreover, the level of the language is not clearly stated as the group contains students of mixed abilities. Consequently, based on the definitions of various language levels skills in the CEFR the determined language level ranges from elementary to pre-intermediate.

Students in the study field 69-41-L/01 Cosmetic services do not own books corresponding with the school curriculum. Therefore, the lesson plans piloted at the Private vocational school in Břeclav contain both ready-to-use activities from various sources and books as well as activities prepared by the author of the thesis.

During the second stage of the research, the author of the thesis closely monitored all stages of the lessons and took notes about the students’ performances. The lessons were reflected on by the teacher in order to make changes in the following lesson plans, if necessary.

\(^9\) See Appendix 3.
6.1.1 Lesson plan 1

Class: 3rd year Cosmetic services

Class size: 15 students (8 present)

Age group: 17 – 18 years old

Language level: elementary to pre-intermediate

Time: 45 minutes

Materials and resources:

- Laptop and projector
- Flashcards created by the author of the thesis (adverbs of frequency)
- Sets of pictures (family) retrieved from https://www.jcpportraits.com/gallery/family
- Recording accessible at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zAvKEy28K1g
- Homework handout

Aims:

- Students will be able to distinguish between present simple and present continuous tenses and use them appropriately
- Students will be able to use present continuous for pictures description
- Students will be able to identify a picture described by a native speaker

Procedure:

Stage 1 (10 minutes)

Content: revision of grammar from previous lessons (present simple and present continuous)

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10 See Appendix 4.
11 See Appendix 5.
**Organisation:** Teacher-centred structural practice. Flashcards of time adverbs divided according to their use either with present simple or present continuous. Students then ask and answer questions using the adverbs of time, e.g. “How often do you visit your grandmother?”, What time do you usually go to bed?”.

**Commentary:** The first stage of the lesson serves as a warm-up activity. Students are familiar with the adverbs of frequency and the structure of both present simple and present continuous tenses since they were practiced in the previous lessons. The first stage has a form of a structural practice and therefore, it can be classified as a pre-communication activity according to the Littlewood’s methodological framework for classroom activities. The purpose of the exercise is to meaningfully revise what was learnt recently and prepare the students for the following activities. Considering the mistakes, since the exercise has a form of a structural practice, the mistakes should be attended immediately.

**Stage 2 (10 minutes)**

**Content:** description of a picture using the present continuous tense (family, free time)\(^\text{12}\)

**Organisation:** Structural practice. Students are already familiar with the usage of present continuous tense for describing pictures and the grammatical structure is revised at the beginning of the lesson. Therefore, the students, taking turns, can independently try to describe the picture projected on the screen when closely monitored by the teacher.

\(^{12}\) See Appendix 4.
Commentary: The second stage of the lesson aims to consolidate the knowledge of grammatical structure used for describing pictures. Similarly to the warm-up activity, the second stage is applied in a form of structural practice and may be classified as a pre-communicative activity based on the methodological framework for classroom activities by Littlewood. Considering the mistakes, the teacher monitors the class closely and notes mistakes made by students. After the activity, the mistakes are corrected with the whole class.

Stage 3 (10 minutes)

Content: practice of listening comprehension skills (choosing a described picture)

Organisation: Individual work. Pictures connected to one topic are projected on the screen. Students then listen to a recording of picture description. The students’ task is to choose one picture of the set which is described on the recording.

Commentary: The third stage of the lesson takes form of a listening comprehension exercise and is done as an individual work. The students hear the recording two or three times but still need to pay close attention since the pictures they are provided with differ only in small details. They greatly practice the listening comprehension skills not only because of small differences between pictures but also because the spoken word is produced by a native speaker. This is an important element, since the Communicative language teaching should expose the students to authentic materials whenever possible, as proposed by Larsen-Freeman. At the end of the exercise, the teacher shares feedback on listening strategies, i.e. what helped the students to decide which picture is described in the recording. This activity also aims to prepare the students for the following activity.
Stage 4 (15 minutes)

Content: identifying described pictures (family, free time)\(^{13}\)

Organisation: Pair work. Student A gets a set of four pictures, student B is provided with a copy of only one of those pictures. Student B describes his/her picture and student A’s task is to guess which picture is being described. If necessary, student A may ask additional questions. Afterwards students swap roles and another picture is described.

Commentary: The fourth stage of the lesson represents a functional communication activity as proposed in Littlewood’s methodological framework for classroom activities and it is the least teacher-controlled activity of the whole lesson. To reach the communication goal, i.e. to find out which photo is their classmate describing, students need to exchange the clues and use the targeted grammatical structures. Considering the mistakes, teacher again monitors the class closely and notes their mistakes. Only those that may negatively affect the communication ought to be attended later with the whole class.

Homework assignment:

- Students are asked to bring a photo of their family. The picture may be either original depicting real people or downloaded from the internet if students do not feel comfortable showing personal photos with their classmates.

- Fill-in exercise. Students fill the gaps using past simple tense and bring the handout to the next lesson.

\(^{13}\) See Appendix 4.
6.1.2 Lesson plan 2

Class size: 15 students (7 present)

Materials and resources:

- Laptop and projector
- Picture connected to crime and criminality\(^{14}\) retrieved from https://www.thewrap.com/good-girls-set-store-robbed-robbery-scene/
- Crossword for homework assignment\(^{16}\)

Aims:

- Students will be able to use past simple tense to talk about their activities in the past
- Students will learn new words connected with the topic of Crime and criminality (crime, murder, burglary, mugging, robbery, shoplifting, vandalism, theft)
- Students will ask and answer personal questions about the activities in the past

Procedure:

Stage 1 (15 minutes)

Content: description of pictures brought by the students using the present continuous tense and introduction of various family members

\(^{14}\) See Appendix 6.
\(^{15}\) See Appendix 7.
\(^{16}\) See Appendix 8.
Organisation: Group work. For their homework, students were asked to bring a photo of their family, either a real or a downloaded one. Students, one by one, present and describe the photos in small groups. Other students are welcome to ask additional questions. When done with the description, students choose one person from the photo and introduce them in detail to their classmates.

Commentary: The first stage of the lesson serves as a warm-up activity and its aim is to revise the grammatical features introduced in the previous lesson. The exercise is directly linked to students’ personal lives and it enables them to practice social interactions resembling the real life. Also, employing the activities in small groups provides students with a maximized amount of communicative practice which corresponds with the principles of Communicative language teaching. Considering the mistakes, the teacher monitors students’ performance, notes the mistakes and attends them with the whole class after the activity.

Stage 2 (5 minutes)

Content: description of a picture using the present continuous tense (crime and criminality)

Organisation: Structural practice. Students are already familiar with the usage of present continuous tense for describing pictures and the grammatical structure is revised at the beginning of the lesson. Therefore, the students, taking turns, can independently try to describe the picture projected on the screen when closely monitored by the teacher.

Commentary: The second stage of the lesson aims to consolidate the knowledge of grammatical structure used for describing pictures. The exercise is applied in a form of
structural practice and may be classified as a pre-communicative activity based on the methodological framework for classroom activities by Littlewood. It also leads students to the next topic – Crime and criminality. Since the exercise is conducted as a structural practice, the mistakes are attended immediately.

**Stage 3 (10 minutes)**

**Content:** introduction of the vocabulary connected with the topic of Crime and criminality

**Organisation:** All students are given a copy of a handout. They work in pairs and match the pictures in the handout with the appropriate words. The teacher then elicits the pairs of pictures and words students put together. To check the answers, a recording with correct matches is played. Afterwards, the same recording is used to practice proper pronunciation of the words.

**Commentary:** The students are asked to work out the correct matches in pairs to feel more confident with the unknown vocabulary. The listening part is included to demonstrate the correct pronunciation, enable the students to practice it and, therefore, avoid the fear of making mistakes when using the new vocabulary in spoken word.

**Stage 4 (15 minutes)**

**Content:** revision and practice of past simple structure based on the homework assignment

**Organisation:** Whole class activity. All students should have completed affirmative sentences in past simple tense with true information about themselves in the handout that they were provided with in the previous lesson. The students move around the class asking questions about their classmates’ activities and whereabouts during the weekend
and try to find somebody who did the same thing as them. If they find such person, they write each other’s name in the column next to the sentence. At the end of the activity, students share with the rest of the class what they found out.

**Commentary:** The last stage of the lesson is the least teacher-controlled activity of the whole lesson and represents a functional communication activity as proposed in Littlewood’s methodological framework for classroom activities. To reach the communication goal students need to exchange information and use the targeted grammatical structures. The exercise is also directly linked to students’ personal lives and it enables them to practice social interactions resembling the real life. Since the exercise represents a functional communication activity, the mistakes are noted down by the teacher and then attended with the whole class.

**Homework assignment:**

- Crossword. Students complete the part of a crossword they are assigned with new vocabulary and bring it to the next lesson.

### 6.1.3 Lesson plan 3

**Class size:** 15 students (10 present)

**Materials and resources:**

- Handout from the previous lesson
- Copy of a real-life dialogue

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17 See Appendix 7.
18 See Appendix 9.
Aims:

- to revise key vocabulary from the previous lesson in a communicative way
- Students will be able to retell a story based on short reading
- Students will be able to read a real-life dialogue

Procedure:

Stage 1 (10 minutes)

Content: crossword with vocabulary from the previous lesson (homework check)

Organisation: Pair work. As homework, each student was given a half of a crossword to complete. In the classroom, student A and student B work in pairs and ask questions to complete the other half of the crossword. A secret word ought to be discovered when the crossword is correctly completed.

Commentary: The main aim of the first stage of the lesson is to revise vocabulary introduced in the previous lesson. To save classroom time, the crossword is assigned as homework. Thus, more time in the lesson can be devoted to speaking activities. The exercise can be classified as functional communication activity based on the methodological framework for classroom activities by Littlewood. As proposed by the same author, students working in pairs need to use whatever language they have at their disposal in order to attain the communicative goal, i.e. to solve the crossword puzzle. Again, this exercise is focused on fluency rather than accuracy and therefore mistakes that may affect the communication in a negative way are attended after the activity.

Stage 2 (20 minutes)

Content: practice of reading comprehension skills and sharing recently gained information
Organisation: Group work. Students use the handout from the previous lesson. Each student reads one short story in the second exercise and then retells it to the rest of the group. Together they then decide which picture and title belongs to which picture. Correct answers are then checked together with the whole class.

Commentary: The second stage of the lesson is, according to the Littlewood’s methodological framework for classroom activities, a functional communication activity since there is an obvious information gap students need to overcome by using whatever language they have at their disposal to share information gained from the short texts. Employing the activity in small groups provides students with a maximized amount of communicative practice which corresponds with the principles of Communicative language teaching. Also, students prefer working in small groups for they are supported by their classmates and thus feel less reluctant to speak. Considering the mistakes, since the exercise focuses mainly on fluency, they are ignored in the process and attended after the activity ends.

Stage 3 (15 minutes)

Content: demonstration of a real-life conversation between a police officer and a crime witness

Organisation: Students are given a copy of a conversation between a police officer and a crime witness with blank gaps. They read the conversation and fill the gaps with words provided in the handout in correct forms. If necessary, students can ask the teacher about unknown vocabulary. They can check their answers afterwards with the student sitting next to them, although all answers are checked together with the whole class. To practise the structure of the dialogue, various pairs read the dialogue aloud.
Commentary: Students are provided with a demonstration of a real-life dialogue, which corresponds with the principle of the Communicative language teaching to expose students with authentic situations whenever possible. The students then read the conversation aloud to practise the structure of a dialogue. Thus, when later asked to simulate a conversation they would feel more confident. All mistakes are corrected together with the whole class after the students attempt to complete it independently.

6.1.4 Lesson plan 4

Class size: 15 students (8 present)

Materials and resources:

- cut up dialogue from the previous lesson
- cued dialogue handout

Aims:

- Students will be able to act out a dialogue (with provided cues)
- Students will be able to use independently the learned structures in the target language
- Students will be able to identify a crime based on its description

Procedure:

Stage 1 (10 minutes)

Content: completing a real-life dialogue between a police officer and a crime witness

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19 See Appendix 9.
20 See Appendix 10.
**Organisation:** Pair work. Each pair of students is given a set of cut up lines taken from the conversation from the previous lesson. They try to complete the dialogue by putting the lines in the correct order. To check if they have succeeded, the conversation is read aloud by various students.

**Commentary:** Rather than reading the conversation from the handout they already have, to remind them of the structure of a dialogue the students are asked to put the lines of the dialogue in the correct order. The exercise requires a certain level of focus and therefore it is used as a warm-up activity. Also, working in pairs to reach a particular goal promotes communication in the target language. Mistakes in pronunciation are corrected immediately in order to avoid them in further practice.

**Stage 2 (25 minutes)**

**Content:** cued dialogues between a police officer and a crime witness

**Organisation:** Pair work. Each pair of students is given cues and prepares a dialogue based on them. The students use their creativity and add their own information instead of the blank spaces. All pairs then simulate their dialogues in front of the whole class. Their classmates need to listen carefully to find out the information given in the place of blank spaces and write them down. The teacher afterwards checks the understanding by eliciting the pieces of information provided instead of the blank spaces.

**Commentary:** In the continuum linking pre-communicative and communicative activities proposed by Littlewood, cued dialogues are seen as activities that lie between the aforementioned types for they require generally the same amount of teacher’s control and students’ individual creativity. In groups that do not have much experience with the communicative approach it is impossible to employ communicative activities
without any pre-communicative practice. The cues in this particular conversation correspond with the lines in the dialogue between a police officer and a crime witness introduced in the preceding activity. Without prior preparation, the students would not be able to simulate cued dialogues. To prevent discouraging the students, the mistakes are noted by the teacher and attended at the end of the activity with the whole class.

**Stage 3 (10 minutes)**

**Content:** Practice of listening comprehension skills (identification of a crime)

**Organisation:** Individual work. The students listen to a recording of four news reporters talking about crimes. The task is to identify the crimes based on the descriptions of the reporters.

**Commentary:** The third stage of the lesson takes form of a listening comprehension exercise and is done as an individual work. The students need to pay close attention as the reporters’ spoken production is quite fast. Although the recording is not considered an authentic material since it is included on a Class CD of a Gateway B1 book, it may be considered as a source of an authentic situation which greatly corresponds with the main principles of the Communicative language learning.

6.1.5 Lesson plan 5

**Class size:** 15 students (9 present)

**Materials and resources:**

- mystery murder character cards

[21] Inspired by


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21 See Appendix 11.
Aims:

➢ Students will be able to carry out a meaningful conversation in the target language
➢ Students will be able to use the target language creatively and independently

Procedure:

Stage 1 (45 minutes)

Content: solving a mystery murder from a school environment (role-play)

Organisation: The teacher explains to the students what a mystery murder game is and provides them with the background information. Each student receives a character card containing the description of their characters and either clues to solving the mystery or no real clues. The students need to memorize the information from the card in order to be able to act out in the game. Afterwards, all students are given a handout in which they write down collected information about other characters. Questions that are necessary to ask are elicited by the teacher and written on the board. When asking the questions and collecting information, the students are closely monitored by the teacher and helped when necessary. After speaking to every character and collecting all information, students get together as a group and use the information to find out who the murderer is and why they committed the crime.

Commentary: The fifth lesson consists of only one stage and takes form of a role-play. The teacher acquires the role of an advisor and provides the students with as much support during the preparation as possible. According to the Littlewood’s methodological framework for classroom activities, role-plays are classified as social interaction activities in which language users need to take into account both functional
and social meanings of the transmitted message. Therefore, they correspond more with the real life communication acts. In terms of Littlewood’s continuum linking pre-communicative and communicative activities, role-plays are considered rather communicative activities. They force students to think about situations outside of the classroom and enable them to experience a different identity but still act as if the situation was real. Creative and independent usage of the target language in role-play activities automatically leads to error making. These errors are considered a natural part of language acquisition and therefore continual correction during the activity seems counterproductive. What students benefit the most from is the extensive experience of the target language. Thus, the activity is monitored by the teacher, mistakes are collected and those that might negatively affect the communication are attended with the whole class after the exercise.

6.2 Students’ evaluation of the lessons

In this subchapter, the five lessons in which the lesson plans introduced in the chapter 6.1 and designed by the author of the thesis were piloted will be evaluated from the students’ point of view. At the end of the two weeks period when the research was carried out at the Private vocational school in Břeclav, the students were distributed a short questionnaire and asked to evaluate the lessons they experienced. For each question they were supposed to choose only one answer which described their opinion the best. The main aim of the questionnaire was to receive students’ feedback related especially to the language skill that the research primarily focused on, i.e. speaking, their participation in the lessons, using the mother tongue in the classroom and also the

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22 See Appendix 12.
practical usage of gained knowledge outside of the classroom. To collect undistorted data and avoid confusion or misinterpretation, the questionnaire for students was distributed in Czech language. The findings of the questionnaire were then recorded into charts\textsuperscript{23} and will be described in great detail in the following paragraphs.

At the end of the research period, the students were asked to determine which language skill was the focus of the experienced level. All four language skills should be constantly developed in English lessons. Nevertheless, the thesis and piloted lesson plans focus mainly on development of speaking skills even though it is only one part of the communicative competence. All students that were present at the time the questionnaire was distributed claimed that speaking was the most practiced skill. Naturally, also other language skills except for writing were included in the lesson plans but were not the centre of focus.

Due to the reluctance to speak and general passiveness of students, speaking activities are difficult to employ in lessons and the teacher often surrenders. During the research, however, the teacher realised the mistakes made in the process and by following the principles of the Communicative language teaching tried to prepare the students for the actual communicative activities. As may be expected, when communicative approach is employed in the lessons, the number of speaking activities grows. This assumption was confirmed by the students who acknowledged that the number of speaking activities was higher in comparison with their previous lessons.

In the questionnaire the students were given at the beginning of the research, majority of them claimed that they do not participate in the speaking activities very often for various reasons. After two weeks of lessons focused mainly on speaking they were asked to compare their participation with the lessons before the research. Although

\textsuperscript{23} See Appendix 13.
not every student was present to fill the questionnaire, most of the students asserted that they participated in the speaking activities more than before. This assertion is in conformity with the teacher’s impression of the lessons. The high participation was probably caused by proper preparation of the students by employing pre-communicative activities and providing the students with vocabulary and grammatical structures they could have followed.

The first stage of the research also revealed that students often feel nervous and insecure when they are asked to speak in the target language. This is mainly caused by the fear of making mistakes in front of their classmates for mistakes are frequently considered something students ought to be ashamed of. During the lessons included in the research, the teacher very often ignored the mistakes as they did not prevent others from understanding the message. If a mistake needed to be corrected, self-correction and peer correction were the main strategies used for feedback. Although the students were not always successful with providing the correct answers right away, rather than providing the students with the right version the teacher attempted to lead them to the answers. Although the students generally seemed to gain confidence as they participated actively during the lessons, only half of the respondents stated that they felt less insecure when speaking in the target language than before.

Although they may have not felt confident, the amount of the mother tongue used in the classroom dropped dramatically. Before the research, the students were used to speaking Czech almost all the time, translating teacher’s questions and providing the answers in the mother tongue as well waiting for the translation. More than half of the students who filled the final questionnaire claimed that they use Czech language less than prior to the research.
The final research also aimed to find out why students use their mother tongue in the English classroom. Half of the students still feel the necessity to switch into Czech to avoid making mistakes, other half of the respondents claimed they use the mother tongue due to the lack of vocabulary in the target language. As mentioned before in the thesis, the lack of vocabulary is easier to overcome, the fear of making mistakes is difficult to dispose of, but not impossible. Thus, both of these features will be worked on constantly in regular English classes.

Last but not least aspect of the lessons the students were asked to share their opinion about the relevance between the things learned in the classroom and the real life outside of school. Not seeing the possibility to use the knowledge used in the classroom negatively influences the motivation of students. Fortunately, the questionnaire revealed that students see the relevance between the knowledge gained during the lessons with the world outside of the classroom as majority of the students expressed their agreement with the last statement in the questionnaire.

In conclusion, based on the high number of speaking activities during the lessons students correctly assumed that the focus of the research was primarily on the development of speaking skills. Although many of them still feel insecure, the amount of Czech language used in the classroom dropped significantly and students participated in assigned activities more actively than before, as they themselves claim. In general, the mother tongue was used mainly in situations where the students did not know the correct vocabulary and wanted to avoid making mistakes. By appropriate strategies this fear of error making can be overcome and more confidence can be evoked in students. Most importantly, during the research students saw the relevance of the in-class activities and curriculum with the world outside of the school which is the key factor in boosting their motivation for studying and participating.
6.3 Teacher’s evaluation of the lessons

In this subchapter, the five lessons in which the lesson plans designed by the author of the thesis were piloted will be evaluated from the teacher’s point of view. Since the thesis aims to confirm, or disprove, the author’s beliefs that communicative approach can affect motivation of students and their approach to the language and to confirm, or disprove, that students’ interest in the language can be raised, the lessons will not be evaluated individually, but collectively.

The first stage of the research revealed that students in this particular group are reluctant to speak mostly because they are afraid of making mistakes and unfortunately, with employing communicative activities the probability of error making highly increases. One of the main principles of Communicative language teaching, though, is for the students to acquire a high level of responsibility for their performance in the lessons. To prepare the students for communicative activities and equip them with language forms and grammatical structures, the author of the thesis decided to employ suitable pre-communicative activities before proceeding to those less controlled by the teacher. This decision proved to be successful, even though the students were reluctant at first as they are obviously not used to such level of independence. During the two weeks in which the lesson plans were piloted, however, they seemed to get used to the process and even seemed to be participated more in the speaking, which they also confirmed in the questionnaire at the end of the research.

The teacher’s main concern was the understanding of the teacher’s instructions which proved to be an issue also in the third part of the questionnaire. Even though the teacher tried to simplify the instructions, majority of the students was able to follow just the basics and more complex activities had to be explained in the mother tongue. The mystery murder activity in the fifth lesson plan was introduced in the Czech language
without an attempt to give the instructions in the foreign language. Nevertheless, it did not influence the activity in any way since the students tried to perform the exercise in English using whatever language they had at their disposal and switched to Czech only when desperate with the lack of vocabulary, as they claimed in the questionnaire at the end of the research.

Using the target language for interaction was quite tricky in general. Some students, naturally, assumed that the teacher does not pay close attention when employing the pair or group work and started speaking the mother tongue. Their performance, however, was monitored by the teacher and all attempts to speak Czech were noticed by her and pointed out.

As the content and timing of the lessons is concerned, the lesson plans proved to be prepared accordingly to students’ abilities and time restrictions of the lessons. Nevertheless, some delays occurred especially in activities based on homework assignments. Due to the absence or general carelessness of various students, assignments such as the fill-in exercise assigned in the first lesson, had to be done in class in order for the students to be able to participate in the activities.

Generally, however, one can conclude that the students responded well to the activities included in the piloted lessons and attempted to participate, as anticipated with various levels of enthusiasm, in the communication even in the target language.

In the subchapter 3.3 Description of the respondents, several issues teachers at the Private vocational school in Břeclav may encounter during their practice were mentioned. Firstly, it is the student’s inappropriate behaviour which greatly influences the education in a negative way. Though it is impossible to generalise, majority of students in the group which participated in the research chats during lessons, plays with the mobile phones or pretend they are not present in the class. The lesson plans in the
second stage of the research were designed with a strong belief that providing the students at this particular vocational school with the opportunity to meaningfully communicate in the target language and show them the resemblance between the school curricula and real life outside of the classroom will decrease the level of ill behaviour throughout the classrooms. Although the two-weeks time period is too short to draw any conclusions connected to the influence of Communicative language teaching on vocational school students’ behaviour, during the time of the research, students in the third year of the study field of Cosmetic services behaved appropriately, rarely played with their mobile phones and did not sabotage any activities employed in the lessons. This experience of students participating actively in the lessons left a positive impression on the teacher and author of the thesis with a promising picture to the future.

As described in the subchapter 3.3, students do not see the relevance of what they are being taught with the real life. This lack of understanding negatively affects the students’ motivation. Motivating students to participate in lessons is increasingly difficult not only for the author of the thesis. The students are unwilling not only to participate in the classroom, but also to prepare for the lessons and do assigned homework. Although as said before, two weeks are too short period of time to draw any conclusion, after piloting the lesson plans based on the principles of the Communicative language teaching and students’ preferences revealed in the first part of the research, the author of the thesis strongly believes that employing communicative approach at the Private vocational school in Břeclav can greatly influence the motivation of students and their general attitude towards the English language. It is impossible to claim that students’ motivation was raised permanently, however, it can be stated that students followed the teacher’s instructions, they were willing to work and engaged in the activities using the target language. The most appealing activity, from the teacher’s
point of view was the mystery murder game in which the students applied the grammatical structures and vocabulary acquired in the previous lessons.

Another feature affecting the performance of the students is the high absence rate which does not concern only the group participating in the research but the whole school. The high absence rate can be seen also during the two weeks of the research since the maximum number of students present in the lesson was ten out of fifteen. This issue causes general problems connected to the continuity of the school curriculum for in almost every lesson there happens to be a student who missed at least one of the previous lessons and who consequently struggles to catch up. Although the high degree of absence is an issue concerning all students, there is probably very little the teachers could do to improve the situation.

To conclude, five lessons and two weeks period of time are not nearly enough to assess all possible advantages and disadvantages of employing the Communicative language teaching at this particular school. However, when comparing the author’s previous teaching experience at the vocational school with the piloted lesson plans, students’ attitude and behaviour was much more appropriate and satisfactory during the time when the communicative approach was applied. Thus, the frequency of the most common issues related to students’ inappropriate behaviour is likely to decrease when employing the communicative approach for a longer period of time. The author’s observations support the beliefs that using communicative approach can affect motivation of students and their approach to the language. Also, the efficiency of English language teaching can be improved and students’ interest in the language can be raised by applying the CLT at the Private vocational school in Břeclav.
Résumé

Students at vocational schools are very often considered to be behaving inappropriately, absent from classes, unmotivated and unwilling to cooperate with the teacher and classmates, too. These are only a few of the challenges that affect teachers’ work seriously. This thesis aimed to confirm, or disprove, the author’s beliefs that communicative approach can affect motivation of students at a particular vocational school and their approach to the language. Also, by creating lesson plans based on principles of communicative approach, the author meant to prove that efficiency of English language teaching can be improved and students’ interest in the language can be raised.

The first chapter discussed communication from the scientific point of view and several definitions were provided as not a single one would fulfil all scholarly and scientific purposes. The chapter then continued with communicative competence and its models, which the communicative language teaching should be based on. For the purposes of this thesis three models were chosen to outline the development of communicative competence, but only the Usó-Juan and Martinez-Flor’s framework was used as an exemplar, since it proposes focus on all four language skills.

The second chapter of the theoretical part of the thesis focused on communicative approach itself. Aims and principles of communicative language teaching were discussed in great detail and commented on by the author of the thesis in the first subchapter. The aims were then followed by presentation of various types of classroom activities.

One of the challenges of the thesis for its author was to assess the main principles of the communicative approach. Even though the Communicative language teaching
seems to be popular nowadays and is rarely criticized, there are points that should be
borne in mind by the teachers.

The author believes that teachers tend to omit the course books in the classroom in
order to work mainly with authentic materials that are among the principles of CLT.
Although the authentic materials are undoubtedly beneficial for students, it is necessary
to find balance between scripted and authentic materials and not relinquish any of these.

Probably the biggest challenge was to acknowledge various strategies of dealing
with mistakes in the classroom and employ them appropriately during the lessons. Many
teachers, including the author of the thesis, struggle to not attend the mistakes
immediately after they are made. As Larsen-Freeman proposes, teachers should
distinguish between activities focused on accuracy and those focused on fluency and in
the latter concentrate on transmitting the message rather than grammatical correctness.
This approach was acquired by the author of the thesis, frequently used during the
research and will be used in further teaching. Moreover, in further practice the author
intends to inform the students about which activities focus on fluency and which ones
on accuracy.

The third subchapter dealt with the role of the teacher in the Communicative
language teaching. Some scholars believe that communicative approach was introduced
as a reaction to the traditional grammar-translation method. Therefore, for better
illustration of the changes, the role of the teacher in both teaching methods was
introduced.

The last subchapter of the theoretical part focused on potential problems both
students and teachers may encounter when new teaching approaches are employed. The
author of the thesis discussed the causes and consequences of such issues. Teachers in
general need to acknowledge that if they fail to acquire their new role they prevent the success of both the lessons and students.

The empirical part of the thesis contained a research employed in two stages at the Private vocational school in Břeclav. In the first stage, a questionnaire was designed by the author and distributed among students in the third year of studies of a 69-41-L/01 Cosmetic services course at the vocational school. Its aim was to discover their feelings in the classroom and the attitude towards English language.

The main issue revealed by the questionnaire was the students’ fear of making mistakes when speaking the target language and fear of speaking without preparation which causes the reluctance to speak in English lessons. These aspects were worked on constantly during the research. The teacher acquired various strategies for dealing with mistakes and tried to employ them in the classroom and will continue employing them in further teaching. Although it will take more than just two weeks for the students to acknowledge mistakes as natural part of language learning, they definitely made progress with the attitude.

Another obstacle for the students seems to be the topics included in the school curriculum that are generally regarded boring or which the students lack the factual knowledge on. Unfortunately, there is very little the English teacher can do about this particular aspect, only to try to present the topics in an entertaining and interesting way with great basis in vocabulary and facts.

The questionnaire also provided the author with another significant revelation that students prefer working in pairs or in small groups. This desire was taken into consideration when designing the lesson plans as most of the activities were conducted as pair or group work. Working together with the classmates enables the students to be more confident and rely on other students’ support.
The generally known principles and advantages of the communicative approach together with the author’s teaching experience at the vocational school led to the conclusion that employment of Communicative language teaching principles in English lessons might affect motivation of students at this particular school and their approach to the language. Moreover, the author intended to confirm or disprove that by communicative approach the efficiency of English language teaching can be improved and students’ interest in the language can be raised.

The second stage of the research therefore consisted of five lesson plans designed by the author according to the principles of the Communicative language teaching. The lesson plans created for the purpose of the thesis were presented and accompanied with a commentary in the subchapter 6.1. Each of the lesson plans reflect the findings of the abovementioned questionnaire as well as the main principles of the Communicative language teaching described in the second chapter in the theoretical part of the thesis.

As the lesson plans contain both activities from various sources and activities created by the author, the challenge was to find the appropriate materials and if necessary modify them so they would fit the principles of the Communicative language teaching. Students at the vocational school do not own course books corresponding with the school curriculum, therefore all materials needed to be prepared by the teacher. By creating and adjusting the exercises the author got even more familiar with the principles of the communicative approach and is able to use the gained knowledge in further teaching.

The last section of the empirical part presented the evaluation of the lesson plans piloted at the Private vocational school in Břeclav from both the students’ and the teacher’s point of view and discussed the influence those lessons had on students.
Although five lessons and two weeks period of time were not nearly enough to assess all possible advantages and disadvantages of employing the Communicative language teaching at this particular school, when comparing the author’s previous teaching experience at the school with the piloted lesson plans. Students themselves confirmed that they participated more during the research than they did before and students’ attitude and behaviour were much more satisfactory during the time when the communicative approach was applied. Thus, the frequency of the most common issues related to students’ inappropriate behaviour is likely to decrease when employing the communicative approach for a longer period of time. The author’s observations support the beliefs that using communicative approach can affect motivation of students and their approach to the language. Also, the efficiency of English language teaching can be improved and students’ interest in the language can be raised by applying the CLT at the Private vocational school in Břeclav.
Sources


List of Figures

Figure 1. Bachman’s model of language competence

Figure 2. Usó-Juan and Martinez-Flor’s model of language competence

Figure 3. The methodological framework for classroom activities
Appendices

Appendix 1: Questionnaire for students – first stage of the research

Vážení studenti,

ráda bych Vás požádala o vyplnění dotazníku, který se týká Vašeho přístupu k výuce anglického jazyka a Vašich preferencí ve výuce. Informace z dotazníku budou použity v moji diplomové práci a rovněž mohou přispět ke zkvalitnění výuky na této škole. Vzhledem k tomu, že dotazník je zcela anonymní, prosím Vás o upřímné odpovědi. Vyplnění dotazníku Vám nezabere déle než 15 minut.

Děkuji za spolupráci,
Bc. Markéta Vysloužilová

Část 1: Vaše pocity v hodinách anglického jazyka.
Vyberte z možností 1-5 podle toho, jak moc souhlasíte s následujícími výroky.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Výroky</th>
<th>Zcela souhlasím</th>
<th>Spíše souhlasím</th>
<th>Nejsem si jistý(á)</th>
<th>Spíše nesouhlasím</th>
<th>Zcela nesouhlasím</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>V mluvené angličtině jsem sebevědomý(á).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bojím se v hodinách dělat chyby.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jsem nervózní, pokud mám mluvit bez přípravy.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vždycky mám pocit, že ostatní studenti mluví lépe.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevadí mi mluvit s učitelem v angličtině.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevadí mi mluvit anglicky se spolužákem.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevadí mi mluvit anglicky s lidmi, které neznám.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Část 2: Vaše aktivity v hodinách anglického jazyka.
Vyberte z možností 1-5 podle toho, jak moc souhlasíte s následujícími výroky.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Výroky</th>
<th>Zcela souhlasím</th>
<th>Spíše souhlasím</th>
<th>Nejsem si jistý(á)</th>
<th>Spíše nesouhlasím</th>
<th>Zcela nesouhlasím</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Často se účastním aktivit zaměřených na mluvený projev.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radši dělám aktivity zaměřené na mluvení se spolužákem.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Část 3: Učitel v hodinách anglického jazyka.
Vyberte z možností 1-5 podle toho, jak moc souhlasíte s následujícími výroky.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Výroky</th>
<th>Zcela souhlasím</th>
<th>Spíše souhlasím</th>
<th>Nejsem si jistý(á)</th>
<th>Spíše nesouhlasím</th>
<th>Zcela nesouhlasím</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jsem nervózní, pokud nerozumím, co učitel říká.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevadí mi, když se mě učitel zeptá na otázku před celou třídou.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pokud učitel zadává aktivitu, nemám problém s porozuměním.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Když učitel organizuje aktivitu, mám dostatek času na přípravu.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Učitel by měl počkat, až domluvím, než mi začne opravovat chyby.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Část 4: Váš mluvený projev v hodinách anglického jazyka.
Vyberte z možností 1-5 podle toho, jak moc souhlasíte s následujícími výroky.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Výroky</th>
<th>Zcela souhlasím</th>
<th>Spíše souhlasím</th>
<th>Nejsem si jistý(á)</th>
<th>Spíše nesouhlasím</th>
<th>Zcela nesouhlasím</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>V hodinách nemluvím, protože neznám slovíčka.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V hodinách nemluvím, protože témata jsou nudná.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V hodinách nemluvím, protože nevím, co říct.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V hodinách nemluvím, protože nevím, jak správně komunikovat.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V hodinách nemluvím, protože se bojím, že udělam chybu.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V hodinách nemluvím, protože se stydím.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V hodinách nemluvím, protože často musím pracovat s lidmi, které nemám rád(a).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2: Results of the questionnaire

Part 1:

**How do you feel in the English classrooms?**

![Bar chart showing feelings in English classrooms](chart1)

Part 2:

**What do you do in classes?**

![Bar chart showing activities in classes](chart2)
Part 3:

What does the teacher do in classes?

Part 4:

What prevents your speaking in classes?
Appendix 3: Blank template of the lesson plans

Lesson plan

Class:

Class size:

Age group:

Language level:

Time:

Materials and resources:

Aims:

Procedure:

Commentary:

Homework assignment:
Appendix 4: Pictures for describing
Appendix 5: Homework handout – past simple tense

*Complete the sentences with true information about your activities at the weekend.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Past simple sentences</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I woke up at .......... on Saturday morning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I ate ................. for lunch on Sunday.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Saturday afternoon, I went .................</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Sunday morning, I saw ...............</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I slept for ..... hours on Friday.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I ............................... on Saturday.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I visited ............... on Sunday.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 6: Picture connected to crime and criminality
Appendix 7: Handout with new vocabulary

2 Criminal records

Vocabulary

Crimes
1. With a partner and match the pictures with these words.
   - burglary
   - mugging
   - murder
   - piracy
   - robbery
   - shoplifting
   - theft
   - vandalism

2. a) Listen and repeat.

3. Look at these pictures. They illustrate newspaper stories about crimes or criminals. Can you match the titles of the stories with the pictures? There is one title you do not need.

   1. Now you see it, now you don’t
   2. And this photo is me stealing your car
   3. The perfect police officer
   4. Burglar in a box
   5. Let me back in!

4. Work with a partner. From the titles and pictures, what do you think happens in each story? Guess.

   What about the story with the car?

   I think that somebody stole the car when the boy is taking a photo of it.

5. Read the stories and match the pictures, titles and texts.

   - Story A Title ______ Picture ______
   - Story B Title ______ Picture ______
   - Story C Title ______ Picture ______
   - Story D Title ______ Picture ______

STUDY SKILLS

Why is it useful to look at pictures and the title of texts before you read them?

STUDY SKILLS on page 146

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A gang of robbers wanted to rob the famous magician David Copperfield last week. They knew an important lesson: never mug a magician. Four young people attacked Copperfield after a show in Florida, last week. Copperfield had money, his passport, and his mobile phone in his pockets. But when the robbers were looking for something to steal, he showed his pockets to the thieves and the objects weren’t there! The thieves didn’t wait to look for them. The police arrested the men when they were running away… after a call from Copperfield on his disappearing phone.

A British car thief made a basic mistake. Lee Hopkins was stealing an Opel Astra when he ran across a camera inside the car. So what did he do? He and his girlfriend took photos of each other next to the car. Soon afterwards, they crashed the car. They quickly ran away from the scene of the crime but they left the camera inside the car. The police soon worked out who the thief was. "Some criminals can be really stupid," said a police officer looking into the case.

An international criminal had an original idea for a burglary. He got inside a box and a friend sent him by post to the house of a rich businessman. But the businessman was surprised and suspicious when the large parcel turned up at his house. He didn’t think it was normal to receive this big parcel and so he called the police. When the thief finally came out of the box, he saw ten police officers standing there waiting for him.
Appendix 8: Crossword for homework assignment

ACROSS
6. doing something illegal that can be punished by law
8. stealing large amounts of money with force or violence from a bank, store, etc.

DOWN
1. destroying private or public property purposely
2. taking things secretly in or out of a place, country, jail, etc.
3. taking someone away by force, often demanding money for their safe return

ACROSS
9. stealing something from a store
10. stealing, in general

DOWN
4. attacking someone with a plan to rob them
5. breaking into a house in order to steal something
7. killing someone on purpose
Appendix 9: Copy of a real-life dialogue

A dialogue between a police officer and a witness.

Yesterday morning a woman was hit by a car. Although she was very hurt, the driver drove away. A young boy saw the accident and was interviewed by the police.

Police officer: Do you know what type of car hit the woman?
Witness: It was a Saab.
Police officer: What colour was it?
Witness: I think it was green.
Police officer: Did you see the plate number?
Witness: No, I didn’t. It was very fast.
Police officer: Where were you exactly?
Witness: I was right there.
Police officer: What were you doing?
Witness: I was going to school.
Police officer: What exactly happened?
Witness: The woman was crossing the road when the car hit her and drove away.
Police officer: Which way did the car go?
Witness: It went straight on.
Police officer: Thank you for your help.
Witness: You’re welcome.
Appendix 10: Cued dialogue handout

**A dialogue between a police officer and a witness.**

*Yesterday morning a woman was hit by a car. Although she was very hurt, the driver drove away. A young boy saw the accident and was interviewed by the police.*

Police officer: Do you know what ________________?

Witness: It was a ____.  

Police officer: What ____ was it?  

Witness: I think it was ____.  

Police officer: Did you see the ______?  

Witness: ______________________.  

Police officer: Where _____ you exactly?  

Witness: I was ________.  

Police officer: What were you doing?  

Witness: I _____________.  

Police officer: What exactly ____________?  

Witness: The woman ________________ when the car hit her and ____________.  

Police officer: ____________?  

Witness: _________________.  

Police officer: Thank you for your help.  

Witness: You’re welcome.
Appendix 11: Mystery murder cards

Background information:
During a school ball a scream is heard from one of the classrooms. It's 9:30 pm. A dead body of Miss Catherine Green, a sweet elderly English teacher, is found a few minutes later. She has been hit on the head. A number of items that may lead us to the killer was also found: a book written by one of her ex-students – Peter King, a photograph of one of her fellow teachers – Paul Mendez, and a handkerchief with the initials W. C. At the moment these are the main suspects but everyone who was at the ball and saw or spoke to Miss Green needs to be questioned.

Character 1:
Your name is Peter King; you are an ex-student.
Memories of Miss Green: She was a very strict teacher, however, she helped you to become a writer by doing extra writing assignments. She said you were talented but you hated all the extra work. But you're a writer now, you have just written a new book and you gave a copy to Miss Green.
Last time you saw Miss Green: You saw Miss Green at about 7 pm, you gave her a copy of your book and she was happy.
When you heard the scream: You were talking to Greg Evans, another ex-student.

Character 2:
Your name is Greg Evans; you are an ex-student.
Memories of Miss Green: You thought she was too strict, you hated her classes, she gave too much homework. You didn't pass your exams and now you work at the McDonalds'. You think it's Miss Green's fault. You're glad she died!
Last time you saw Miss Green: You were outside, smoking at about 8 pm. You saw her with Mr. Winston, it looked like they were arguing. Anyway, they were talking about someone called Saul or Raul … you couldn't hear very well.
When you heard the scream: You were glad for the distraction; you were trying to get rid of drunk Peter King.

Character 3:
Your name is Paul Mendez; you are a teacher at the school.
Opinion of Miss Green: She was a very strict teacher, she wasn't very likeable.
Last time you saw Miss Green: Miss Green was your mother, but nobody at school knows this. She gave you up for adoption when you were a baby. You had an argument because who didn’t want to tell you who your father is. It was about 8:30 pm.
When you heard the scream: You were looking for Mr. Winston, the headmaster, you knocked on his office door but there was no answer.
Character 4:

Your name is Will Clarice; you are the janitor at the school.

Opinion of Miss Green: You thought that she was a very nice lady. You wanted to ask her out but you were afraid she would refuse.

Last time you saw Miss Green: You saw her arguing with Mr. Wilson. You went to see if she was okay, you gave her your tissue, you always carry one because you are allergic.

When you heard the scream: You were cleaning the floor in the men's toilets.

Character 5:

Your name is Grace Alem; you are an ex-student.

Memories of Miss Green: She was a scary teacher, most of the students worked hard because they were scared by her. Miss Green inspired you to become a teacher.

Last time you saw Miss Green: You talked to her briefly at about 8:45. you told her about your studies but she didn't seem interested. When she saw Mr. Wilson said she had to go.

When you heard the scream: You were dancing in the Gym with some other ex-students.

Character 6:

Your name is Tim Wilson, you are the headmaster of the school.

Opinion of Miss Green: You have known Miss Green since you both studied college, you thought she was an amazing woman, you will miss her a lot.

Last time you saw Miss Green: You were very busy talking to the guests, you didn't see Miss Green.

When you heard the scream: You were working on the computer in your office.

Character 7:

Your name is Kim Blake, you are a teacher at the school.

Opinion of Miss Green: She was a good teacher but had almost no friends.

Last time you saw Miss Green: She was on her way to the classroom, it was about 9:15 pm and she looked disturbed. She was crying and was wiping her tears with a tissue.

When you heard the scream: You were having a lively discussion with the other teachers in the Gym.
### Character 8:

Your name is Marz White, you are a teacher at the school.

Opinion of Miss Green: You didn’t know her well.

Last time you saw Miss Green: You didn’t see her all evening.

When you heard the scream: You were talking to other teachers in the Gym.

### Character 9:

Your name is Mel Newton, you are the school’s receptionist.

Opinion of Miss Green: She was very polite, seemed lonely.

Last time you saw Miss Green: You said hi when you arrived to the ball.

When you heard the scream: You were in the men's restroom.
Appendix 12: Questionnaire for lesson plans evaluation

Vážení studenti,

ráda bych Vás požádala o vyplnění dotazníku, který se týká výuky anglického jazyka v uplynulých dvou týdnech. Informace z dotazníku budou použity v moji diplomové práci a rovněž mohou přispět ke zkvalitnění výuky na této škole. Vzhledem k tomu, že dotazník je zcela anonymní, prosím Vás o upřímné odpovědi. U všech otázek, prosím, vyberte pouze jednu odpověď. Vyplnění dotazníku Vám nezabere déle než 5 minut.

Děkuji za spolupráci,
Bc. Markéta Vysloužilová

1. Jalá jazyková dovednost byla v posledních dvou týdnech procvičována nejčastěji?
   a) poslech
   b) čtení
   c) mluvení
   d) psaní

2. V posledních dvou týdnech se aktivit na procvičení mluvení objevovalo
   a) stejně jako předtím
   b) više než předtím
   c) méně než předtím

3. Aktivit k procvičení mluveného projevu jsem se účastnil(a)
   a) častěji než předtím
   b) stejně jako předtím
   c) méně než předtím

4. V posledních dvou týdnech jsem se při mluvení v angličtině cítil(a)
   a) méně nejistý(á) než předtím
   b) stejně nejistý(á) jako předtím
   c) více nejistý(á) než předtím

5. Česky jsem v hodinách mluvila
   a) více než předtím
   b) stejně jako předtím
   c) méně než předtím

6. Mluvil(a) jsem česky, protože
   a) jsem neznal(a) slovní zásobu
   b) jsem nechtěl(a) udělat chybu
   c) jsem nevěděl(a) co říct

7. Myslíte, že je možné učivo probrané v posledních dvou týdnech použít i mimo školní prostředí?
   a) ano
   b) ne
   c) nejsem si jistý(á)
Appendix 13: Results of the final questionnaire

What skill was practised the most during the research?
- listening
- reading
- speaking
- writing

The number of speaking activities during the research was ...
- higher
- same
- lower

During the research, I participated in the speaking activities ...
- more
- same
- less
Speaking English during the research
I felt ...

During the research, I spoke Czech ...

I spoke Czech because of the ...
Is it possible to use the knowledge from the lessons outside of school?

- yes
- no
- not sure