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**DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILLS**

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# **DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILLS**

**THESIS**

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**ROZVOJ ŘEČOVÉ DOVEDNOSTI  
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## **Abstract**

Developing speaking skills includes several aspects that influence this process. It is more than obvious that the student together with the teacher are the most important ones. The way this process can be influenced from the position of the teacher will be the aim of the thesis.

Modern teaching methods of foreign languages count on involving the use of different organizational forms and activities which support such a development. The way teachers organize these activities and the way they perceive the individual steps connected with the organization of activities may essentially influence the eventual efficiency of the activity and the consequent development of speaking skills.

The theoretical section therefore deals with the theoretical notes concerning speaking together with the analysis of the most frequent organizational forms. Next part includes theoretical suggestions of the individual stages that should be taken into consideration when organizing activities focused on the development of speaking skills.

The practical section contains research which tries to prove the practical use of the theoretical notes concerning one selected stage of the activity in English lessons at Czech elementary schools.

## **Abstrakt**

Pod pojmem rozvoj řečové dovednosti mluvení se skrývá bezpočet prvků, které tento proces ovlivňují. Je více než zřejmé, že žák a učitel jsou jedněmi z těch nejdůležitějších. Jak může být tento proces ovlivněn z pozice učitele bude předmětem této práce.

Moderní způsob výuky cizího jazyka, v našem případě angličtiny, počítá se zapojením nejrůznějších organizačních forem a aktivit, které takový rozvoj podporují. Způsob, jakým učitel organizuje aktivity a jak vnímá jednotlivé fáze spojené s organizací aktivit může mít vliv na následující efekt samotné aktivity a v důsledku i rozvoj mluvení.

Teoretická část proto nastiňuje poznatky týkající se této produktivní řečové dovednosti, společně s rozbohem základních organizačních forem, které se pro tento účel využívají. Dále pak zahrnuje teoretický návrh jednotlivých fází a jejich oblastí, které by měly být brány v úvahu při organizaci aktivit zaměřených na rozvoj mluvení.

Praktická část zahrnuje výzkum, jenž ověřuje praktické využití teoretických poznatků týkající se vybrané fáze organizace aktivit v hodinách angličtiny na českých základních školách.

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Talking about the development of speaking skills during a teaching- learning process, it is necessary to consider a number of factors that influence this process. Oral production, the process of communication, number of interlocutors, interaction patterns, an amount of information processed, time span, teacher, student, the conditions under which all these elements mutually interact are only a small part of what developing speaking skills makes. It is impossible to discuss all the factors related to this process in the thesis; therefore, an attention will be focused only on selected areas.

As it has just been suggested, there are several aspects that contribute to the development of students' speaking skills, one of them being, I personally believe, the effective organization of activities.

Before dealing with the problematic of organizing activities focused on the development of speaking skills, however, I would like to consider the theoretical background of the skill of speaking, particularly theory of speaking (elements of speaking); furthermore, speaking in relation to communicative competence, and typology of activities proposed for the development of speaking skills.

Carrying out activities which aim at developing speaking skills is inevitably connected with the use of different organizational forms, of which some principal aspects will be proposed in the second part of the theoretical section.

Each speaking activity is bounded to a certain progress, within which there can be traced stages and areas that can be positively or negatively influenced by the teacher. Therefore, the aim of the third part will be to propose principles related to the organization of speaking activities that need to be taken into consideration when planning activities focused on the development of speaking skills.

The purpose of the practical section is to focus on one of the areas developed in third part of the theoretical section and present the data obtained in small-scale research by structured observation method. It will be the aim to find out whether the theoretical notes as implied by teaching specialists are applied in real environment of elementary schools.

## **II. THEORETICAL SECTION**

### **1. THEORY OF SPEAKING**

The aim of the part concerning theoretical background of speaking will be to determine the position of speaking skill among the other skills and to analyze the elements that speaking as a skill includes. The following part will present the theory of communicative competence and its relation to speaking, primarily based on Lyle F. Bachman's (1994) theoretical inputs. Finally, activities in which speaking skills can be developed will be dealt with by drawing upon William Littlewood's (1991) typology of activities.

#### **1.1. Speaking – Bygate vs. Harmer**

Almost entire libraries have been written on speaking, however space provided here does not allow to cover all the theories and notes in this work. Speaking, together with writing, belongs among productive skills. (Harmer, 2001) Gower *et al.* (1995, 99-100) note down that from the communicative point of view, speaking has many different aspects including two major categories – accuracy, involving the correct use of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation practised through controlled and guided activities; and, fluency, considered to be 'the ability to keep going when speaking spontaneously'. This is, however, rather a superficial view of this skill.

For the purpose of the thesis, I have decided to draw upon the theories provided by Jeremy Harmer, *The Practice of English Teaching* (2001), and, more importantly, Martin Bygate, *Speaking* (1987), whose theoretical inputs concerning the elements of speaking will be analyzed and their views compared.

##### **1.1.1. Bygate's theory**

According to Bygate (1987, 3), in order to achieve a communicative goal through speaking, there are two aspects to be considered – knowledge of the language, and skill in using this knowledge. It is not enough to possess a certain amount of knowledge, but a speaker of the language should be able to use this knowledge in different situations.

We do not merely *know* how to assemble sentences in the abstract: we have to produce them and adopt to the circumstances. This means making decisions rapidly, implementing them smoothly, and adjusting our conversation as unexpected problems appear in our path.  
(Bygate 1987, 3)

Being able to decide what to say on the spot, saying it clearly and being flexible during a conversation as different situations come out is the ability to use the knowledge ‘in action’, which creates the second aspect of speaking - the skill, Bygate notes (p.4).

Bygate views the skill as comprising two components: production skills and interaction skills, both of which can be affected by two conditions: firstly, processing conditions, taking into consideration the fact that ‘a speech takes place under the pressure of time’; secondly, reciprocity conditions connected with a mutual relationship between the interlocutors (Bygate 1987, 7).

### Production skills

The processing conditions (time pressure) in certain ways limit or modify the oral production; it means the use of production skills. For that reason, speakers are forced to use devices which help them make the oral production possible or easier through ‘facilitation’, or enable them to change words they use in order to avoid or replace the difficult ones by means of ‘compensation’, Bygate says (p.14).

There are four elementary ways of facilitating that Bygate distinguishes: simplifying structures, elipsis, formulaic expressions, and using fillers and hesitation devices.

On the other hand, when a speaker needs to alter, correct or change what he or she has said, they will need to make use of compensation devices. These include tools such as substitution, rephrasing, reformulating, self-correction, false starts, and repetition and hesitation. Bygate concludes that incorporation of these features, facilitation and compensation, in the teaching-learning process is of a considerable importance, in order to help students’ oral production and compensate for the problems they may face:

All these features [facilitation, compensation] may in fact *help* learners to speak, and hence help them to *learn* to speak . . . In addition to helping learners to learn to speak, these features may also help learners to sound *normal* in their use of the foreign language.  
(Bygate 1987, 20-21)

Facilitation and compensation, both devices which help students make the oral production possible or easier, or help them to change, avoid or replace the difficult expressions, besides these elementary functions also help students to sound more naturally as speakers of a foreign language.

### Interaction skills

According to Bygate (1987, 22), both speakers and listeners, besides being good at processing spoken words should be ‘good communicators’, which means ‘good at saying what they want to say in a way which the listener finds understandable’. This means being able to possess interaction skills. Communication of meaning then depends on two kinds of skill: routines, and negotiation skills.

To begin with, routines are the typical patterns in which speakers organize what they have to communicate. There are two kinds of routines: information routines, and interaction routines. The information routines include frequently recurring types of information structures involved in, for example, stories, descriptions, comparisons, or instructions. Bygate further divides information routines according to their function into evaluative routines (explanations, predictions, justifications, preferences, decisions), and expository routines (narration, descriptions, instructions).

The interaction routines, on the other hand, present the characteristic ways, in which interactions are organized dealing with the logical organization and order of the parts of conversation. Interaction routines can typically be observed in, for example, telephone conversations, interviews, or conversations at the party. (Bygate 1987, 23-27)

While routines present the typical patterns of conversation, negotiation skills, on the other hand, solve communication problems and enable the speaker and listener to make themselves clearly understood. In fact, according to Bygate, negotiation skills get routines through by the management of interaction and negotiation of meaning.

The first aspect of negotiation skills ‘management of interaction’, Bygate notes, refers to ‘the business of agreeing who is going to speak next, and what he or she is going to talk about’ (p.27). These are two aspects of management of interaction that Bygate distinguishes: agenda of management and turn-taking. On one hand, participants’ choice of the topic, how it is developed, its length, the beginning or the end is controlled by the agenda of management. On the other hand, effective turn-taking requires five abilities: how to signal that one wants to speak, recognizing the right moment to get a turn, how to use appropriate turn structure in

order to one's turn properly and not to lose it before finishing what one has to say, recognizing other people's signals of their desire to speak, and, finally, knowing how to let someone else have a turn. (Bygate 1987, 35-40)

The second aspect of negotiation skills - 'the skill of communicating ideas clearly and signalling understanding or misunderstanding during a conversation' - is referred to as negotiation of meaning (p.27).

There are two factors that ensure understanding during oral communications, according to Bygate; they are: the level of explicitness and procedures of negotiation. (Bygate 1987, 29)

The level of explicitness refers to the choice of expressions with regard to interlocutors' knowledge. As regards the procedures of negotiation, i.e. how specific speakers are in what they say, this aspect of negotiation of meaning involves the use of paraphrases, metaphors, on the use of vocabulary varying the degree of precisions with which we communicate. (Bygate 1987, 29-34)

To sum it up, there are two basic aspects that Bygate distinguishes when considering the skill of speaking. These include the knowledge of the language and the skill in using this knowledge. The knowledge of producing the language has to be used in different circumstances as they appear during a conversation by means of the skill. The ability to use the knowledge requires two kinds of skills, according to Bygate – production skills, and interaction skills.

Production skills involve two aspects – facilitation and compensation, brought about by processing conditions. Both devices help students, besides making the oral production easier or possible, sound more naturally. Interaction skills, on the other hand, involve routines and negotiation skills. Routines present the typical patterns of conversation including interaction and information routines. Negotiation skills serve as a means for enabling the speaker and listener to make themselves clearly understood. This is achieved by two aspects: management of interaction and turn-taking.

### **1.1.2. Harmer's theory**

Harmer (2001), when discussing the elements of speaking that are necessary for fluent oral production, distinguishes between two aspects – knowledge of 'language features', and the ability to process information on the spot, it means 'mental/social processing'.

The first aspect, language features, necessary for spoken production involves, according to Harmer, the following features: connected speech, expressive devices, lexis and grammar, and negotiation language. For a clearer view of what the individual features include, here is a brief overview:

- connected speech – conveying fluent connected speech including assimilation, elision, linking ‘r’, contractions and stress patterning – weakened sounds);
  - expressive devices – pitch, stress, speed, volume, physical – non-verbal means for conveying meanings (suprasegmental features);
  - lexis and grammar – supplying common lexical phrases for different functions (agreeing, disagreeing, expressing shock, surprise, approval, etc.);
  - negotiation language – in order to seek clarification and to show the structure of what we are saying.
- (Harmer 2001, 269-270)

In order to wage a successful language interaction, it is necessary to realize the use of the language features through mental/social processing – with the help of ‘the rapid processing skills’, as Harmer calls them (p.271).

‘Mental/social processing’ includes three features – language processing, interacting with others, and on-the-spot information processing. Again, to give a clearer view of what these features include, here is a brief summary:

- language processing – processing the language in the head and putting it into coherent order, which requires the need for comprehensibility and convey of meaning (retrieval of words and phrases from memory, assembling them into syntactically and proportionally appropriate sequences);
  - interacting with others – including listening, understanding of how the other participants are feeling, a knowledge of how linguistically to take turns or allow others to do so;
  - on-the-spot information processing – i.e. processing the information the listener is told the moment he/she gets it.
- (Harmer 2001, 271)

From Harmer’s point of view the ability to wage oral communication, it is necessary that the participant possesses knowledge of language features, and the ability to process information and language on the spot. Language features involve four areas – connected speech, expressive devices, lexis and grammar, and negotiation language. Supposing the speaker possesses these language features, processing skills, ‘mental/social processing’, will help him or her to achieve successful communication goal. Processing skills include these

features – language processing, interacting with others, and on-the-spot information processing.

## Conclusion

Both Bygate and Harmer agree that for a speaker, in order to be able to wage a successful fluent oral production, it is necessary to possess knowledge of the language and skill in using this knowledge.

Harmer and Bygate approach the speaking from the viewpoint of a skill that involves several elements to be considered during language teaching. Harmer makes a distinction between knowledge of language features (skills) and the ability to possess information and language on the spot via mental/social processing. According to Bygate, the skill of speaking involves production skills and interaction skills.

While Harmer includes under the term language features connected speech, expressive devices, knowledge of lexis and grammar, and negotiation language; Bygate, on the other hand, distinguishes between two devices that are involved in production skills – facilitation and compensation.

The second group of skills that Harmer distinguishes includes rapid processing skills that help speakers process the information and language on the spot. These involve language processing, interacting with others and on-the-spot information processing. Bygate, on the other hand, recognizes the term interaction skills and involves here routines, the typical patterns for organizing utterances, and negotiation skills that realize these routines through management of interaction and negotiation of meaning so that understanding and thus communicative goal is achieved. The first chapter was devoted to an analysis of the elements that speaking involves. Next chapter aims at viewing the skill of speaking in relation to communicative competence.

## **1.2. Speaking in Relation to Communicative Competence**

Beginning with Noam Chomsky (1967) and his distinction between competence - ‘a speaker’s intuitive knowledge of the rules of his native language’, and performance - ‘what he actually produces by applying these rules’, the theory of communicative competence has gone through a serious development so far (Revell, 1991:4).

Brown (1994) refers to several theories of communicative competence as they developed through periods of time, of which the most notable ones include the studies by Hymes (1967, 1972), Savignon (1983), Cummins (1979, 1980), or Canale and Swain (1980). Nevertheless, as Brown suggests, the newest views are probably best captured by Lyle F. Bachman (1990) in his schematization of what Bachman calls 'language competence'. (Brown 1994, 227-229)

For the purpose of the thesis, I drew upon Lyle F. Bachman's *Fundamental Considerations in Language Testing* (1994). As a useful source of information for helping with the interpretation of Bachman's framework of communicative competence, I made use of Douglas H. Brown's *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching* (1994).

According to Bachman (1994, 84), communicative competence, 'communicative language ability' (CLA), comprises two basic features – firstly, knowledge, competence in the language, and, secondly, the capacity for implementing or using the competence. Bachman proposes three components that in his view 'communicative language ability' framework includes, they are: language competence, strategic competence, and psychological mechanisms.

While language competence is a set of specific knowledge components that are utilized in communication via language, strategic competence is the term that Bachman uses to characterize the mental capacity for implementing the components of language competence in contextualized communicative language use; the third component, psychophysiological mechanisms present the neurological and psychological processes involved in the actual execution of language as a physical phenomenon. (Bachman 1994, 84)

Bachman divides language competence into two categories: organizational and pragmatic competence.

Organizational competence, further splitting into grammatical and textual competence, presents those abilities involved in controlling the formal structure of language for producing or recognizing grammatically correct sentences, comprehending their propositional content, and ordering them to form texts. (Bachman 1994, 87)

Grammatical competence includes the knowledge of vocabulary, morphology, syntax, and phonology and graphology all of which govern, according to Bachman, the choice of words to express specific significations, their forms, arrangements in utterance, to express propositions, and their physical realization. Textual competence, on the other hand, includes the knowledge of the conventions for joining utterances together to form a text structured according to rules of cohesion and rhetorical organization, Bachman says. (Bachman 1994, 87-88)



According to Brown (1994, 229), what Bachman proposes here is a group of rules and systems that ‘dictate’ what a communication can do with the forms of language, whether they are sentence-level rules (grammar) or rules which control how, for example, spoken ‘string’ of sentences together (discourse).

Both competences then, in relation to oral production, provide devices for creating cohesive relationships in oral discourse and organizing such discourse in ways that are ‘maximally efficient in achieving the communicative goals of the interlocutors’, Bachman concludes (p.89).

The second category of language competence that Bachman distinguishes, pragmatic competence, also splits into two further competences – illocutionary competence, and sociolinguistic competence. Both competences concern ‘the relationship between utterances and the acts of functions that speakers . . . intend to perform through these utterances’ (p.89).

While illocutionary competence deals with the knowledge of pragmatic conventions for performing acceptable language functions (ideational, heuristic, manipulative, imaginative), sociolinguistic competence refers to the knowledge of the sociolinguistic conventions for performing these language functions in a given context with regard to the sensitivity to dialect or variety, register, naturalness, and cultural references and figures of speech. (Bachman 1994, 92-98)

Brown interprets illocutionary competence as functional aspects ‘pertaining to sending and receiving intended meanings’ while sociolinguistic aspects of pragmatic competence relate to ‘such considerations as politeness, formality, metaphor, register, and culturally related aspects of language’ (p.229).

### **1.3. Communicative Language Teaching and Speaking Activities**

As Brown (1994) describes, it has been the philosophy of communicative language teaching (CLT) for many years to teach foreign languages through communicative approach which focuses ‘on speaking and listening skills, on writing for specific communicative purposes, and on authentic reading texts’ (p.226).

The most important features of CLT then Brown defines by means of four characteristics:

- 1) Classroom goals are focused on all of the components of communicative competence and not restricted to grammatical or linguistic competence;
- 2) Language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes. Organizational language forms

are not the central focus but rather aspects of language that enable the learners to accomplish those purposes.

- 3) Fluency and accuracy are seen as complementary principles underlying communicative techniques. At times fluency may have to take on more importance than accuracy in order to keep learners meaningfully engaged in language use.
- 4) In the communicative classroom, students ultimately have to use the language, productively and receptively, in unrehearsed context.  
(Brown 1994, 245)

In addition, Harmer (2001, 84-85) when suggesting features of CLT implies that ‘the language learning will take care of itself’ and agrees with Brown that the accuracy of the language is less important than successful achievement of the communicative task.

In relation to communicative language teaching, Revell (1991) reminds that ‘theories of communicative competence imply that teachers must do more than just supply learners with a number of language structures to manipulate’ and suggests that it is necessary to make a link between ‘linguistic competence’ and ‘communicative competence’ (p.5).

At this point, William Littlewood (1991, 8) proposes a solution for bridging the gap that Revell demands by categorizing activities into two groups: pre-communicative activities, and communicative activities.

The aim of the pre-communicative activities is, apart from producing certain language forms in an acceptable way, as Littlewood suggests, to ‘help the learners to develop links with meanings that will later enable them to use this language for communicative purposes’ (p.8). Pre-communicative activities are therefore divided into two subcategories: ‘structural activities’, such as mechanical drills or verb paradigms, for producing accurate and appropriate language forms, on one hand; and, ‘quasi-communicative activities’, such as question-and-answer activities, giving directions to a stranger basing learner’s replies on, for example, a town plan, or questionnaires, which bear a potential functional meanings of the language. (Littlewood 1991, 9-14)

The second category forms a group of ‘communicative activities’, which Littlewood divides into two further categories: ‘functional activities’, and ‘social interaction activities’. The aim of the functional communication activities is to practise students’ ability to get meaning across as effectively as possible. Littlewood includes here activities based on sharing information with restricted and unrestricted cooperation (identifying pictures, discovering sequences, locations, missing information, ‘secrets’, differences, etc.), sharing and processing information (reconstructing story sequences, pooling information to solve a problem, etc.), or processing information (for example, groups must decide what they will take for a trip). On

the other hand, social interaction activities, in addition to overcoming an information gap or solving a problem, extend the social meanings of the language through, for example, simulation and role-play activities, discussions or conversations thus developing also social acceptability in the language use. (Littlewood 1991, 16-36)

When classifying activities focusing on the development of speaking skills, Byrne (1991) besides taking into consideration organizational forms to be involved in the activities and their focus either on accuracy or fluency of the language, also considers their teacher or learner centredness.

Teacher controlled whole-class activities that focus on the accuracy of language involve making drills and controlled conversations, while fluency activities give space for conversations, discussions or story-telling. On the other hand, learner directed pairwork, or groupwork activities that focus on accuracy involve role-plays, controlled conversations or working with questionnaires, while fluency activities make use of project work, various games, and also discussions carried out within groups or pairs. (Byrne 1991, 10-12)

For the purpose of the practical part – research, in which the activities focused on the development of speaking skills will be identified, I am going to make use of Littlewood's typology of activities, basically identifying between pre-communicative and communicative activities.

As regards speaking, providing students with as many opportunities to practice the language orally as possible is, from my point of view, an essential aspect of teaching of this productive skill. I also think that it is important to avoid purely grammatical lessons and follow the principles that communicative language teaching offers, with the primary focus on activities that aim at overcoming an information gap and developing the social meanings of the language. All of these will lead to a better communication of students' 'thoughts and feelings more clearly and fully as well as being confident in their own ability to verbally tackle new situations and challenges', as Fontana (2003) suggests (p.90-91, my translation).

Both kinds of activities that aim at either communicative or partially communicative purpose will inevitably be connected with the use of different organizational forms. There are primarily three organizational forms that methodologists describe – groupwork, pairwork, and whole-class teaching. In the following part of the thesis, therefore, I am going to talk about the specifics, advantages and disadvantages, of the three organizational forms.

## 2. ORGANIZATIONAL FORMS

It has been said that the development of speaking requires the use of activities that have been classified, for example, according to Littlewood's typology of activities – pre-communicative and communicative activities.

All the activities are organized in certain organizational forms. The aim of the second part of the theoretical section is to introduce three most commonly used organizational forms – whole-class teaching, groupwork, and pairwork; and discuss their specifics, advantages or possible drawbacks that these organizational forms may expose.

It is important to point out that in a number of cases, methodologists, for example Nunan and Claire (1996), Byrne (1991), do not distinguish between group and pair work and include both organizational forms under the term small group work or simply discuss their specifics together.

In addition to groupwork, pairwork and whole-class teaching, there is also individual work that literature offers in relation to organizational forms. However, only the first three organizational forms meet the requirements needed for the effective use of communicative activities and thus development of speaking. Nevertheless, specifics of this organizational form will also be briefly discussed.

Richards and Lockhart (1999, 147) define individual work as a pattern in which 'each student in the class works individually on a task without interacting with peers or without public interaction with the teacher'. Harmer (1992, 248) labels individual work as 'individual study' and, claims that though it is not the arrangement suitable for developing interaction among learners, it provides learning 'space' and relaxation from outside pressure and enables learners to rely on themselves.

To conclude, Harmer calls for a balanced use of different groupings 'in order to create positive learning for our students, not provoke negative reactions' (p.249). This is certainly very important, nevertheless, talking about developing speaking skills and the use of organizational forms, whole-class teaching, groupwork, and pairwork will play the leading role in this process.

## 2.1. Whole-class teaching (Lockstep method)

According to Richards and Lockhart (1999), whole-class teaching most usually includes ‘frontal teaching method’. Richards and Lockhart define whole-class teaching as follows:

The teacher leads the whole class through a learning task. For example, the teacher conducts a class discussion of an article from a newspaper, asking questions about it and eliciting comments around the class.  
(Richards and Lockhart 1999, 146-147)

According to research, Richards and Lockhart say, whole-class teaching is the most commonly used model in public school teaching, primarily for the beginning of lesson.  
(Richards, Lockhart 1999, 147)

Harmer (1992), in addition to Richards and Lockhart, provides another name for the whole-class work, it is ‘lockstep’ method:

Lockstep is the class grouping where all the students are working with the teacher, where all the students are ‘locked into’ the same rhythm and pace, the same activity . . . where a teacher-controlled session is taking place.  
(Harmer 1992, 243)

Harmer says that whole-class teaching is usual for ‘accurate reproduction stage’ (e.g. drills, controlled conversation) with the teacher most often acting as controller or assessor, and is rather pessimistic about the use of the lockstep method for fluency communicative activities. Harmer notes down:

lockstep, where the teacher acts as a controller, cannot be the ideal grouping for communicative work . . . Lockstep, in other words, involves too much teaching and too little learning!  
(Harmer 1992, 244)

Richards and Lockhart agree with Harmer’s suggestions and add that it is possible that teachers include whole-class activities ‘to encourage more student participation (for example, by stopping from time to time during an activity and asking students to compare a response with a partner)’. However, it is necessary that other kinds of organizational forms are explored in order to provide learners with various opportunities for communicative interaction and individual language use within the classroom. (Richards and Lockhart 1999, 148-149)

Among the major advantages of whole-class teaching, Harmer includes the concentration of all learners who can hear what is being said by the teacher. A teacher conducting whole-

class teaching is a good language model, Harmer continues, and, finally, it can be comforting for some learners, where choral repetition takes place, for example. (Harmer 1992, 243)

Richards and Lockhart add that whole-class teaching enables teaching large numbers of learners at the same time and can serve as a preparation for subsequent activities which can be completed individually or in groups. (1999, 148)

The essential disadvantage of whole-class teaching is, Harmer, and Richards and Lockhart agree, the little chance for learner's oral practice. Tricia Hedge (2000, 13-14) considering the role of interaction in the classroom interprets the findings by Pica and Doughty (1985) concerning the amount of input and output between whole-class work and groupwork and pairwork. For whole-class work, there were found out to be fewer opportunities for output and input that learners produce or are exposed to.

Further disadvantage concerns the speed, at which activities are conducted. Richards and Lockhart (1999, 148) say that whole-class teaching assumes that all students can proceed at the same pace, but, slower students are likely to be lost, and brighter students may be held back.

In addition, Harmer says: 'Lockstep always goes at the wrong speed!' (p.243). On one hand, fast learners may get bored when the teacher's speed is insufficient; on the other hand, slower learners may be discouraged by too fast activities, Harmer claims. (1992, 243) In addition, Harmer confirms how stressful whole-class teaching can be for some learners:

Shy and nervous students also find lockstep work extremely bad for the nerves since they are likely to be exposed in front of the whole class.  
(Harmer 1992, 243)

Finally, it is necessary to mention that teachers working with the whole class are likely to interact with only a small number of learners Richards and Lockhart claim. Teachers usually tend to interact with learners within their action zone, i.e. 'those students with whom the teacher regularly enters into eye contact; those students to whom the teacher addresses questions; and those students who are nominated to take an active part in the lesson' (p.139).

To conclude, the use of whole-class teaching that frequently involves frontal teaching method, also labelled as lockstep, may bring about several advantages and disadvantages. It is important that the teacher may provide the language model for the whole class. Furthermore, whole-class teaching enables less exposure of students, for example, during choral repetition. On the other hand, talking in front of the classroom may be very stressful for some students;

and, finally, most teaching specialists agree that there is little opportunity for practice of language by students connected with student talking time that is rather oppressed.

## 2.2. Groupwork

To begin with, Adrian Doff (1991) describes group work as follows:

In group work, the teacher divides the class into small groups to work together (usually four or five students in each group). As in pair work, all the groups work at the same time.  
(Doff 1991, 138)

According to the movement of learners during a group activity, Harmer (1992) and Ur (1991) distinguish between flexible and fixed groups. While working in flexible groups, Harmer suggests that students start in set groups, and as an activity progresses the groups split up and reform; or they join together until the class is fully reformed. (Harmer 1992, 246)

In addition, it is wise, according to Ur, to settle fixed groups or at least semi-permanent groups to avoid problems every time the groups are about to form. For that reason, Ur suggests:

The physical reorganization can be done very simply by getting some students to turn face those behind them if they are normally in rows. This may need a little modification . . . but once the students are settled into fixed groups, they will assume them quickly and with little fuss each time.  
(Ur 1991, 7)

Richards, Lockhart (1999), and Nunan, Lamb (1996) agree that groupwork together with pairwork change the interactional dynamics of the classroom. Nevertheless, Harmer (1992) proposes that groupwork is even more dynamic than pairwork:

There are more people to react with and against in a group and, there is a greater possibility of discussion. There is a greater chance that at least one member of the group will be able to solve a problem when it arises, and working in groups is potentially more relaxing than working in pairs, for the latter puts a greater demand on the student's ability to co-operate closely.  
(Harmer 1992, 245-246)

Doff (1991, 141) confirms that learners feel secure within the group where they create a part of a whole. There is a real chance that learners who would never say anything in a whole-class activity participate at least partially during the groupwork.

Ur (1991) agrees that groupwork provides some learners with confidence and courage: 'students who are shy of saying something in front of the whole class, or to the teacher, often find it much easier to express themselves in front of a small group of their peers' (p.7).

Another point taken by methodologists concerns the amount of learners' participation and mutual co-operation among learners during activities carried out in groups.

Richards and Lockhart (1999, 153) say that groupwork is likely to increase the amount of student participation in the class and promote collaboration among learners; furthermore, learners are given a more active role in learning, teacher's dominance over the class decreases, while the opportunities for individual student practice of new features of the target language increase.

Doff agrees and claims that groupwork is likely to create such conditions, in which learners help each other and are encouraged to share their ideas and knowledge. (1991, 141)

Harmer (1992), and Richards and Lockhart (1999) also discuss allocating learners to groups according to their level of knowledge – mixed ability groups and shared ability groups. Harmer assumes that learners working in mixed ability groups will both benefit from the arrangement. He admits that weaker learners may be overpowered by stronger learners; but, at the same time, Harmer claims that stronger learners will not be unnecessarily hindered 'from getting the maximum benefit from the activity' (p.246).

Brown and Yule (1991) justify the opinion of grouping learners into mixed level groups. The main reason is sharing the possessed knowledge by an 'advanced' learner with the 'beginner'.

The opportunities for practice, if teacher is the only 'senior' conversationalist available, are obviously limited. It seems likely that any serious attempt at practising spoken English would involve mixing learners at different levels for conversation practice, so that advanced level students would take the senior role in a conversation and support the relative beginner.

(Brown and Yule 1991, 32)

On the other hand, same ability groups provide some space for sharing the knowledge and interests on the learners same level claims Harmer. (1992, 246)



Next area of focus that methodologists consider is a suitable number of learners within a group. Methodologists have not set a definite number, ‘magic number’, but range the number of learners per group between four and seven. (Harmer 2001, 75)

Byrne (1991, 75) suggests that the number of learners range from four to eight learners per group. The actual number should consequently depend on the particular activities. Richards and Lockhart agree that the ‘optimum size’ depends on the kind of activity learners are working on, and add: ‘If the group is too large, student interaction is affected; only a few students may participate, the others remaining silent or passive’ (p.153).

Harmer confirms Richards and Lockhart’s words and claims that the borderline might be established on number seven, because ‘groups of more than seven can be unmanagable’. (Harmer 1992, 246)

To sum it up, when considering the specifics of groupwork, methodologists discuss the settlement of students within the groups as flexible or fixed. Ur, for example, recommends that teachers set up fixed or at least semi-permanent groups that are likely to prevent some problems connected with their creating and consequent misbehaviour. Groupwork tends to support cooperative learning, and may give confidence and courage to shy students when handling the target language. Still, methodologists do not provide a concrete number of learners that a group should include.

### **2.3. Pairwork**

To begin with, Byrne (1991) divides pairwork into three kinds: ‘open pairs’, ‘fixed pairs’, and ‘flexible pairs’. During ‘open’ pairwork, learners talk to one another across the class under the teacher’s control. While working in ‘fixed pairs’, learners work with the same partner in order to complete a task (for example, dialogue). Finally, working in ‘flexible’ pairs presupposes that learners keep changing their partners (for example, interviewing other classmates).

On the other hand, Doff (1991), to compare with, distinguishes between ‘simultaneous pairwork’ and ‘public’ or ‘open’ pairwork and defines both kinds of pairwork as follows:

In pairwork, the teacher divides the whole class into pairs. Every student works with his or her partner, and all the pairs work at the same time (it is sometimes called ‘simultaneous pairwork’) . . . this is not the same as ‘public’ or ‘open’ pairwork, with pairs of students speaking in turn in front of the class.  
(Doff 1991, 137)

Similarly as with group work, Harmer (1992, 224) claims that pairwork increases the amount of learners' practice, encourages co-operation, which is important for the atmosphere of the class and for the motivation it gives to learning with others, and enables learners to help each other to use and learn the language. In addition, the teacher is able to act as an assessor, prompter or resource, Harmer believes.

Byrne (1991) adds that pairwork facilitates learners' independence; and, moreover, sees pairwork as an interaction similar to real-life language use:

they [learners] can face and talk directly to one another, so it is much closer to the way we [people] use language outside the classroom.  
(Byrne 1991, 31)

The problem concerning noise and indiscipline during pairwork depends, according to Harmer, on the task set by the teacher and teacher's attitude during the activity. (1992,244) However, Ur (1991) strongly disagrees with the claim that the choice of activity influences the discipline and noise in the classroom and shifts the problem onto the teacher's personality:

As regards discipline: this basically depends on the personality of the teacher, her class, and the relationship between them, not on the type of activity.  
(Ur 1991, 8)

In addition to noise, Doff (1991) provides some interesting comments. Doff claims that noise is a side effect of the groupwork (and pairwork) and 'cannot be helped'. He points out that 'usually the students themselves are not disturbed by the noise', and adds that "the noise created by pairwork and groupwork is usually 'good' noise – students using English, or engaged in a learning task" (p.141-2).

Another frequently discussed problem concerns the use of learners' mother tongue. While conducting communicative activities, Byrne (1991) believes that learners' use of mother tongue is a natural factor of group and pair work activities: 'Of course the students will sometimes start to use their mother tongue to express an idea - especially if they get excited' (p.34).

Harmer (1992) adds that it is pointless if learners do not use the target language for the communicative activity, however, for example, comparing answers to reading comprehension questions or vocabulary-matching exercise should not make teachers unnecessarily restless. Harmer claims that learners in such a case concentrate on the language in question and adds

that 'if a bit of their own language helps them [learners] to do this in a relaxed way that is all to the good' (p.247). Harmer emphasises that it is important that learners know that teachers' attitude depends on the activity, otherwise they will not be able to recognize the reasons and the moments when teachers are insisting solely on the target language.

The problematic concerning the use of mother tongue, it means how to avoid its use and how to support the use of the target language will further be considered in the following part, specifically, as one of the focus areas of 'during-activity stage'.

Similarly to groupwork, methodologists distinguish between several kinds of pairwork, Byrne, for example, describes open, fixed, and flexible pairs, while Doff divides pairwork into simultaneous and public or open pairwork. Pairwork is believed to encourage students' cooperation and presupposes that teachers will have to take on several roles while using this organizational form. In addition, noise and the use of mother tongue have been discussed in relation to pairwork often presenting inevitable drawbacks that teachers have to tackle.

### Conclusion

It has been the aim of the second part of the theoretical section to introduce the specifics of the three most frequently discussed organizational forms – whole-class teaching, groupwork, and pairwork. All of the organizational forms have their advantages and disadvantages, and their specifics may positively or negatively influence the achievement of communicative goal set for an activity. Nevertheless, bearing on mind the theoretical inputs concerning the different organizational forms, all of them are an unseparable aspect for conducting activities focusing on the development of speaking.

It is the aim of the last part of the theoretical section to discuss the aspects concerning the organization of activities focused on the development of speaking skills.

### 3. ORGANIZING ACTIVITIES

Several methodologists and teaching specialists suggest and describe the organization of activities focused on the development of speaking skills with different names and numbers of stages.

The aim of the third part of the theoretical section is to provide a unifying framework, and thus suggest the principal aspects – key principles – that should be taken into consideration when organizing activities focused on the development of speaking skills.

Penny Ur (1991, 18-24) discusses four different stages for organizing speaking activities in groups, pairs or whole-class – presentation, process, ending, and feedback. Harmer (2001, 122-124), when considering organizing groupwork and pairwork in relation to various communicative and pre-communicative speaking activities, proposes three stages – before, during, and after.

For the purpose of this thesis, I am going to suggest a framework consisting of three stages: pre-activity stage, during-activity stage, and conclusion stage. Primarily, the framework will be based on Harmer's (2001) theoretical inputs related to organizing pairwork and groupwork, which originally, as suggested above, also includes three parts: before, during, and after.

Each stage includes certain areas of focus, for which didactic principles have been collected as a synthesis of several sources.

The theoretical sources used for the thesis mention a large number of areas that could be studied and explored, however, it is impossible to include all of them in this work. For that reason, a more selective approach has been accepted, covering only a limited number of focus areas, which I consider as the most important and from my own experience as worth analysing in more details. Therefore, the first stage, pre-activity stage, includes two focus areas - 'engage-instruct-initiate sequence', of which the name has been borrowed from Harmer (2001, 58-59), and 'grouping students', it means dealing with the ways that can be initiated in order to divide learners into groups or pairs in case of including groupwork and pairwork activities.

During-activity stage focuses on 'the roles of the teacher' that he or she can take on during activities, and, what can be suggested concerning the roles of the teacher. Another focus area concentrates on 'providing feedback during activities'; and, finally, 'the mother tongue use',

which discusses attitudes towards mother tongue use in the classroom, and actions that can be taken to promote the use of English will be included in this stage.

Conclusion stage includes the areas which focus on the process of ‘stopping the activity’, it means the appropriate time and method selection; and, ‘providing feedback’ after the activity.

### **3.1. Pre-activity stage**

The first stage, pre-activity stage, includes two focus areas: engage-instruct-initiate sequence, and grouping students. First area concerns engagement of students, it means the techniques for drawing attention or involving students, providing students with instructions and initiating students to start the activity. The second area deals with setting students into groups, providing this is required by the nature of the activity.

#### **3.1.1. Engage-instruct-initiate sequence**

For the majority of theoreticians, for example Gower *at al.* (1995), Scrivener (1994), or Parrot (1993), the primary aspect when dealing with the theory of instructions is their clarity, economical structure, logical order, and comprehension check. In relation to problem behaviour, Penny Ur (1996), I think clearly explains how instructions should be conducted:

Problems sometimes arise to student uncertainty about what they are supposed to be doing. Instructions, though they take up a very small proportion of lesson time, are crucial. The necessary information needs to be communicated clearly and quickly, cortiously but assertively: this is precisely what the task involves, these are possible options, those are not.  
(Ur 1996, 264)

To begin with, there is an ‘engage-instruct-initiate sequence’ that Harmer (2001, 59) proposes for the beginning phase of an activity. Firstly, engagement, according to Harmer, means “making it clear that something ‘new’ is going to happen ”.

As regards giving instructions, this involves a number of aspects that need to be considered for achieving the maximal effectivity of activities, consequently the development of speaking skills.

Firstly, the use of language (mother tongue or target language) that is used for providing instructions will be considered. It is basically agreed, for example Ur (1991) and Byrne (1991), that explaining instructions in mother tongue is acceptable especially with classes

whose knowledge of the target language is not on a sufficient level yet. The aim is primarily to find ‘a more accessible and cost effective alternative to sometimes lengthy and difficult target-language explanations’ (Ur 1996, 17). Parrot (1993, 109) thinks that instructions should be given in both languages, but at the same time is afraid that students may ‘switch off’ knowing that they will be repeated in their own language.

Secondly, there is a length of instructions. Optimal choice, according to Scrivener (1994) is based on sequencing instructions in a sensible order, using short sentences and avoiding or separating instructions clearly from ‘the other chit-chat, telling off, joking, etc.’ (p.98). All of these is necessary because as Ur (1991, 18) warns the concentration span of students is limited; and, therefore, the instructions should be clear and concise.

Furthermore, support for instructions, such as, visual clues, physical movement, aural input or gestures that the teacher makes need to be considered. Gower *at al.* (1995, 41) propose that instructions should be supported with visual clues ‘whenever possible’, among which real objects, pictures, gestures and mime or instructions written on the cards or pieces of paper are included. In addition, Atkinson (1993) notes that for giving concise instructions in English, techniques, such as gestures and mime play an important role in their comprehension. According to Ur (1996, 12), restatement of the main points or repeating is important for accurate perception of instructions.

The use of comprehension check on provided instructions is the last area that is frequently commented upon. Scrivener’s (1994) words are I think more than clear about expressing the importance of comprehension check. Scrivener points out that ‘even the clearest instructions’ can be difficult to comprehend (p.17). Ur and Scrivener agree that checking comprehension by asking general questions such as ‘do you understand?’ is not satisfactory, because positive answers may carry different implications (shyness, nervousness, etc.) (Ur 1996, 17). It is therefore more appropriate to have students repeat, paraphrase or summarize instructions after the teacher. The best way, however, both Ur and Scrivener agree is demonstrating instructions. Gower *at al.* (1995, 41), in addition, proposes different forms of demonstrating the instructions, for example, by the teacher herself, teacher and a chosen student, usually a stronger one, or by students themselves.

As a part of initiation, it is most appropriate to tell students how much time they have got and exactly when the students should start the activity. (Harmer, 2001:59)

To sum it up, for the ‘engage-instruct-initiate sequence’, it is necessary to activate students by phrases offering a rationale for the activity together with paying a careful attention to providing instructions with a final time allocation. Instructions will be the aim of the practical

section. For the purpose of the research, there will be four areas investigated. The aim will be focused on the use of language (target language, mother tongue, or combination of both languages); the length of instructions (short, long); support for instructions, which based on the theoretical notes will include five categories: paralinguistic support (hand-gesture, eye-contact, body-movement, facial expressions); visual support (textbooks, objects for the use in the activity, and space for other forms of visual support); though written clues can be considered as visual support, I include them into a special form of support for instructions involving written clues prepared beforehand (on the cards, pieces of paper, etc.), written on the blackboard and other forms; and finally, repetition, paraphrasing or restatement of the main points as the last category of support for instructions. The last investigated area will include the use of comprehension check: using general questions (for example, Do you understand?; Ok?; All right?; or in Czech, Ano?; Rozumíte?, etc.); when students are asked to repeat, paraphrase or summarize instructions; lastly, demonstrating instructions as a form of comprehension check will be involved (teacher herself, teacher + student(s), and student(s) themselves).

### **3.1.2. Grouping students**

The second area of focus, I have included in the pre-activity stage concerns grouping students.

There are different ways of grouping learners, it means dividing them into pairs or groups. To begin with, Harmer (2001 120-122) suggests four basic ways - friendship, streaming, chance, and changing groups. The first method provides enough space for students to choose their friends and thus create groups. On the other hand, streaming method assumes that students will be divided into groups according to their abilities, thus creating the same ability groups or mixed ability groups. Counting out avoids the ability differentiation within groups, this method Harmer calls 'chance'. Finally, changing groups presupposes that students keep changing while the activity continues.

Friederike Klippel (1991, 9-10) when considering grouping students for communicative activities, particularly discussions, describes some main types such as buzz groups, hearing, fishbowl, network, onion, star, market, opinion vote, or forced contribution.

What both Klippel and Harmer suggest is a couple of theoretical methods for dividing students into groups or pairs, which will inevitably in many cases require students' change of positions.

Byrne (1991, 32-33), on the other hand, prefers as little students' movement as possible, suggesting that it is reasonable, taking into consideration a time factor influenced by moving students and frequency of the use of pairwork and groupwork, to make use of the existing classroom arrangement. Byrne advises to get students to work with a neighbour or neighbours and move students only if it is absolutely necessary. It is important for students to be able to form pairs and groups quickly and without any fuss, Byrne concludes.

Drawing upon my personal experience, I agree with Donn Byrne that it is important to give learners a very limited number of opportunities for moving around the classroom with relation to the process of dividing students to groups or pairs. Once allowing students to move around the classroom in order to form groups or pairs, it may be rather difficult to draw students' concentration back on the activity together with the time that is likely to be lost. Therefore, the use of the existing arrangement seems to me to be the best solution.

### **3.2. During-activity stage**

The second stage, during-activity stage, will include three focus areas – the role of the teacher, providing feedback during the activity and the use of mother tongue. In this stage, I think it is important to focus the attention on teacher's attitude, consequently the role he or she takes during the activity. Secondly, I think it necessary to consider the feedback though some theories suggest postponing the actual feedback after the activity. Finally, I have included the use of mother tongue, which is still a 'hot' topic especially when considering the use of communicative activities. Though this issue has already been discussed in relation to various organizational forms, in this part the aim will be to mention some of the didactic principles.

#### **3.2.1. The role of the teacher**

The roles of the teacher can be categorized from several points of view, for example, according to the type of the activity, stage of the activity, or the interaction pattern selected for the particular activity.

Nunan and Lamb (1996) point out that the roles that the teachers adopt are dynamic, not static, and are subject to change according to the psychological factors brought by the participants. (Nunan, Lamb, 1996:134) In addition, Byrne (1991) compares the teacher to an actor claiming that the teacher 'will have to play different roles at different times' (p.13).



Byrne (1991, 13) divides the roles of the teacher according to the type of interaction activity distinguishing between fluency and accuracy activities. During fluency activities the teacher most frequently adopts the roles of stimulator, manager and consultant, reminding that the main reason for taking part in such activities is to get students to interact, set up the activities and to be available for help and advice if students need and ask for it. On the other hand, the roles that the teacher carries out during accuracy activities will primarily include the roles of conductor, organizer and monitor. Teacher's main task will therefore be to make sure that the students know what to practice, and that they practise effectively, together with organizing the activities and checking while students are performing.

Based on the reflection of the students' behaviour in the classroom. Nunan and Lamb (1996) grade the roles of the teacher from the most problematic, in terms of participants' roles and behaviour. They include the roles of: controller, entertainer, disciplinarian, and a developer of a sense of independence and responsibility. The teacher continually establishing control, giving directions, threats and punishment, is labelled as 'controller'. Still noisy but positive atmosphere, where the teacher introduces games and recreational activities, or reading stories, shows the teacher as 'entertainer'. The 'disciplinarian' establishes rules to be followed and is quick to notice any misbehaviour; while the teacher who spends time by teaching, not requiring a close supervision and in case of noise providing only a simple reminder with effectivity, Nunan and Lamb label as 'developer of a sense of independence and responsibility'. (Nunan and Lamb 1996, 135-136)

In relation to fluency speaking activities, Harmer (2001, 275-276) mentions three basic roles that teachers take on including: prompter, participant, and feedback provider.

While taking the role of a prompter, the teacher offers discrete suggestions or lets students struggle out of a difficult situation (when students get lost, cannot think of what to say next, lose fluency), which can stop the sense of frustration when coming to a 'dead end' of language ideas. A teacher acting as a participant prompts covertly, introduces new information to help the activity along, ensures continuing students' engagement, and generally maintains a creative atmosphere. Harmer warns that when acting as a participant, the teacher should be careful not to participate too much, thus dominating the speaking and drawing all the attention to himself or herself. Finally, feedback provider, Harmer says, may inhibit students and take the communicativeness out of the activity by over-correction; therefore, the correction should be helpful and gentle getting students out of difficult misunderstanding and hesitations.

As regards the roles of the teacher, methodologists do not remain united in labelling the different roles that the teacher can take on when conducting activities focused on the development of speaking. There are several approaches to be taken when describing teacher's roles, e.g. according to its type, stage, interaction pattern or even behaviour during activities as Nunan and Lamb present.

### **3.2.2. Providing feedback**

According to Richards and Lockhart (1999, 188), feedback on students' spoken language can be either positive or negative and may serve not only to let students know how well they have performed but also increase motivation and build a supportive climate.

Harmer (2001, 104) says that the decision about how to react to students' performance will depend upon the stage of the lesson, the activity, the type of mistake made, and the particular student who is making that mistake.

Different methodologists look at providing feedback from several aspects; most often, however, feedback is seen from the viewpoint of accuracy (form of the language used) and fluency (content of spoken production) activities.

To begin with, Richards and Lockhart (1999, 189) distinguish between the feedback on content, and feedback on form, suggesting strategies and decisions to be considered for both kinds. The strategies that Richards and Lockhart suggest for feedback on content include: acknowledging a correct answer, indicating an incorrect answer, praising, expanding or modifying a students' answer, repeating, summarizing, or criticizing.

On the other hand, feedback on form represents focusing on the accuracy of spoken production including decisions about 'whether learners' errors should be corrected, which kinds of learner errors should be corrected, and how learner errors should be corrected' (p.189). Richards and Lockhart provide different ways for accomplishing feedback on form:

- Asking the student to repeat what he or she said;
- Pointing out the error and asking the student to self-correct;
- Commanding on an error and explaining why it is wrong, without having the student repeat the correct form;
- Asking another student to correct the error;
  
- Using a gesture to indicate that an error has been made.

(Richards and Lockhart 1999, 190)

Similarly, Byrne (1991, 35) describes providing feedback from the viewpoint of accuracy and fluency activities. During accuracy activities, Byrne notes down, the teacher may provide feedback immediately on how well or badly students have done, or make a note of mistakes and shift the feedback onto a future lesson. In addition, teacher should not forget that the students may want to ask some questions or say what they think of the activity.

On the other hand, when conducting a fluency activity, Byrne suggests that the teacher makes notes of anything serious and reteach it in another lesson and lets the students to take responsibility for what they are doing by not interfering. (Byrne 1991, 79)

For the feedback provided during fluency work, according to Harmer (2001, 105), it is important that the teacher does not interrupt in 'mid-flow', since it interrupts the communication and drags an activity back to the study of language form or precise meaning.

The techniques for correcting students during fluency work that Harmer suggests include gentle correction, such as prompting students forward, reformulating what a student has said, and recording mistakes with further analysis.

During accuracy work, according to Harmer, it is necessary to point out and correct the mistakes the students are making, but at the same time the correction should not be too intensive, because it can be just as unpleasant as during fluency work. Harmer goes on by suggesting several ways of correcting students during accuracy work, among which he includes showing incorrectness by repeating, echoing, giving statement and question, making a facial expression, or hinting. (Harmer, 2001, 105-108)

Methodologists often distinguish between feedback on accuracy and fluency activities in relation to speaking, though sometimes differently labelled, for example, Richards and Lockhart make a distinction between the feedback provided on the content and form, while Harmer and Byrne describe feedback provided for accuracy and fluency activities. Nevertheless, most of the teaching specialists agree that providing feedback during spoken performance depends on several aspects, of which the most important are the type of activity and the kind of mistake that is made.

### **3.2.3. The use of mother tongue**

To begin with, Nunan and Lamb (1996, 98-100) note down that it is almost impossible to know how, when, and how frequently to use students' first language; however, agree that the

first language use to give brief explanations of grammar and lexis, as well as for explaining procedures and routines, can greatly facilitate the management of learning.

Harmer (2001, 132) agrees with Nunan and Lamb pointing at the fact that it is not wise to stamp out the mother tongue use completely. Harmer thinks that such an approach will not work; and, what is more, it may discourage those students who feel the need for it at some stages. However, while doing an oral fluency activity, the use of language other than English makes the activity pointless, therefore, it should be a teacher's duty to try and insist on the use of the target language. On the other hand, it is appropriate to be more relaxed about using the target language in other pedagogic situations, though the teacher should continue to encourage students to try to use it as often as possible. Teachers are a principal source of comprehensible input playing an important part in language acquisition, therefore, the teacher should speak in the target language as much as possible in the class, especially since if he or she does not, students will not see the need to use the target language either. At lower levels, the use of mother tongue may help both the teacher and students, such as in an explanation or discussion of methodology, or giving of announcements to communicate the meaning more easily. (Harmer 2001, 132)

In relation to mother tongue use, Byrne (1991, 78) says that it is natural for students to use their mother tongue if they want to communicate, especially if they get too excited.

In addition to Byrne, Penny Ur (1996, 121) also tries to give reasons why students are liable to using the mother tongue claiming that it is easier to use the mother tongue, because it feels unnatural to speak to one in a foreign language, and because the students feel less 'exposed' if they are speaking their mother tongue.

Ur concludes by admitting the fact that it can be uneasy to persuade some students 'particularly the less disciplined or motivated ones' to make use of the target language (p.121).

In order to avoid students using their mother tongue, Harmer (2001) suggests several actions to promote the use of the target language. Firstly, the teacher needs to 'set clear guidelines', making it straightforward when mother tongue is permissible and when it is not. Secondly, it is important to 'choose appropriate tasks', i.e. tasks which the students, at their level, are capable of doing in the target language. Harmer points out that it is not wrong to 'stretch' students 'with challenging activities which engage them, but it is clearly counter-productive to set them tasks they are unable to perform' (p.133). Furthermore, it is advisable to create an English atmosphere. Harmer suggests giving students names in the target language and making English the classroom language as well as the language to be learnt.

Using friendly encouragement persuasion might also play its role, such as going around to students and saying things like: ‘Please, speak English!, Stop using Turkish/Arabic, etc.’ (p.133).

In case these strategies do not work, Harmer suggests stopping the activity and telling students there is a problem, which might change the atmosphere so that students go back to the activity with a new determination. (Harmer 2001, 132-133)

Nevertheless, the best way to keep students speaking the target language is, Ur says, simply to be at students’ hand as much as possible, reminding and modelling the language use because ‘there is no substitute for nagging!’ (p.122).

To sum it up, students’ use of the first language often presents a difficult obstacle for many teachers, however, not in all cases this ‘problem’ has to be perceived as a drawback, as Harmer or Byrne suggest. The recent theories suggest that in certain phases, such as giving instructions or providing explanations, the mother tongue use may play an important role for a better communication between students and the teacher; on the other hand, where the language is the target point of learning, the mother tongue use should be avoided.

### **3.3. Conclusion stage**

The last stage concerning organizing activities focused on the development of speaking skills will include two focus areas that several methodologists, e.g. Ur (1991), Harmer (2001), Gower *at al.* (1995), comment on when describing the ending phase of an activity: stopping the activity, and providing feedback after the activity.

#### **3.3.1. Stopping the activity**

Before the actual process of bringing the activity to the end, however, some pairs or groups may finish earlier than others. In such a case, it is important to be prepared and ‘have some way of dealing with the situation’, primarily, in order to show students ‘that they are not just being left to do nothing’ (Harmer 2001, 124-125). Ur (1996) agrees and emphasises that in any case ‘these reserve occupations should be ready to hand; and their preparation is an essential part of the lesson plan as a whole’ (p.22). Such extra work may include, for example, a further elaboration of the task, getting students to read their books, or asking students to get on with their homework. (Ur, 1996:22) Harmer also suggests that tired students may be told to relax for a bit while the others finish. (Harmer 2001,124)

As far as accuracy work is concerned, Byrne (1991, 34) suggests that the activity should not go on for too long giving an estimate for the appropriate length of the activity from three to five minutes.

Nevertheless, stopping the fluency work, on the other hand, is dependent on the time that the teacher allocates for the activity, Byrne says. Both for accuracy and fluency activities, it is not desirable to let the activities drag on nor give an opportunity for some students to get bored. (Byrne 1991, 79)

Ur (1991) notes down that it may be best to wait until all the groups have completed the task, however, sometimes this may take too long, and it is better to stop the last ones before they finish. Ur continues that sometimes, on the other hand, it is necessary to quit students' work while they are all occupied, e.g. for the reason that the teacher wants to organize a 'fruitful session' (p.22). Ur believes, though this might not be the best thing to do, that this intervention will leave students with a taste for more, and thus 'heightened enthusiasm, or at least willingness' (p.22).

Basically, in addition to time allocation, Ur agrees with Donn Byrne (1991) that time solves the problem of appropriate end of the activity, though this may also bring about some inappropriacy. However, students should be let to know in advance, in order to save protests and delays when the time comes. (Ur 1991, 22)

On the whole, Ur concludes that it is up to the teacher to be flexible and rely on common sense considering the end of an activity. From my limited practical experience, I prefer allocating the time limit for an activity before starting the activity, though not always remembering to do so, I admit. As Ur advises, in relation to extra activities, I agree that it is very important to have them ready at hand in order to make students busy not disturbing others, though, especially for beginning teachers this might be sometimes rather time consuming.

### **3.3.2. Feedback after the activity**

Generally, in order to bring about self-awareness and improvement in students, Gower *et al.* (1995, 63) suggest that it is important to provide 'positive feedback', i.e. positive points to comment on, such as successful communication, accurate use of grammar points, use of vocabulary, appropriate expressions, good pronunciation, or expressive intonation, good use of fluency strategies in conversation, etc.

As an unseparable part of the feedback, Harmer (2001, 109) proposes getting students to express what they found easiest or most difficult. Putting some of the recorded mistakes on the board, asking students to recognize the problems and putting them right should follow, Harmer notes down.

Similarly to feedback provided during activities, methodologists commonly draw a distinction between the feedback on accuracy and fluency activities, for example, Ur (1991), Harmer (2001).

To begin with, both Harmer (2001) and Gower *at al.* (1995) agree that it is not necessary to say which students made the mistake or error, but more importantly, focus on common ones, or ones in general interest, and provide students with individual notes and instructions on how to correct them, or where to find them (in dictionaries, grammar books, or on the Internet).

As regards the fluency activities, Gower *at al.* (p. 103) propose that the teacher should indicate how each person communicated, comment on how fluent each was, how well they argued as a group, and so on.

In addition, Harmer (2001, 124) suggests that it is also advisable to have a few pairs or groups quickly demonstrate the language they have been using with the teacher correcting it, if and when necessary. Such a demonstration gives both the students and the rest of the class goal information for future learning and action, Harmer says. In case of discussing an issue or predicting the content of a reading text, it is important to encourage students to talk about their conclusions with the teacher and the rest of the class since by comparing the different solutions, ideas, and problems, everyone gets a greater understanding of the topic.

What a feedback is and what form it should take, Ur (1991) describes as follows:

What the groups have done must then be displayed and related to in some way by teacher and class: assessed, criticized, admired, argued with, or even simply listened with interest!  
(Ur 199, 23)

In relation to feedback on fluency activities, Penny Ur (1996, 23) distinguishes between three focus areas of feedback to be provided: on the result, on process, and on the language use.

There are different approaches towards organizing the individual forms of feedback. Firstly, the feedback on the result can be organized by, for example, giving the correct results, getting groups to assess their own success, trying to collate proposals and versions of outcomes, or comparing or displaying conclusions. The feedback on process, on the other hand, it means on the organization and performance of, for example, debate, requires more

teacher-centred approach. Teacher should take an active part – react, assess, criticize, preferably immediately after the activity. At the same time, however, students’ reactions or comments should be taken into consideration. Finally, what is used rightly and what needs correction and practice should be monitored by the feedback on the language. The language used in the activity is a valuable source of information on what language is actively known and what is not. (Ur 1991, 22-24)

To sum it up, when providing a feedback after the activity, methodologists distinguish the feedback according to the type of the activity. It is necessary to provide a positive feedback that is likely to motivate students and bring about some kind of improvement, along with pointing out what went wrong during the activity. Furthermore, it is not important to concentrate on who made the mistakes but rather focus on the mistakes that have been frequent among the students.

## Conclusion

The third part of the theoretical section focuses on the process of organizing speaking activities and the aspects that need to be taken into consideration. To conclude, I suggest that the key principles that need to be taken into consideration in relation to organizing activities focused on the development of speaking skills with the use of different organizational forms, namely whole-class teaching, groupwork, and pairwork, involve the following:

1) Each speaking activity comprises three stages:

- a) Pre-activity stage
- b) During-activity stage
- c) Conclusion stage

2) Each of the stages involves several focus areas that should be taken into consideration when organizing speaking activities. I have suggested and discussed the following:

- a) Pre-activity stage – engage-instruct-initiate-sequence  
– grouping students



- b) During-activity stage – the role of the teacher
  - feedback during the activity
  - the use of the mother tongue
  
- c) Conclusion stage – stopping the activity
  - feedback after the activity

#### **4. CONCLUSION OF THE THEORETICAL SECTION**

The theoretical section of the thesis comprises three basic parts – theory of speaking, organizational forms, and organizing activities focused on the development of speaking skills. The first part, theory of speaking, involves three areas – elements of speaking, theory of communicative competence, and the theory of language teaching in relation to speaking activities. Firstly, the skill of speaking is dealt with basically from the viewpoint of Martin Bygate, and Jeremy Harmer. Secondly, the theory of communicative competence has been analyzed; the analysis has been based on Lyle F. Bachman’s framework of communicative language ability. Finally, the aspects of communicative language teaching (CLT) and the typology of activities based on Littlewood’s theoretical inputs have been dealt with.

The second part discusses the organizational forms used for conducting speaking activities - whole-class teaching (lockstep method), groupwork, and pairwork. The aim of this part was to introduce and describe the specifics of the individual organizational forms and consider their advantages and possible drawbacks.

Finally, the third part dealt with the theory of organizing activities focused on the development of speaking. The aim of this part was to gather theoretical notes in order to suggest general ‘principles’ for the organization of speaking activities. Therefore, based on the relevant literature, three elementary stages have been suggested – pre-activity stage, during-activity stage, and conclusion stage, that should be taken into consideration when organizing speaking activities. In addition, each stage of the activity involves a number of selected areas of focus. For the first stage, pre-activity stage, two focus areas have been chosen – engage-instruct-initiate sequence, and grouping students. For the during-activity stage, three focus areas have been selected – the role of the teacher, providing feedback during the activity, and the use of mother tongue. Finally, the third stage, conclusion stage, further concentrates on the process of stopping the activity and the feedback provided after the activity.

It is more than obvious that there are many other aspects or focus areas that should be taken into consideration when organizing activities that aim at developing speaking skills. Nevertheless, the discussed areas are the ones that I consider as the most important and that have been most frequently discussed in literature; and, therefore, a special attention has been paid to them.

### **III. PRACTICAL SECTION**

#### **5. INTRODUCTION TO THE PRACTICAL SECTION**

It is the purpose of the practical section to present and interpret the data collected via small-scale research, for which the observation method has been chosen. The research has been carried out in English lessons conducted at primary schools in Pardubice.

It has been suggested in the theoretical section of the thesis that for the effective development of speaking skills certain principles concerning the organization of speaking activities need to be taken into consideration. Two general principles have been suggested: firstly, the organization of activities involves three stages: pre-activity stage, during-activity stage, and conclusion stage; secondly, each of the stages further includes focus areas: pre-activity stage involves engage-instruct-initiate sequence and grouping students; during-activity stage involves the role of the teacher, the feedback during the activity, and the use of the mother tongue; conclusion stage involves stopping the activity and feedback provided after the activity.

It is impossible, due to the limited space provided for the thesis, to focus the attention of the research on all the focus areas as discussed in the theoretical section. For that reason a more selective approach had to be accepted.

Firstly, for the purpose of the research, I have chosen the pre-activity stage, concretely engage-instruct-initiate sequence, out of which providing instructions will be the aim of the research.

Secondly, in relation to providing instructions, it will be the aim of the research to collect the data concerning six basic areas: the type of the activity, the organizational forms used (whole-class teaching, groupwork, pairwork), the language use (the mother tongue, the target language, combination of mother tongue and target language), length of instructions, support for instructions, and comprehension check on instructions.

Though there arise two relevant perspectives, from which the findings could be compared and analyzed, firstly, the type of activity, and, secondly, the organizational forms used for the activity, I am going to focus the attention on the use of instructions in relation to two basic types of activities – communicative and pre-communicative.

The purpose of the research is to find out what can be said about the practice of giving instructions as observed in real primary school environment in comparison with the

theoretical background, it means which of them are used, which of them are used less, and which of them are not used at all.

The research tries to answer the following questions:

- Q 1:** Which language do teachers use for giving instructions – target language, mother tongue, or combination of target language and mother tongue, in relation to speaking activities?
- Q 2:** Which language do teachers use for giving instructions specifically in relation to communicative and pre-communicative activities?
- Q 3:** Do teachers use short instructions in relation to speaking activities?
- Q 4:** Do teachers use short instructions specifically in relation to communicative and pre-communicative activities?
- Q 5:** Do teachers make use of support for instructions in relation to speaking activities?
- Q 6:** What is the most frequent form of support for instructions specifically in relation to communicative and pre-communicative activities?
- Q 7:** Do teachers make comprehension check on provided instructions in relation to speaking activities?
- Q 8:** What is the most frequent form of comprehension check on provided instructions specifically in relation to communicative and pre-communicative activities?

To conclude, the small-scale research involves three parts: collection of the data, presentation of the obtained data, and, finally, the interpretation of the obtained data.

## **5.1. Organization of the research**

The method selected for carrying out the research was observation, which was conducted within a two month period, March and April 2006. The research was conducted in three different primary schools, all of which are situated in a town with a population of about one hundred thousand inhabitants. Two institutions were housing estate primary schools, one of which offers extended mathematical education. The third school is located on the suburbs with the majority of pupils coming from the adjacent villages. The school offers extended sports education.

The total number of observed lessons made 30. There have been six teachers observed aged between twenty-seven and forty, four women and two men.

There was no differentiation of students within the language groups. The number of students within the language groups ranged between nine and twenty-three per group. The classrooms observed involved pupils aged between 10 – 15, fifth to ninth grade.

## **5.2. Research method**

After consulting relevant literature, Gavora (2000, 2005), Hopkins (2002), and Freeman (1996), the structured observation has been decided as the most suitable research method for the intended small-scale research.

The research is divided into three basic parts involving the collection of the data, the presentation of the obtained data, and the interpretation of the data.

The initial aim was to make use of structured observation sheets in the lesson, but this proved as very difficult for thorough depicting all the needed information. For that reason, recording oral behaviour and consequent transmission was decided as a more effective method.

The data collection process therefore comprises two stages: firstly, recording oral behaviour of the teacher providing instructions for speaking activities into recording sheets (see appendix 1); and, secondly, an analysis of the recorded oral behaviour and transmitting the data and other relevant information, such as class, date, number of learners present, time, type of activity, and an organizational form used, into structured observation sheets (see appendix 2).

The structured observation sheet includes the following areas: the type of activity, the type of organizational form, the use of language, the length of instructions, support for instructions, and comprehension check on the provided instructions.

Firstly, the type of activity will be considered according to Littlewood's typology of activities, it means communicative and pre-communicative activities.

Secondly, three main types of organizational forms will be identified – whole-class teaching, groupwork, and pairwork.

The third area presents the use of language for providing instructions. Three different forms of language use will be considered: the use of mother tongue (Czech), the target language (English), and the combination of both language forms.

The length of instructions will be the fourth area of focus basically distinguishing between long and short instructions.

As regards the support for instructions the focus will be aimed at the following features: the use of paralinguistic features (eye-contact, hand-gestures, body-movement); the use of visuals (immediate objects for the use in the activity, such as textbooks, books, pictures, etc.); written clues (prepared beforehand – written on the cards, pieces of paper, textbooks; written on the blackboard, etc.); repetition or paraphrasing instructions and restatement of the main points by the teacher.

There arose a slight problem concerning the use of textbooks, these were included into visuals as an individual form of visual support. However, if used as a source for reading instructions, the use of textbook was included into written clues as material prepared beforehand.

Finally, the occurrence of comprehension check on provided instructions and its form will be identified. The following forms are considered: general question (Do you understand?; Ok?; etc.); repeating instructions by the student(s); and demonstrating instructions. As far as demonstrating instructions is concerned, the different methods will be considered: demonstrating by the teacher herself, demonstrating by the teacher and student(s), and demonstrating by the student(s) themselves.

After transmitting the analysed data into structured observation sheet, these were divided according to the type of activity.

In order to create individual charts and diagrams for further presentation and interpretation of the findings, it was necessary to express the occurrence of the individual features concerning providing instructions in numbers. For that purpose, charts for depicting the occurrence of the individual features were constructed (see appendix 3).

According to the results, three tables were designed for showing the overview (see appendix 4), in which the occurrence of the individual target features was recorded specifically for communicative activities, pre-communicative activities, and consequently speaking activities altogether.

The purpose of the data presentation part is to show, with the use of bar and pie charts, the individual proportions of the target features as observed in the process of providing instructions.

It will be the aim to show the proportion of the occurrence of communicative and pre-communicative activities, organizational forms, and the use of the language. The area instructions will present the proportions of short and long instructions, of different means of support provided, and of different forms of comprehension check used or its lack.

The purpose of the last part of the small-scale research, data interpretation, is to try to answer the question whether the theory concerning ‘giving instructions’ as presented in literature by teaching specialists and its areas of interest as described in the theoretical section is used in practice.

Concretely, whether the short instructions are preferred to long instructions; whether there is a paralinguistic, visual, or written support provided when giving instructions and what their proportion is; and, whether, there is a comprehension check used after giving instructions, if so, what the proportion of the different methods is, all of these in relation to speaking activities and specifically in relation to communicative and pre-communicative activities. As regards presenting the concrete proportions of paralinguistic support, visual support, written clues, and demonstrating instructions, these have been included in appendix 5.

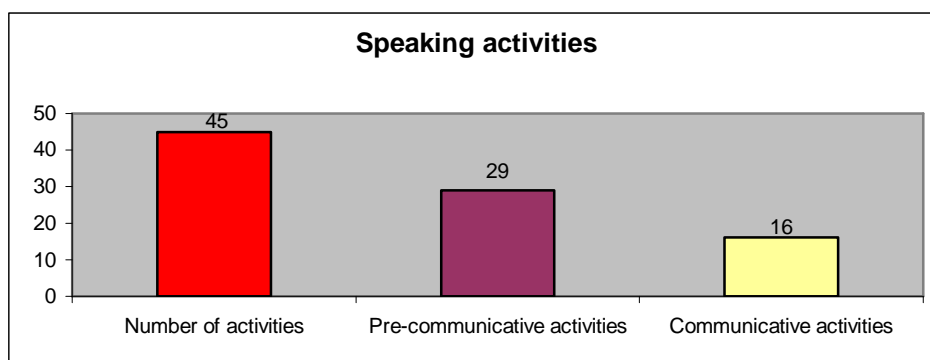
To conclude, the small-scale research will be conducted by means of observation method including three parts: collection of the data, presentation of the data, and interpretation of the data.

## **6. PRESENTATION OF THE DATA**

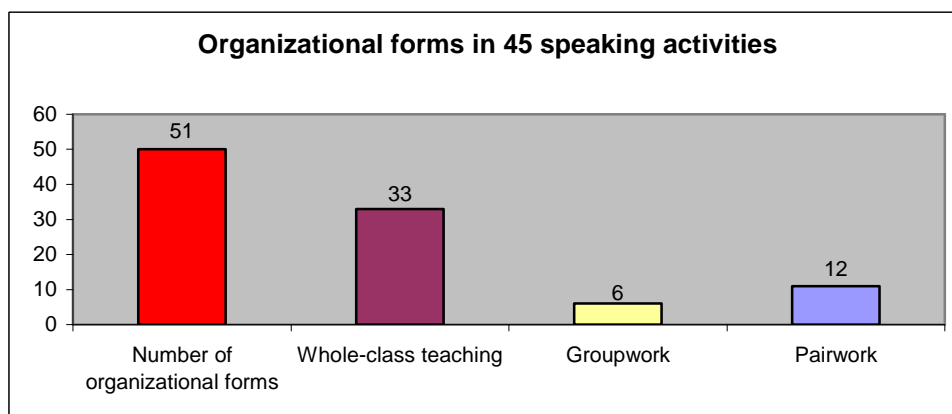
There were 45 communicative and pre-communicative speaking activities, which have been observed during 30 lessons. Out of 45 speaking activities, 29 activities have been classified as pre-communicative activities, and 16 activities as communicative activities, these numbers are presented in figure 1.

In figure 2, the total number of organizational forms used during 45 speaking activities is presented. The chart shows that 51 different organizational forms were used. There were 33 cases in which the method of whole-class teaching was used, in 6 cases students were organized into groups, and in 12 cases pairwork organization was used.

**Figure 1**



**Figure 2**

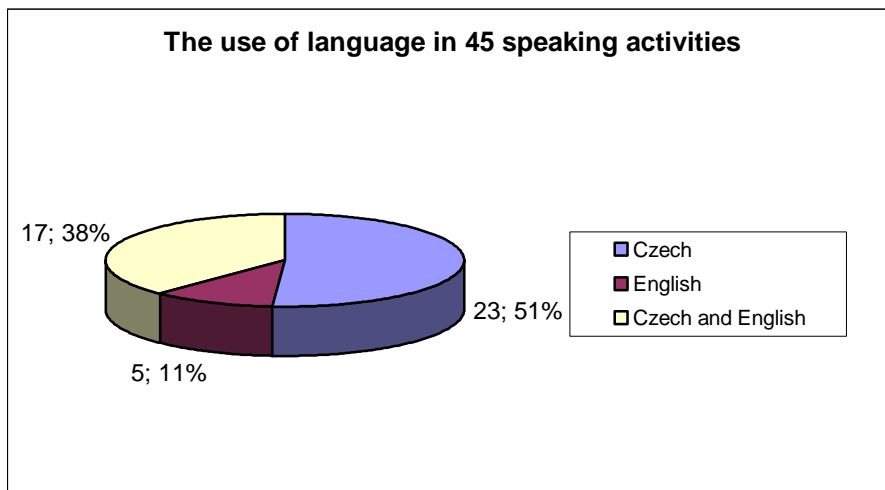


## **6.1. The Use of Language**

Three different forms of language use were analysed - mother tongue (Czech), target language (English), and the combination of mother tongue and target language. In figure 3, the use of language in the total of 45 activities is visualized. The mother tongue for giving instructions was used in 23 speaking activities, for 5 activities the instructions were given in the target language, and the combination of mother tongue and target language for giving instructions was used in 17 activities.



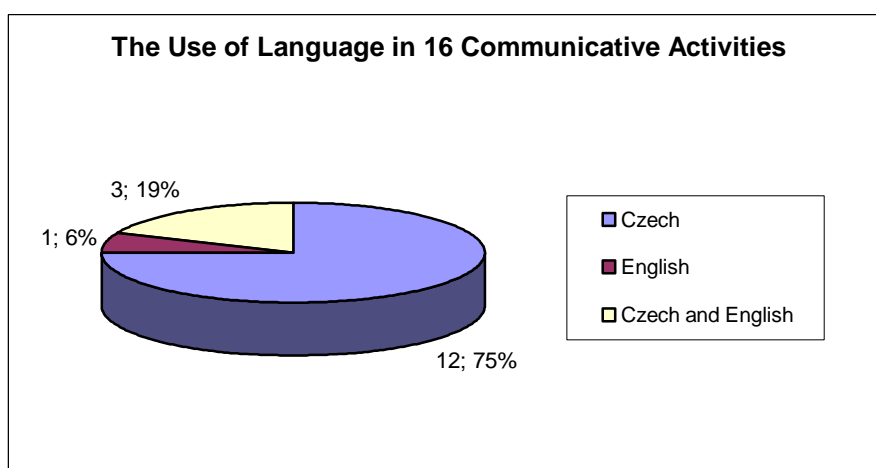
**Figure 3**



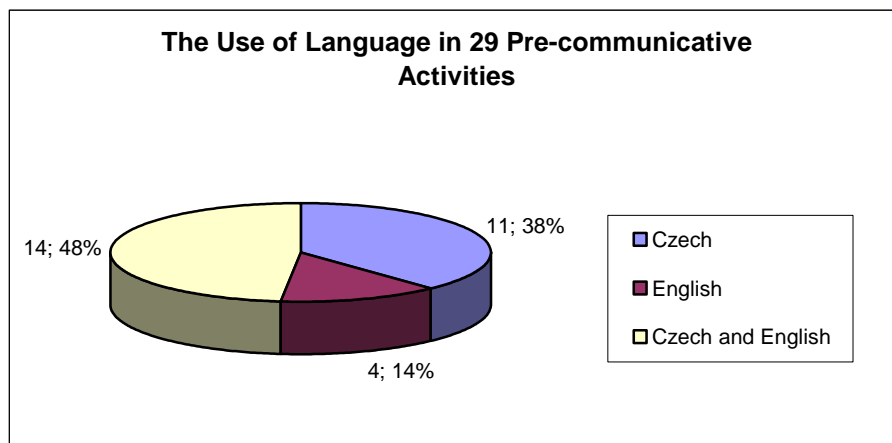
In figure 4, the use of language for giving instructions in 16 communicative activities is visualized. In 12 cases, teachers made use of the mother tongue, in 1 case the target language was used, and for 3 activities the instructions were given by combining the mother tongue and target language.

In figure 5, on the other hand, the use of language for giving instructions in 29 pre-communicative activities is presented. The mother tongue was used for instructions for 11 activities, the target language was used for 4 activities, and the combination of both languages was used for 14 activities.

**Figure 4**



**Figure 5**

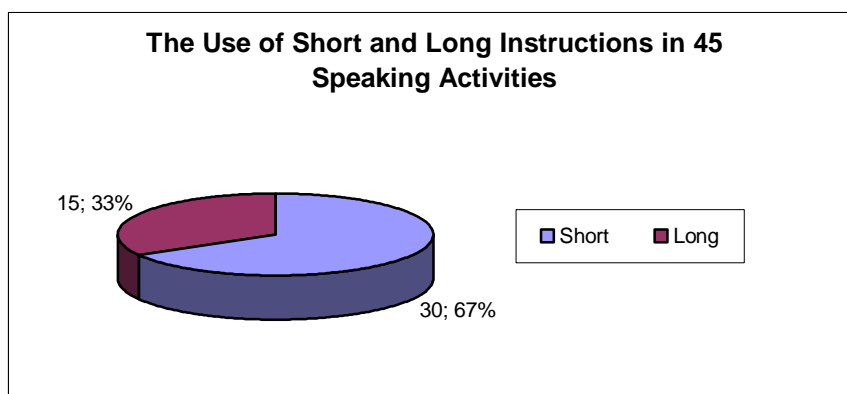


## 6.2. The length of instructions

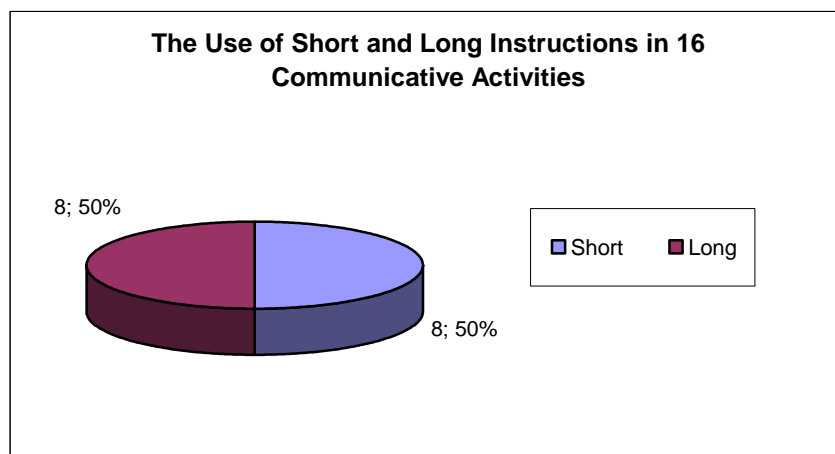
Figure 6 shows the proportion of the use of short and long instructions in all 45 speaking activities. The short instructions were used in 30 cases to compare with 15 cases, in which long instructions were used.

In 16 communicative activities (figure 7), there occurred an equal number of short (8) and long (8) instructions. In case of pre-communicative activities, there were 22 sets of short instructions and 7 sets of long instructions (figure 8).

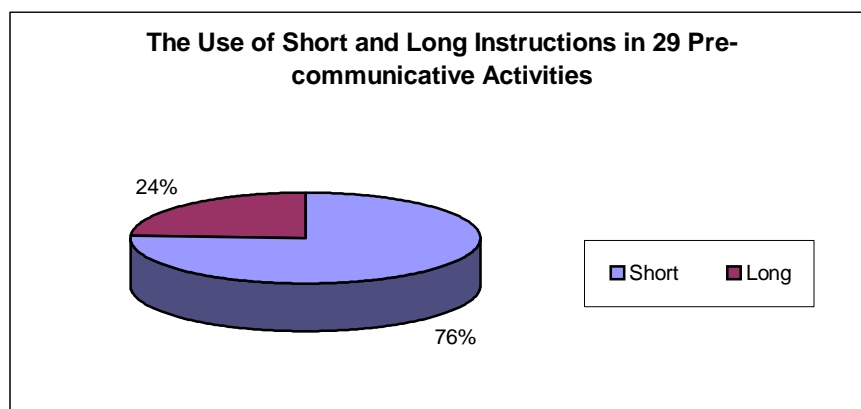
**Figure 6**



**Figure 7**



**Figure 8**

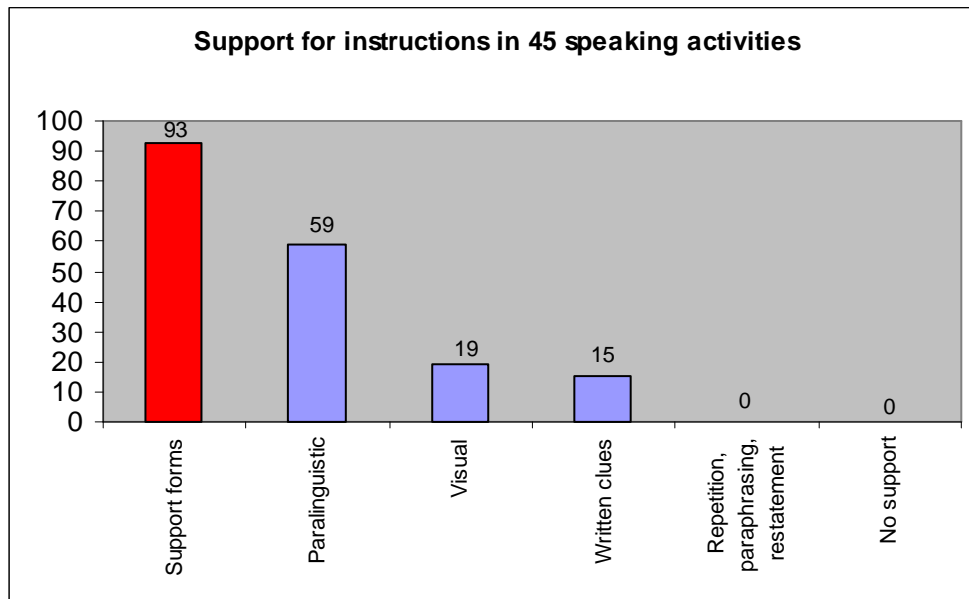


### **6.3. Support for instructions**

There were 93 different forms of support found in the total of 45 communicative and pre-communicative activities (figure 9). In 16 communicative activities (figure 10), there were 36 different forms of support, and in 29 pre-communicative activities (figure 11), there were 57 different forms of support altogether.

Out of 93 different forms of support, there were 59 paralinguistic forms, 19 visual forms of support, and the written clues as a support for instructions occurred 15 times. To check the proportions of paralinguistic, visual and written clues as a form of support for giving instructions see appendix.

**Figure 9**

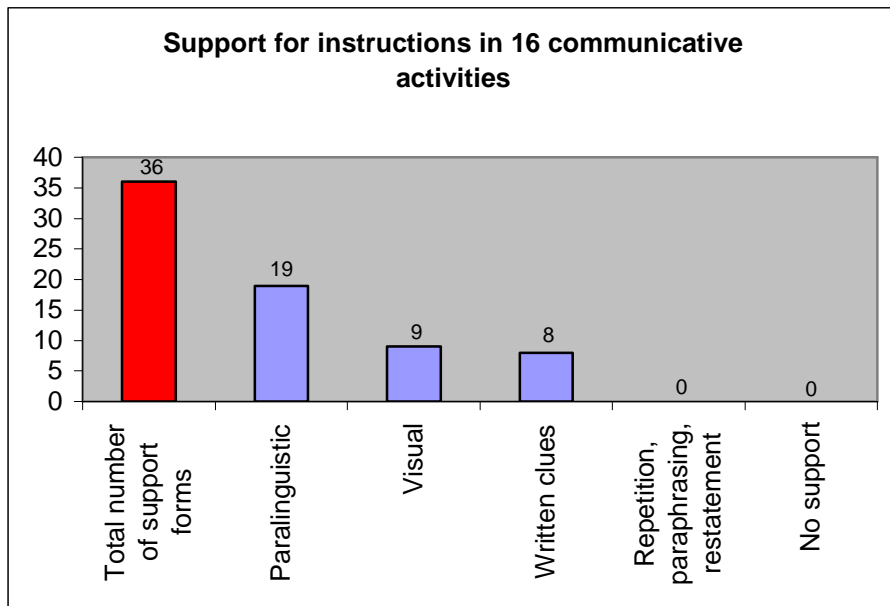


Figures 10 and 11 present the numbers of the support for instructions as provided in relation to communicative and pre-communicative activities.

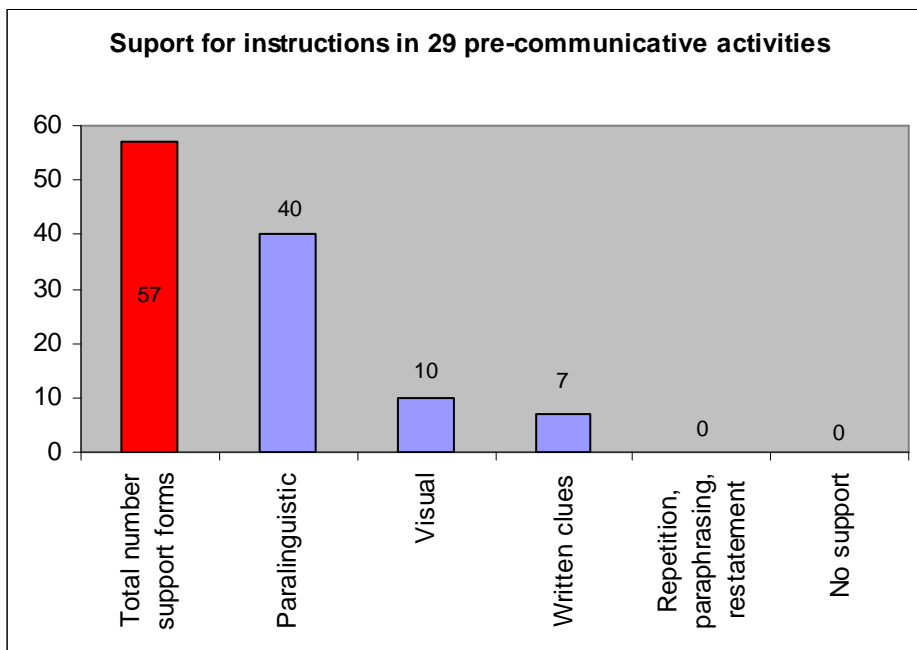
There were 16 communicative activities, in which 36 different forms of support took place. Out of these, there were 19 forms of paralinguistic support forms, 9 visual forms of support, and written clues as a means of support occurred in 8 cases.

For 29 pre-communicative activities, 36 different forms of support were provided. There were 40 different forms of paralinguistic support, 10 forms of visual support, and 7 cases as of written clues as a form of support for providing instructions.

**Figure 10**



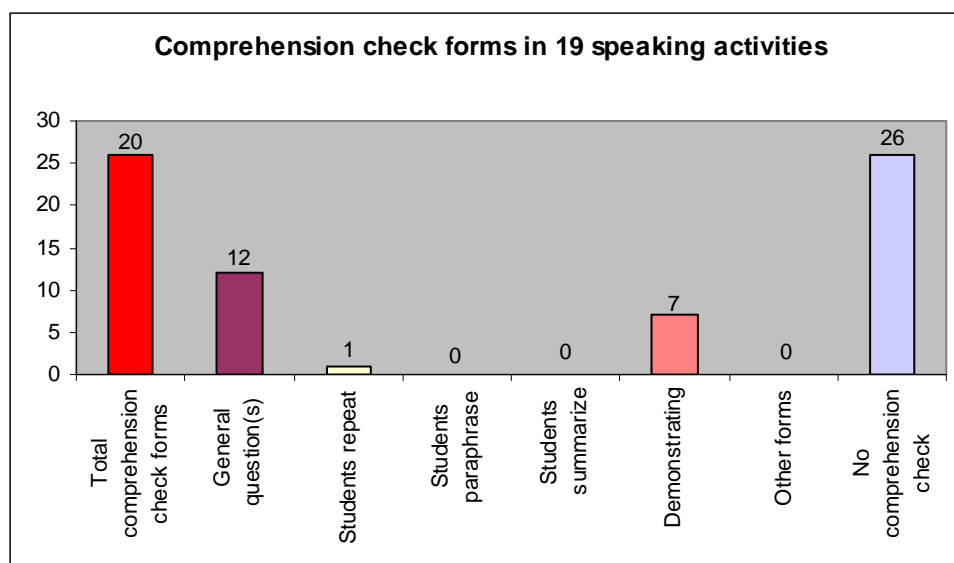
**Figure 11**



#### **6.4. Comprehension check**

The last set of charts presents the use of comprehension check on providing instructions; firstly, in all the activities in which the comprehension check occurred (figure 12), and the use of comprehension check as it took place while providing instructions for communicative activities (figure 13) and pre-communicative activities (figure 14).

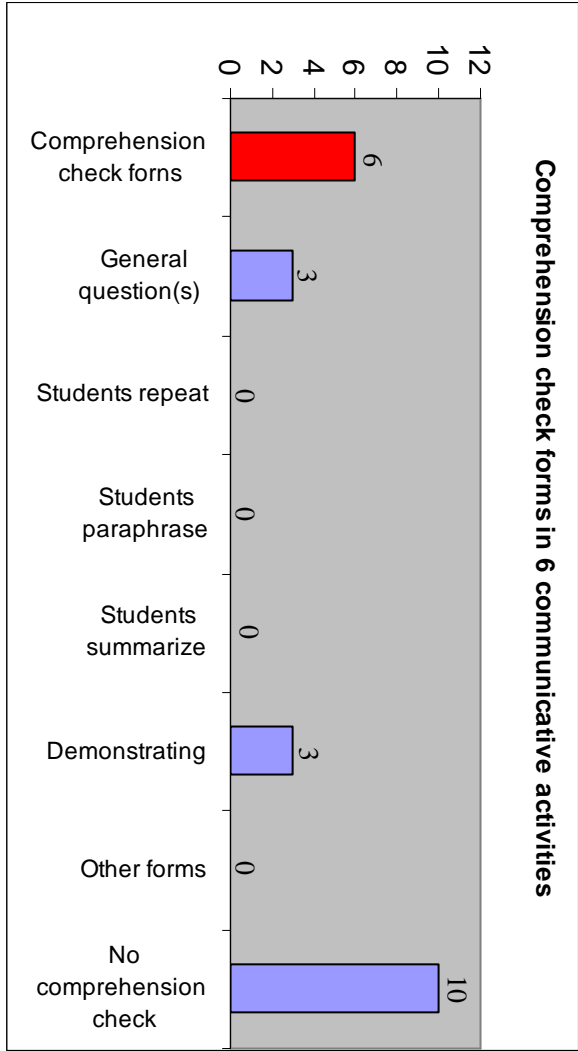
**Figure 12**



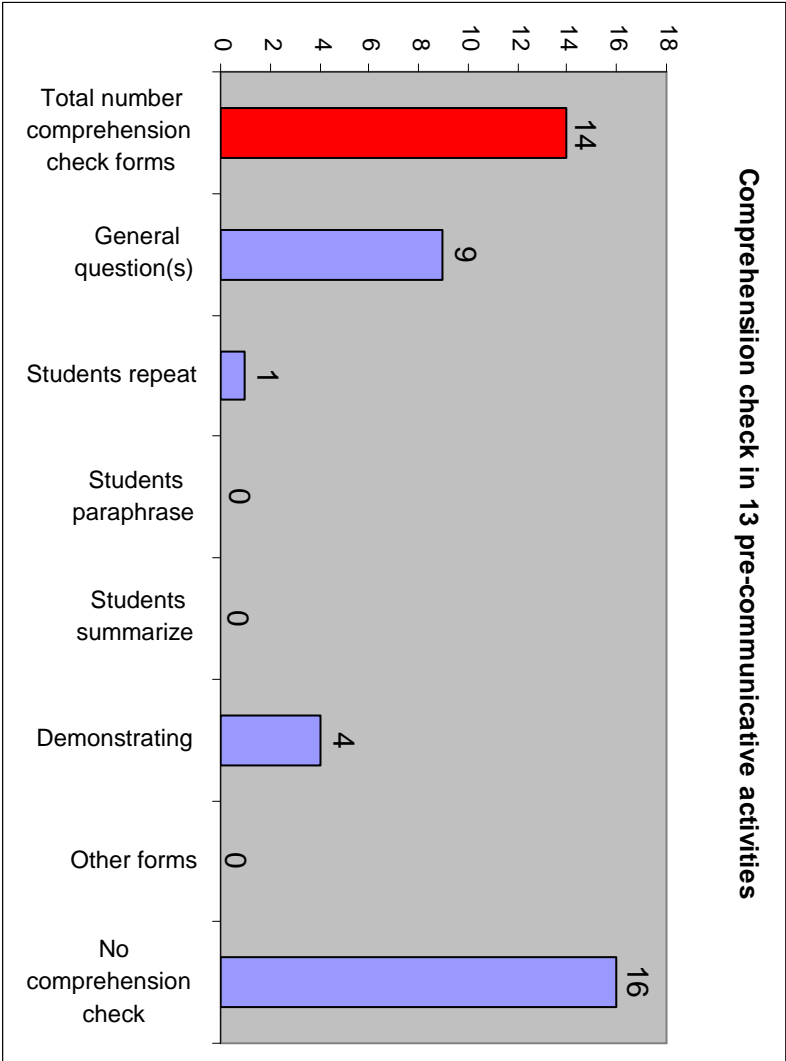
There were 6 communicative activities (figure 13), in which comprehension check took place. General question or questions given and demonstrating instructions both occurred in 3 cases. See appendix to learn about the proportions between different forms of demonstrating instructions. No comprehension check has been found out in 10 cases of providing instructions for communicative activities.

In 13 pre-communicative activities (figure 14), there were 14 different forms of comprehension check on instructions. In 9 cases, teacher asked a general question or questions, in 1 case a student(s) was asked to repeat instructions, and in 3 cases the instructions were demonstrated as a form of comprehension check.

**Figure 13**



**Figure 14**



## **7. INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA**

### **7.1. The Use of language for speaking activities**

Which language teachers use for providing instructions was the first question that has been set in the practical part to be investigated through the small-scale research. Three basic forms were identified – target language (English), mother tongue (Czech), and the combination of the target language and the mother tongue. The first question concerns both kinds of activities, communicative and pre-communicative activities.

Looking back at the diagram 3, we will see that out of the total of 45 activities, there were 23 (51%) sets of instructions for which exclusively the mother tongue was used. Combination of the mother tongue and the target language (17/38%) presents the second most frequently used form of the language for giving instructions. The ‘least’ occurring form, therefore, remains the use of the target language, which was used in 5 (11%) sets of instructions.

Taking into consideration the fact that the target group for language learning ranged from 5<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> graders (aged 10 – 15), a group of learners which can be identified as beginners, the results for answering the first question do not have to be as much surprising.

Byrne (1991, 79) admits that for the early stages of learning, it is legitimate to explain tasks in the mother tongue in order to make sure that students know what the aim is. In addition, Ur (1996) suggests that the use of mother tongue is necessary, especially if this is likely to prove as ‘cost effective alternative to the sometimes lengthy and difficult target-language explanations’ (p.17).

It would be highly interesting to focus the attention particularly on which of the organizational forms were used for the activities and whether their use may significantly influence the choice of teacher’s language use for providing instructions.

Nevertheless, the second question aims at the use of language on providing instructions individually for communicative and pre-communicative activities.



## **7.2. The Use of language specifically for communicative and pre-communicative activities**

Looking at the results concerning the language use on instructions for communicative activities (see figure 4), we will see even a more visible disproportion between the use of mother tongue (occurring in 12 activities), target language (occurring in 1 activity) and the combination of both languages (3). Expressed in percentage, we will find out that out of 16 activities, there was 75 % usage of the mother tongue, to compare with 19 % usage of the combination of both languages and 6% usage of the target language. Prevalence of mother tongue use on providing instructions for communicative activities was in the small-scale research rather obvious.

We can speculate what the possible reasons could be, because as it has already been said, the target group of learners is presented mainly by beginners. In addition, communicative activities are likely to take more time and are more demanding on their organization. Therefore, as Ur (1996) suggests (see above) in order to avoid long explanations, the use of mother tongue language, which is certainly less demanding on students' interpretation and perception, at the beginning stage of learning a foreign language is preferred.

To compare with, the use of language on providing instructions for pre-communicative activities does not reveal such clear disproportions (see figure 5).

Here, the use of combination of both languages (Czech and English) slightly overcomes the use of mother tongue. During 29 activities, in which language use was analysed, the combination of Czech and English occurred in 14 sets of instructions, which means almost a half of all the activities (48%). In 11 sets of instructions (38%), teachers used the mother tongue. For pre-communicative activities as well as communicative activities, the least used language form for providing instructions is the target language, which took place in 4 activities (14%).

To conclude, the research suggests that within the investigated area there is a preference for the use of mother tongue in case of communicative activities, while for pre-communicative activities a more frequent occurrence of the combination of both languages was found out.

The analysis concerning the use of language specifically for communicative and pre-communicative activities has not confirmed the overall findings for all speaking activities. Nevertheless, it can be said that mother tongue plays, within the investigated area, a substantial role when providing instructions for speaking activities.

### **7.3. The length of instructions for speaking activities**

The preference in use between long and short instructions has been the second area of focus during the analysis of instructions for speaking activities. To remind of what is meant by short and long instructions; I will briefly summarize that as short instructions are considered to be short phrases or sentences, organized in a sensible order with simple and clear language. These need to be separated from the unnecessary chit-chat, telling off, joking, and other similar disturbing elements.

What proportions between long and short instructions have been found out will be the purpose for interpretation in this part. Firstly, I am going to analyze the length of instructions as provided for communicative and pre-communicative activities together.

As it has been visualized in figure 6, it is fair to state that the proportions between short and long instructions show the prevalence in the use of short instructions. In the total of 45 activities, teachers used short instructions in 30 of them, which makes 67% use. On the other hand, in 15 sets of instructions, expressed in percentage giving 33%, the instructions provided were identified as long ones. The overall impression therefore suggests that when providing instructions, teachers do avoid complicated, illogically structured instructions. The question, however, remains whether such rather 'distinctive' preference for the use of short instructions will be found out also individually for communicative and pre-communicative activities. Generally, it is very positive to perceive the fact that teachers make use of short instructions, which I personally view as one of the key moments for organizing activities. Unnecessary words are likely to drag learners' attention away from the most important information that needs to be concentrated on.

### **7.4. The length of instructions specifically for communicative and pre-communicative activities**

The attention concerning the length of instructions will now be focused individually on communicative and pre-communicative activities.

To begin with, in 16 communicative activities (see figure 7), the proportion found between short and long instructions was rather 'balanced'. There were 8 sets of instructions identified as short and the same amount of instructions (8) which have been identified as long. These numbers do not confirm findings related to the overall proportions.

To compare with, a more distinctive difference can be seen in case of pre-communicative activities. It has been found out that in 29 pre-communicative activities (figure 8), for which instructions have been provided, there were 22 sets of instructions, presenting 76% of all pre-communicative activities identified as short, while for 7 activities, giving 24% of all pre-communicative activities, the instructions were identified as long.

Therefore, looking separately at the numbers regarding communicative and pre-communicative activities, there has been found out that in case of pre-communicative activities, teachers made use of short instructions; however, in case of communicative activities, the proportions between short and long instructions have been found as proportionally balanced. Consequently, on the basis of the findings related separately to pre-communicative and communicative activities, it cannot be said with certainty that teachers use short instructions. There may be several reasons for such findings. First of all, it is necessary to remind that these findings have not been given into relation with the use of organizational forms. From a certain point of view, this element could hypothetically play an important role in case of, for example, including group or pair work in the activities. Such an involvement would probably demand certain organizational restrictions, for example in case of students' misbehaviour, which could negatively influence the length of instructions. Nevertheless, as it has already been suggested, the research takes into consideration only limited amount of data, and as such they should be worked with.

### **7.5. Support for instructions for speaking activities**

Support for instructions included four basic areas of focus, which have been the subject for answering the third question: paralinguistic support, visual support, written clues (as a form of written support), and repetition, paraphrasing or restating the main points by the teacher.

The figure 9 shows that out of the total number of 93 different forms of support on instructions for communicative and pre-communicative activities, there were 59 forms of paralinguistic support, which means that 63% of all forms of instructions were provided by either hand-gesture, eye-contact with students, different ways of body movement or facial expressions. The individual proportions between the forms of paralinguistic support are visualized in appendix 5A, figure 15 a. This figure shows that the main paralinguistic support was provided by keeping eye-contact with students which took place in all cases of providing instructions. The importance of eye-contact should not be underestimated and it is positive to state that teachers do not, for example, turn back when giving instructions and bear in mind

the importance of paying attention to what students do during her utterance by means of an intense form of monitoring.

In comparison, the visual support took place in 19 forms, being the second most frequent form of support, which makes 20%, out of the total number of support forms. Most often, teachers used the different objects for the activity (recorded in 11 cases) to instruct students. These involved, for example, showing up pictures, a prepared poster for AZ Quiz, books for comparison, goods for a role-play 'at the shop', etc. The individual proportions can be seen in appendix 5A, figure 15 b. The written clues as a form of support (15), among which I include cards or pieces of paper on which instructions are depicted beforehand, or written clues given on the blackboard, were the third most frequent form of support that teachers provided when giving instructions for speaking activities. The individual proportions between written clues as a support for instructions are depicted in appendix, figure 15 c. Here the most frequently used form is writing instructions on the blackboard.

Rather surprisingly, no teacher made use of repeating instructions for students, their paraphrasing, or a restatement of the main points, which Ur (1996) mentions as an important form of support. Nevertheless, this lack may be compensated by making use of comprehension check in the form of repetition, summarizing or paraphrasing by students themselves possibly perceived as a strategy to limit teacher's talk. It is therefore at least satisfactory to conclude that in every activity, for which instructions were provided, there was some kind of support present, among which the most frequent form was the paralinguistic support.

Now we will look at whether these data correspond with the support for instructions provided individually for communicative and pre-communicative activities.

#### **7.6. Support for instructions specifically for communicative and pre-communicative activities**

There were 16 communicative activities, in which 36 forms of support for instructions were identified (see figure 10). The most frequent form recorded is the paralinguistic support with 19 forms. To compare with the total of 57 forms of support provided for instructions in 29 pre-communicative activities, the paralinguistic support was also the most frequent form of support with 40 forms of support recorded (see figure 11).

As regards the paralinguistic support in relation to activities individually, it has been found out that the most frequent form of paralinguistic support is eye-contact, which took place in

16 (84%) cases for communicative and 29 (72%) cases for pre-communicative activities. Hand-gesture recorded in 3 (16%) cases of communicative and 11 (28%) cases of pre-communicative activities was the second most frequent form of support. No special forms of body-movement nor facial expressions as the form of paralinguistic support were identified. For the graphical visualization, see appendix 5B, C, figures 16a and 17a.

In case of communicative activities, for which instructions were conducted, the second most frequent form of support presents the visual support with 9 forms. There are similar findings in the analysis of visual support for pre-communicative activities, which took place in 10 forms.

As regards the individual proportions of visual support in relation to communicative and pre-communicative activities, the findings show that the use of objects for activities was the most frequently occurred form of visual support for communicative activities (7/78%). For pre-communicative activities, however, the most frequent form of visual support presents the use of textbooks (6/60%). (See appendix 5B, figure 16b and 5C, figure 17b)

I think it is interesting to compare the occurrence of visual support in relation to the total numbers of support forms taking communicative and pre-communicative activities individually.

Taking into consideration the total number of support forms for pre-communicative activities, which made 57, out of which there were 10 forms of visual support, to compare with 9 forms of visual support out of the total of 36 support forms for communicative activities, there exists a certain disproportion. Expressed in percentage, we will see that the total use of visual support for pre-communicative activities makes 18%, to compare with 25% out of the total use of visual support for communicative activities. It can be said that there was a more extensive use of visual support for instructions for communicative activities than for pre-communicative activities.

The third most frequent form of support, also identical for both communicative and pre-communicative activities, has been found out to be the use of written clues. Looking at the findings (figure 10, 11) concerning the written clues as a support for instructions on communicative and pre-communicative activities, we will find out that there is also a little disproportion in their occurrence.

There were 8 forms of written clues as a form of support for instructions provided for communicative activities to compare with 7 forms provided for pre-communicative activities. Nevertheless, putting the numbers in percents in relation to the total number of support forms, we will see that in case of communicative activities this makes 22%, while in case of pre-

communicative activities, it is only 12%. These findings say that the use of various forms of support is more balanced in relation to the number of support forms provided for instructions for communicative activities. (see appendix 5B, figure 16c and 5C, figure 17c)

In both cases, the most frequently used forms of written clues provided was on the blackboard. There were 6 forms of written clues provided on the blackboard out of the total of 7 forms for pre-communicative activities, to compare with 100% use of the blackboard for providing written clues (8 forms) as a form of support for instructions for communicative activities.

As it has already been mentioned, no other support form such as repetition, paraphrasing instructions, or restatement of the main points, or other forms of support were identified.

It can therefore be said that the most frequent form of support for instructions for communicative activities is the paralinguistic support, in which eye-contact between the teacher and the students plays the primary role. On the second place, it is the visual support for which the object for the use in the activity is the most frequent form.

In case of pre-communicative activities, the paralinguistic support, of which the leading form being the eye-contact, is the most frequent form of support. The use of visual support is the second most frequent form of support identified in the research, in which, however, textbooks were the most frequent form used.

To conclude, it is very positive to note that the use of support for instructions has been found out to be an inseparable part of the process of providing instructions. There have been found to be almost two different forms of support per process of providing instructions for both communicative and pre-communicative activities used in average.

Finally, I would also like to point at the balance of the use of various forms of support for providing instructions. On the basis of the findings, it can be concluded that the use of various forms of support in relation to the total number of support forms for communicative and pre-communicative activities individually is more balanced in case of communicative activities.

## **7.7. Comprehension check on provided instructions for speaking activities**

Out of 45 speaking activities, there was a total of 19 activities in which 20 comprehension check forms were identified altogether (see figure 12). This means that per one set of instructions, there was at least one comprehension check form in average.

There were 6 basic categories which were analyzed in relation to comprehension check on providing instructions including: general question(s) given by the teacher occurring in 12

forms; students are asked to repeat instructions after the teacher, which took place in 1 form; furthermore, paraphrasing and summarizing instructions by the students, which were not found out; and, demonstrating instructions, which as a form of comprehension check on provided instructions was noted in 7 cases. The demonstration of instructions involved three basic forms to be analyzed: 1) teacher demonstrating instructions herself, which took place in 2 forms; 2) the teacher demonstrating instructions together with a student or students, of which there were 5 forms found; 3) a student or students demonstrating instructions themselves, which was not identified in any process of providing instructions. For the proportions of the individual forms of demonstrating instructions in all speaking activities see appendix 5D, figure 18.

As it has already been mentioned, there was a total of 20 comprehension check forms in 19 activities, in which some of the forms of comprehension check took place. Considering the total number of activities, in which some forms of instructions occurred we will see that for 26 activities, which is more than 50% (58% precisely), there is a factual lack of comprehension check on instructions. Theoreticians, for example, Ur (1996), openly stress the importance of comprehension check, which is necessary even for the clearest instructions (Scrivener 1994, 17). Therefore, taking into consideration the findings, it is quite surprising to note that the teachers, within the small-scale research, remain rather economical as regards its use.

This is, however, an overall impression, and in the last part we will look at whether these findings apply also individually to communicative and pre-communicative activities.

### **7.8. Comprehension check on provided instructions specifically for communicative and pre-communicative activities**

Firstly, we will look at the most frequent comprehension check forms on instructions in relation to communicative activities (see figure 13). In 16 communicative activities, there were 6 activities, in which there was a total of 6 comprehension check forms on their instructions. There were 3 forms of a general question or questions asked; in no activity, in which comprehension check occurred, did the teacher make use of asking students to repeat, paraphrase or summarize instructions. In 3 forms, the comprehension of instructions was checked by their demonstration. In 1 case, the teacher demonstrated the instructions herself, in the remaining 2 cases teacher demonstrated instructions together with a student or students. (See appendix 5D, figure 19)

As regards the comprehension check on instructions for communicative activities, it can be said that the frequency of comprehension check forms, found out within the small-scale research, between the teacher asking general questions and demonstrating instructions is balanced. There were 3 forms of general questions asked by the teacher and 3 forms of demonstrating instructions.

Looking at the findings concerning the total of comprehension check forms and no comprehension check, the prevalence of the lack of comprehension check on instructions will be found out. In the total of 16 communicative activities for which instructions were provided, there was a lack of comprehension check in 10 cases, which makes a proportion of 63%.

Out of 29 pre-communicative activities, there were 13 activities, in which comprehension check on instructions appeared (see figure 14). In 13 activities, there were 14 comprehension check forms identified. General questions were asked in 9 cases, which, to compare with 1 case when students were asked to repeat instructions and 4 cases of demonstrating instructions, make this comprehension check form, as in case of communicative activities, the most frequent comprehension check form used. For demonstrating instructions, as with communicative activities, the most frequently used pattern proved to be 'teacher + student(s)', which took place in 3 forms, to compare with 1 case when the teacher demonstrated instructions herself. (see appendix 5D, figures 20)

There is one more interesting thing worth noticing which concerns demonstrating instructions as a form of comprehension check on instructions for communicative activities worth noticing. Looking at the total number, we will see that the use of demonstrating instructions makes 50% of all comprehension check forms. To compare with, demonstrating instructions as a form of comprehension check on instructions for pre-communicative activities, which presents only 29% of all comprehension check forms.

Considering the total number of activities (13) for which comprehension check on instructions was provided, to compare with the total number of pre-communicative activities (29), we will see a considerably high number of sets of instructions in which there was a lack of comprehension check. Expressed in percentage, 55% activities for which instructions were provided lacked the comprehension check. Comprehension check was not present in 10 cases of instructions provided for communicative activities. With the total of 16 communicative activities for which instructions were carried out, there was 63% lack found out. Unfortunately, it must be noted that the lack of comprehension check applies to both communicative and pre-communicative activities, which makes more than 50% in average.



To conclude, it has been found out within the small-scale research that the most frequent form of comprehension check on instructions for pre-communicative activities, is asking a general question or questions by the teacher, followed by demonstrating instructions. At this point, the findings reveal the second likely negative aspect. As it has been suggested both Scrivener (1994) and Ur (1996) reject the use of a general question, such as 'Do you understand?' , as satisfactory.

It is equally interesting and rather surprising as a matter of fact also on instructions specifically to point out that for communicative and pre-communicative activities, there is a more than 50% lack of comprehension check provided. This insight can hypothetically be ascribed to the length of activities, students' overall feedback or atmosphere. Thinking about the comprehension check need for pre-communicative activities, which usually involve repetition, structured dialogues and other activities, based on routines with a quick transition between providing instructions and the action itself, I personally do not consider the more distinctive lack of comprehension check or use of general questions as somehow disturbing.

On the other hand, considering the comprehension check on instructions for communicative activities, I think that a more than 50% lack of comprehension check on instructions is rather unsatisfactory, and the use of general question should be avoided and the use of some other form should be preferred.

## 8. CONCLUSION OF THE PRACTICAL SECTION

The aim of the small-scale research was to try to answer eight basic questions, which have been formulated in the introduction to the practical section and for which the theoretical inputs were explained in the theoretical part concerning organizing activities for the development of speaking skills.

The first question concerned the use of language for providing instructions. The research has revealed that the use of mother tongue (Czech) shows to be the most frequent form of language that teachers use for providing instructions for speaking activities. Nevertheless, looking separately at the results concerning communicative and pre-communicative activities, we will see that these findings are proved to be relevant in case of communicative activities, while for pre-communicative activities, the combination of the target language and the mother tongue shows to be the choice that teachers prefer when giving instructions.

The second target area concerned the length of instructions. The overall results prove that teachers use short instructions and avoid unnecessary complicated or illogically structured instructions. Again, however, when focusing on communicative and pre-communicative activities individually, a slight difference can be noted. There is a rather clear difference in the use of short and long instructions in case of pre-communicative activities, in favor of short forms of instructions, to compare with balanced proportions when considering communicative activities.

Support for instructions for speaking activities was the next area of interest. Considering both kinds of activities for which instructions were given, it is positive to state that all the instructions were supported in some form, among which the leading position takes the paralinguistic support. Visual support and written clues as a support for instructions followed. The paralinguistic support as the most frequent form of support was also found out in case of communicative and pre-communicative activities individually. The same has been found about the following forms of support – visual support and written clues.

Finally, the fourth area included the use of comprehension check on the instructions provided. At this point, seriously taking into consideration the amount of data which served for the small-scale research, I think there are two interesting things to comment on. Firstly, it has been found out that the most frequent form of comprehension check used among the teachers was the use of a general question or questions. Although, this has not been proved in case of communicative activities, for which the findings show an equal use of demonstrating instructions; on the other hand, it still was the most frequent form of comprehension check

form for pre-communicative activities. Secondly, and more importantly, it has been found out that for both communicative and pre-communicative activities, teachers did not make use of comprehension check on instructions in more than half of all the activities. for which instructions were provided.

Nevertheless, as it has been said at the beginning of the practical section, the research worked with limited amount of data that have been collected in a restricted area, and should not be the aim for general conclusions.

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

At the very beginning of the thesis, it was suggested that the development of speaking skills is influenced by several aspects. Each aspect may present a separate prospective from which the development of speaking skills can be viewed.

For the purpose of the thesis, teacher's perspective and her share in that process has been chosen. Teacher's organization of activities, preparation and considering different aspects related to the organization is in my opinion one of the crucial phases, though not the only one neither the most crucial one.

Before dealing with the organization of speaking activities, I considered it as inevitable to comment on some of the related aspects concerning the problematic of developing speaking skills. Therefore, the first part of the theoretical section was devoted to the analysis of the speaking skills. Next area of interest involved speaking in relation to the concept of communicative competence. When talking about developing speaking skills, it is also important to mention what activities are relevant to this process and what the current theories and practical experience from the viewpoint of teaching specialists offer.

The use of various activities is connected with the involvement of different organizational forms. For that reason, a chapter dealing with the organizational forms, specifically what advantages or disadvantages the most frequently used ones – whole-class teaching, groupwork, and pairwork, may expose was included.

The third part of the theoretical section is devoted to the organization of speaking activities. The purpose of this part was to provide a unifying framework for stages which resulted in defining the key principles to be considered when organizing activities focused on the development of speaking. Two principles have been suggested: firstly, each speaking activity comprises three stages – pre-activity stage, during activity stage, and conclusion stage; secondly, each of the stages involves several focus areas that should be taken into consideration when organizing speaking activities, these involve – engage-instruct-initiate sequence, and grouping students (pre-activity stage); the role of the teacher, feedback during the activity, and the use of mother tongue (during-activity stage); and, stopping the activity, feedback after the activity (conclusion stage).

The last chapter of the theoretical section was also the basis for the practical part. A selected focus area was the subject of small-scale research, in which the use of theoretical notes in real life elementary school environment was checked.

For that purpose, the 'engage-instruct-initiate sequence', specifically the process of providing instructions, belonging to the pre-activity stage was chosen. By means of observation method, the use of selected features related to providing instructions for speaking activities was the aim in view.

The observed features involved the length of instructions, the use of language, the support for instructions and comprehension check on provided instructions. The findings were discussed in relation to communicative and pre-communicative activities individually, as well as in relation to speaking activities altogether.

## V. RESUMÉ

Ve vztahu k výuce cizích jazyků literatura hovoří o rozvoji čtyř základních dovedností: mluvení, psaní, poslech a čtení. Cílem této práce bylo zaměřit se na první z těchto dovedností a její rozvoj.

Pod pojmem rozvoj řečových dovedností mluvení se skrývá bezpočet prvků, které tento proces ovlivňují. Je více než zřejmé, že žák a učitel jsou jedněmi z těch nejdůležitějších. Cílem této práce bylo nahlížet na tento proces z pohledu učitele, tedy jakým způsobem může učitel ovlivnit rozvoj řečových dovedností žáka.

Moderní způsob výuky cizího jazyka, v našem případě angličtiny, počítá se zapojením nejrůznějších organizačních forem a aktivit, které takový rozvoj podporují. Způsob, jakým učitel organizuje aktivity a jak vnímá jednotlivé fáze spojené s organizací aktivit může mít vliv na následující efekt samotné aktivity a v důsledku i rozvoj mluvení.

Pro teoretickou část byly proto vytvořeny tři oblasti, pomyslné pilíře, které z mého pohledu neoddělitelně souvisejí s rozvojem řečových dovedností.

První z těchto oblastí zahrnuje teorii mluvení, ve které je zahrnuto také mluvení ve vztahu ke konceptu komunikativní kompetence společně s typologií aktivit. Druhou oblastí teoretické části je pojednání o organizačních formách, které jsou nejčastěji využívány pro aktivity zaměřené na rozvoj řečových dovedností. Poslední oblast je věnována organizaci aktivit.

V první části zabývající se teorií mluvení byly představeny tři okruhy. První z nich se zaměřil na analýzu jednotlivých dovedností spojených s mluvením. Pro tento účel byla využita teoretická pojednání zpracovaná Martinem Bygatem (1996) a Jeremy Harmrem (2001). Cílem bylo vysledovat společné prvky, případně upozornit na rozdíly, jež tyto teorie představují.

Druhý okruh byl věnován mluvení ve vztahu ke konceptu komunikativní kompetence. Teorie komunikativní kompetence prošla určitým vývojem, jejíž počátek lze spojovat s teorií, kterou v 70. letech představil Noam Chomsky. Soudobé rozpracování teorie komunikativní kompetence se opírá o poznatky, které nabízí Lyle F. Bachman, jež byly také využity pro vypracování této části.

Poslední z okruhů teorie mluvení se zaměřuje na teorii CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) a její návaznost na členění aktivit zaměřených na rozvoj řečových dovedností. Největší pozornost je zde věnována Littlewoodově (1981) typologii aktivit, která současně slouží k identifikaci aktivit sledovaných v praktické části.

Využití nejrůznějších aktivit na podporu rozvoje řečových dovedností je také spojeno s různými organizačními formami. Druhá oblast teoretické sekce je proto věnována analýze třech vybraných organizačních forem výuky. Tyto organizační formy představují: ‘whole-class teaching’ (frontální výuka), ‘groupwork’ (skupinová práce), a ‘pairwork’ (párová práce). Cílem této kapitoly bylo seznámit čtenáře se specifiky jednotlivých organizačních forem, jejich přednostmi pro využití v aktivitách nebo případnými komplikacemi, které mohou tyto formy výuky představovat.

Třetí z pilířů teoretické sekce pojednává o organizaci aktivit zaměřených na rozvoj řečových dovedností. Z důvodu širokého rozptylu jednotlivých aspektů bylo nutné se opět zaměřit pouze na vybrané faktory, které tento proces ovlivňují. Tato část je především vnímána z pozice učitele a jejím účelem je navrhnout principy, které by měly být brány v úvahu při organizaci aktivit.

Výstupem této části je vydefinování dvou základních principů: 1) při organizaci aktivit zaměřených na rozvoj řečových dovedností je třeba brát v úvahu, že každá aktivita sestává ze tří základních fází – ‘pre-activity stage’ (fáze před započítím vlastní aktivity), ‘during-activity stage’ (fáze průběhu vlastní aktivity), a ‘conclusion stage’ (fáze zakončení aktivity); 2) v rámci těchto fází je nutné brát v úvahu, že každá z fází zahrnuje několik oblastí, které je nutno zvažovat při organizaci aktivit zaměřených na rozvoj řečových dovedností. Vzhledem k mnohočetnosti těchto oblastí, na které by bylo možné se soustředit byly pro účel této práce vybrány tyto oblasti: ‘pre-activity stage’ – ‘engage-instruct-initiate sequence’ (sekvence navození aktivity, podání instrukcí a pobídky k zahájení), ‘grouping students’ (rozdělení žáků do skupin); ‘during-activity stage’ – ‘the role of the teacher’ (role učitele), ‘providing feedback during the activity’ (poskytování zpětné vazby během aktivity), ‘the use of mother tongue’ (použití mateřského jazyka); ‘conclusion stage’ – ‘stopping the activity’ (zastavení aktivity), ‘feedback after the activity’ (zpětná vazba po ukončení aktivity).

Třetí část teoretické sekce byla současně základem pro praktickou část této práce. Cílem praktické části bylo formou výzkumu (small-scale research) ověřit využití teoretických poznatků ve skutečném prostředí základních škol v hodinách anglického jazyka.

Pro tento účel byla zvolena první fáze ‘pre-activity stage’, oblast ‘engage-instruct-initiate’, přesněji zadávání instrukcí pro aktivity zaměřené na rozvoj řečových dovedností. Ve vztahu k aktivitám členěným podle Littlewoodovy typologie aktivit byly sledovány čtyři oblasti týkající se poskytování instrukcí pro aktivity zaměřené na rozvoj řečových dovedností. Tyto oblasti zahrnovaly volbu jazyka pro poskytování instrukcí, délku instrukcí, formy podpory instrukcí a formy zpětné vazby ke kontrole percepce zadaných instrukcí.

Cílem výzkumu bylo pokusit se odpovědět na osm otázek: 1) Jaký jazyk učitelé volí k zadávání instrukcí pro aktivity zaměřené na rozvoj řečových dovedností – cílový jazyk, mateřský jazyk, nebo kombinaci cílového a mateřského jazyka?; 2) Jaký jazyk učitelé volí k zadávání instrukcí specificky pro pre-komunikativní a komunikativní aktivity?; 3) Volí učitelé krátké instrukce pro aktivity zaměřené na rozvoj řečových dovedností?; 4) Volí učitelé krátké instrukce specificky pro pre-komunikativní a komunikativní aktivity?; 5) Využívají učitelé formy podpory pro zadávání instrukcí ve vztahu k aktivitám zaměřených na rozvoj řečových dovedností?; 6) Jaká je nejčastější forma podpory pro zadávání instrukcí specificky pro pre-komunikativní a komunikativní aktivity?; 7) Provádějí učitelé kontrolu pochopení zadaných instrukcí u aktivit zaměřených na rozvoj řečových dovedností?; 8) Jaká je nejčastější forma kontroly pochopení zadaných instrukcí specificky pro pre-komunikativní a komunikativní aktivity?

Pro tento účel byla zvolena metoda strukturované observace, která sestávala ze tří fází: sběr dat, prezentace dat a interpretace dat.

Pro první z těchto fází byly sestaveny záznamové a observační archy. Záznamové archy sloužily ke sběru dat v reálném prostředí školy, v nichž byl zaznamenáván verbální i nonverbální projev učitele při poskytování instrukcí. Záznamové archy dále obsahovaly obecné identifikační údaje, tzn. třídu, datum, čas, počet žáků, druh aktivity (komunikativní/pre-komunikativní) a organizační forma (whole-class teaching, groupwork, pairwork).

Tyto údaje byly následně analyzovány a přenášeny do strukturovaných observačních archů.

Strukturované observační archy se zaměřovaly na čtyři základní oblasti poskytování instrukcí. Tyto oblasti zahrnovaly: 1) volbu jazyka pro poskytování instrukcí, cílový jazyk, mateřský jazyk, kombinaci mateřského a cílového jazyka; 2) délku instrukcí, rozlišení krátkých a dlouhých instrukcí; 3) formu podpory při zadávání instrukcí; 4) formu zpětné vazby ke kontrole pochopení zadaných instrukcí.

Z hlediska podpory při zadávání instrukcí byly sledovány tyto formy: paralingvistická podpora, vizuální podpora, psaná podpora, opakování, parafráze nebo přetvoření instrukcí učitelem.

Z hlediska kontroly pochopení instrukcí byly sledovány tyto formy: položení obecné otázky, požádání studenta, aby zopakoval instrukce, parafrázoval, shrnul nebo demonstroval instrukce.



Strukturované observační archy poté sloužily k vytvoření tabulek a grafů pro následnou prezentaci dat.

Na základě zjištěných dat lze říci, že učitelé volí k zadávání instrukcí pro aktivity zaměřené na rozvoj řečových dovedností spíše mateřský jazyk. Avšak ve vztahu k jednotlivým druhům aktivit nejsou výsledky dat takto jednotné. Zatímco u instrukcí pro komunikativní aktivity bylo užívání mateřského jazyka potvrzeno, ve vztahu k pre-komunikativním aktivitám převládalo využití kombinace mateřského a cílového jazyka.

Na základě zjištěných dat lze dále říci, že pro zadávání instrukcí učitelé volí krátké, věcné a logicky uspořádané instrukce. Znovu však tento pohled není tak jednoznačný při analýze dat pro jednotlivé druhy aktivit. Používání krátkých instrukcí bylo potvrzeno u pre-komunikativních aktivit, avšak použití krátkých a dlouhých instrukcí ve vztahu ke komunikativním aktivitám bylo vyrovnané.

Pátá otázka se vztahovala k oblasti podpory instrukcí při jejich zadávání. V této oblasti bylo zjištěno, že učitelé využívají podpory pro zadávání instrukcí. Nejčastější forma podpory představovala paralingvistickou podporu. Toto zjištění bylo potvrzeno také pro komunikativní a pre-komunikativní aktivity.

V poslední oblasti výzkumu zaměřené na kontrolu pochopení zadaných instrukcí bylo zjištěno, že u více než poloviny poskytnutých instrukcí nebyla tato kontrola provedena. Totéž bylo zjištěno ve vztahu k jednotlivým druhům aktivit. V případě použití zpětné vazby u pre-komunikativních aktivit bylo zjištěno, že nejčastější formu představuje užití obecné otázky. Ve vztahu ke komunikativním aktivitám to byl vyrovnaný poměr užití obecné otázky a demonstrace zadaných instrukcí.

Výzkumné šetření bylo provedeno ve specifické oblasti s omezeným počtem subjektů, které pro tento účel sloužily. S ohledem na tato fakta je proto nutné tato data interpretovat, tedy pouze pro danou oblast a neměly by sloužit k vytváření obecných závěrů.



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## **VII. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1A Recording sheet - Sample

Appendix 1B Recording sheet - Sample

Appendix 1C Recording sheet - Sample

Appendix 2A Structured observation sheet - Sample

Appendix 2B Structured observation sheet - Sample

Appendix 2C Structured observation sheet - Sample

Appendix 3A Chart for the analysis of observation sheets (speaking activities)

Appendix 3B Chart for the analysis of observation sheets (communicative activities)

Appendix 3C Chart for the analysis of observation sheets (pre-communicative activities)

Appendix 4A Chart – Overview of the results (Speaking activities)

Appendix 4B Chart – Overview of the results (Communicative activities)

Appendix 4C Chart – Overview of the results (Pre-communicative activities)

Appendix 5A Support for instructions (Speaking activities)

Appendix 5B Support for instructions (Communicative activities)

Appendix 5C Support for instructions (Pre-communicative activities)

Appendix 5D Demonstrating instructions



## Appendix 2B – Structured observation sheet - Sample

### Structured Observation Sheet - Giving Instructions for Activities Focused on the Development of Speaking Skills

#### 1) Type of Activity:

- a)  Pre-communicative activity
- b)  Communicative activity

#### 2) Organizational form:

- a)  Whole-class teaching
- b)  Groupwork
- c)  Pairwork

#### 4) Instructions:

- a) The use of language
  - English (target language)
  - Czech (mother tongue)
  - Target language combined with the mother tongue and vice versa
- a) Length of instructions
  - Short (one word, phrase, short sentences)
  - Long (sentence(s) including chit-chat, telling off, joking, complicated polite language)
- b) Support for instructions
  - Paralinguistic support
    - hand-gesture
    - eye-contact
    - body-movement
    - facial expressions

- Visual support
  - textbooks
  - objects for the use in the activity (pictures, various objects, etc.)
  - others \_\_\_\_\_
- Written clues
  - prepared beforehand (written on cards/pieces of paper, etc.)
  - written on the blackboard
  - others \_\_\_\_\_
- Repetition or paraphrasing instructions, restatement of the main points
- No support for instructions

c) Comprehension check

- General question(s) by the teacher in mother tongue or target language (for example, Ok?, Do you understand? All right?, Jo/Ano?, Jasné?, etc.)
- Students are asked to repeat instructions
- Students are asked to paraphrase instructions
- Students are asked to summarize instructions
- Demonstrating instructions:
  - teacher herself
  - teacher + student(s)
  - student(s)
- No comprehension check
- Other forms \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix 4A: Chart - Overview of the results (Speaking activities)

<b>1) Type of Activity</b>	
Pre-communicative activities	29
Communicative activities	16
<b>Total number of activities</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>2) The Organizational Form</b>	
Whole-class teaching	33
Groupwork	6
Pairwork	12
<b>Total number of organizational forms used</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>3) Instructions</b>	
<b>A) The Use of Language</b>	
Czech (mother tongue)	23
English (target language)	5
Target language combined with the mother tongue and vice versa	17
<b>B) The Length of Instructions</b>	
Short	30
Long	15
<b>C) Support for instructions</b>	
<b>Number of activities in which support for instructions took place</b>	<b>45</b>
- Paralinguistic support	59
Hand-gesture	14
Eye-contact	45
Body-movement	0
Facial expressions	0
- Visual support	19
Textbooks	8
Objects for the use in the activity	11
Others	0
- Written clues	15
Prepared beforehand	1
Written on the blackboard	14
Others	0
- Repetition or paraphrasing instructions, restatement of the main points	0
<b>Total number of support forms</b>	<b>93</b>
- No support for instructions	<b>0</b>
<b>D) Comprehension check</b>	
<b>Number of activities in which comprehension check on instructions took place</b>	<b>19</b>
- General question(s)	12
- Students are asked to repeat instructions	1
- Students are asked to paraphrase instructions	0
- Students are asked to summarize instructions	0
- Demonstrating instructions	7
Teacher herself	2
Teacher + student(s)	5

Student(s)	0
- Other forms	0
<b>Total number of comprehension check forms</b>	<b>20</b>
- No comprehension check	<b>26</b>

## Appendix 4B: Chart - Overview of the Results (Communicative activities)

<b>1) Type of Activity</b>	
Communicative activities	<b>16</b>
<b>2) The Organizational Form</b>	
Whole-class teaching	10
Groupwork	4
Pairwork	3
<b>Total number of organizational forms used</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>3) Instructions</b>	
<b>A) The Use of Language</b>	
Czech (mother tongue)	12
English (target language)	1
Target language combined with the mother tongue and vice versa	3
<b>B) The Length of Instructions</b>	
Short	8
Long	8
<b>C) Support for instructions</b>	
<b>Number of activities in which support for instructions took place</b>	<b>16</b>
- Paralinguistic support	19
Hand-gesture	3
Eye-contact	16
Body-movement	0
Facial expressions	0
- Visual support	9
Textbooks	2
Objects for the use in the activity	7
Others	0
- Written clues	8
Prepared beforehand	0
Written on the blackboard	8
Others	0
- Repetition or paraphrasing instructions, restatement of the main points	0
<b>Total number of support forms</b>	<b>36</b>
- No support for instructions	<b>0</b>
<b>D) Comprehension check</b>	
<b>Number of activities in which comprehension check on instructions took place</b>	<b>6</b>
- General question(s)	3
- Students are asked to repeat instructions	0
- Students are asked to paraphrase instructions	0
- Students are asked to summarize instructions	0
- Demonstrating instructions	3
Teacher herself	1
Teacher + student(s)	2
Student(s)	0
- Other forms	0
<b>Total number of comprehension check forms</b>	<b>6</b>
- No comprehension check	<b>10</b>

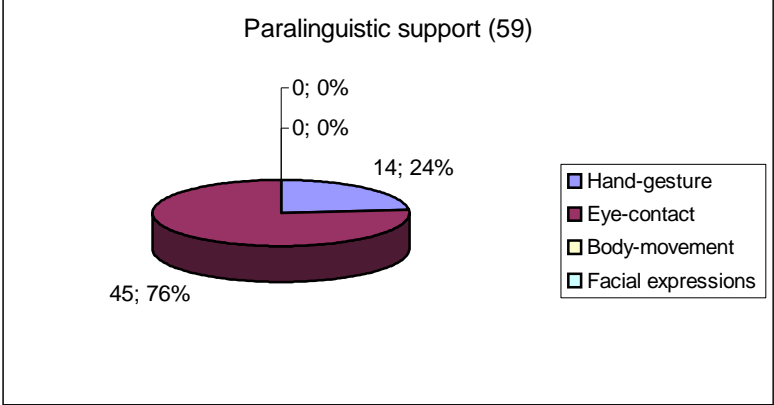
## Appendix 4C: Chart – Overview of the results (Pre-communicative activities)

<b>1) Type of Activity</b>	
Pre-communicative activities	<b>29</b>
<b>2) The Organizational Form</b>	
Whole-class teaching	23
Groupwork	2
Pairwork	9
<b>Total number of organizational forms used</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>3) Instructions</b>	
<b>A) The Use of Language</b>	
Czech (mother tongue)	11
English (target language)	4
Target language combined with the mother tongue and vice versa	14
<b>B) The Length of Instructions</b>	
Short	22
Long	7
<b>C) Support for instructions</b>	
<b>Number of activities in which support for instructions took place</b>	<b>29</b>
- Paralinguistic support	40
Hand-gesture	11
Eye-contact	29
Body-movement	0
Facial expressions	0
- Visual support	10
Textbooks	6
Objects for the use in the activity	4
Others	0
- Written clues	7
Prepared beforehand	1
Written on the blackboard	6
Others	0
- Repetition or paraphrasing instructions, restatement of the main points	0
<b>Total number of support forms</b>	<b>57</b>
- No support for instructions	<b>0</b>
<b>D) Comprehension check</b>	
<b>Number of activities in comprehension check on instructions took place</b>	<b>13</b>
- General question(s)	9
- Students are asked to repeat instructions	1
- Students are asked to paraphrase instructions	0
- Students are asked to summarize instructions	0
- Demonstrating instructions	4
Teacher herself	1
Teacher + student(s)	3
Student(s)	0
- Other forms	0
<b>Total number of comprehension check forms</b>	<b>14</b>
- No comprehension check	<b>16</b>

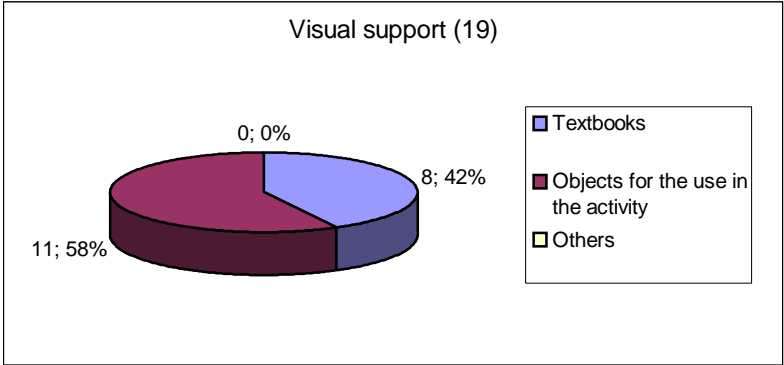
**Appendix 5A: Charts – Support for instructions (Speaking activities)**

**Figure 15**

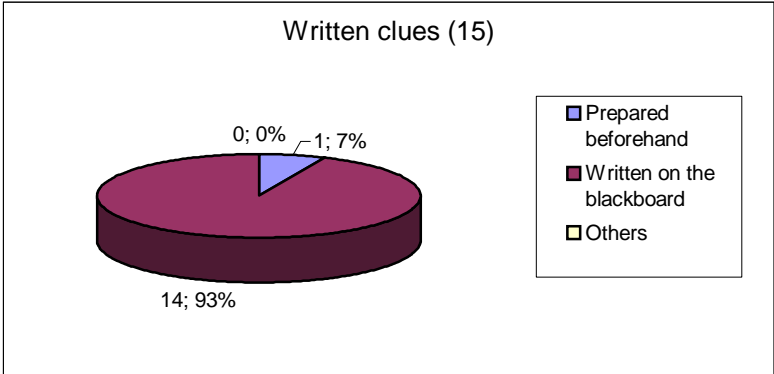
a)



b)



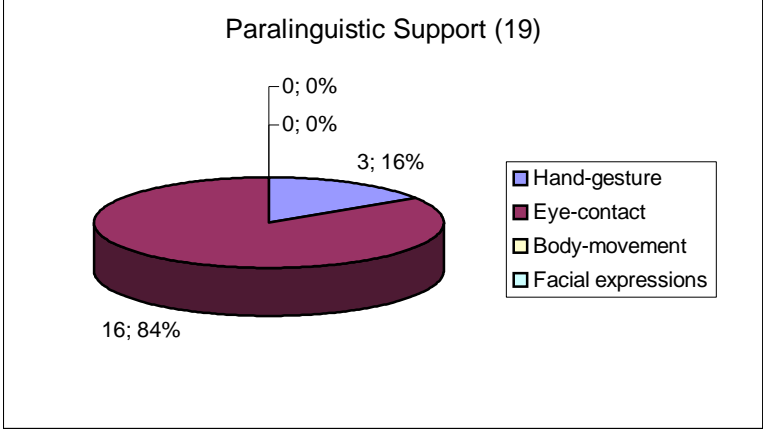
c)



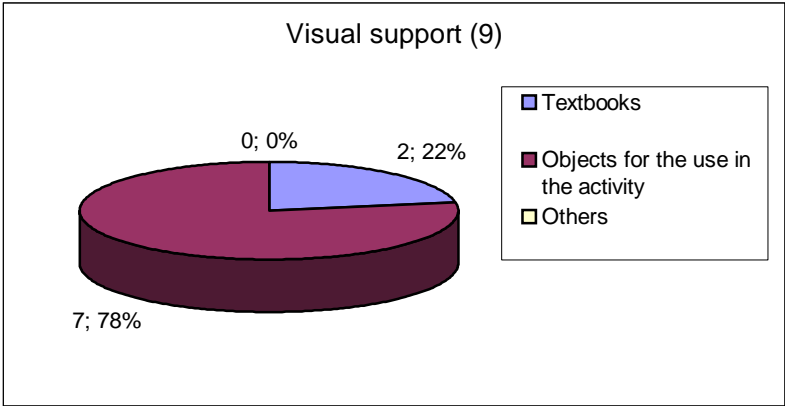
**Appendix 5B: Charts - Support for instructions (Communicative activities)**

**Figure 16**

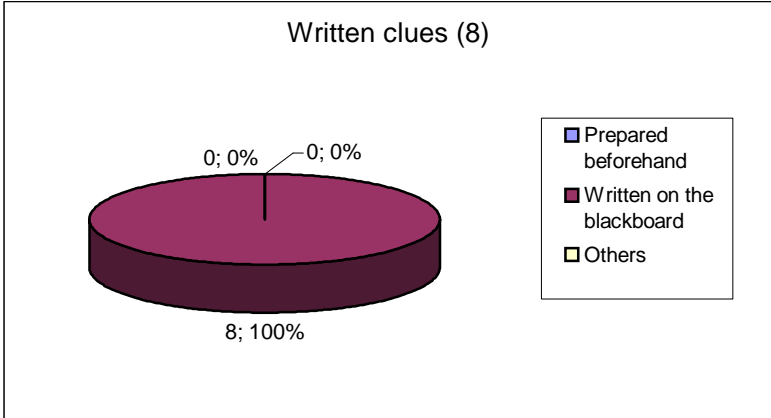
a)



b)



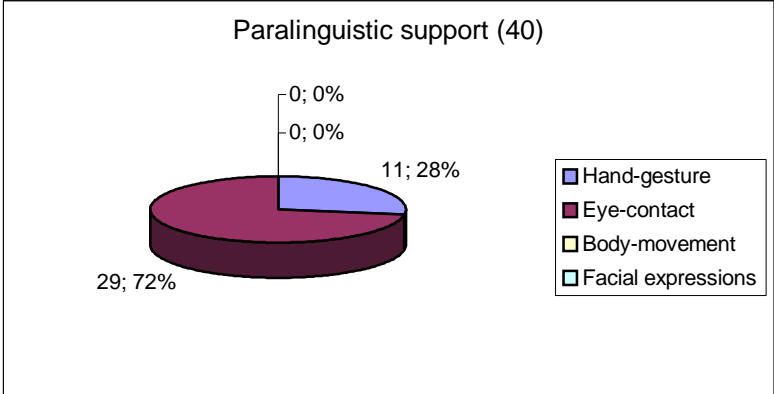
c)



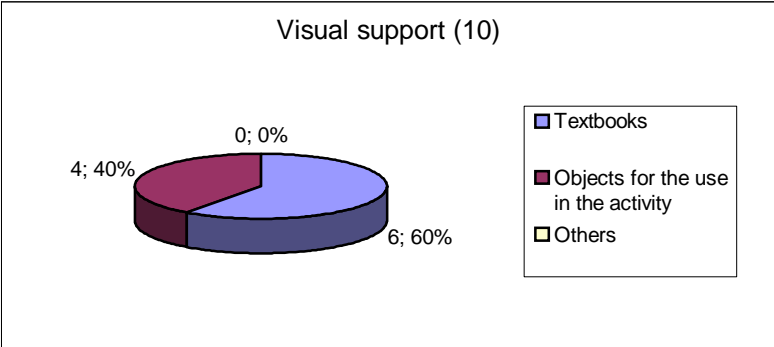
**Appendix 5C: Charts - Support for instructions (Pre-communicative activities)**

**Figure 17**

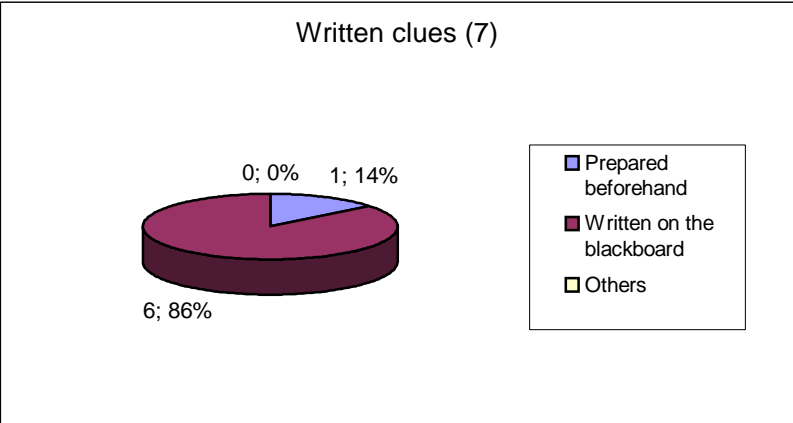
a)



b)

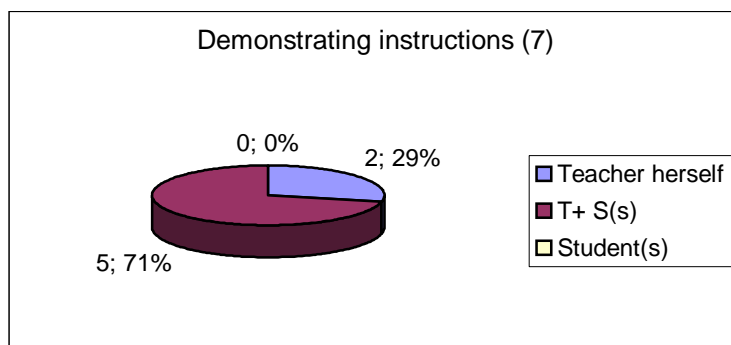


c)

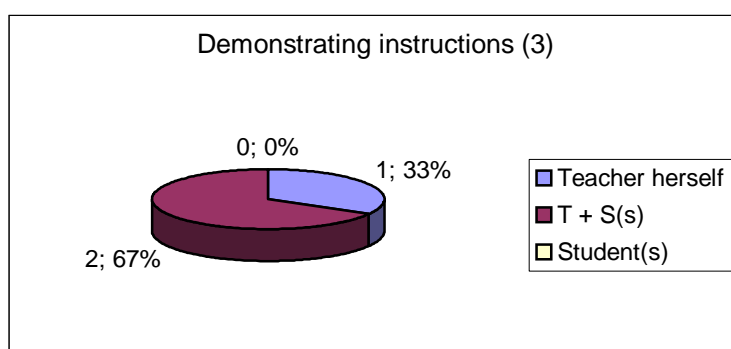


## Appendix 5D: Charts - Demonstrating instructions

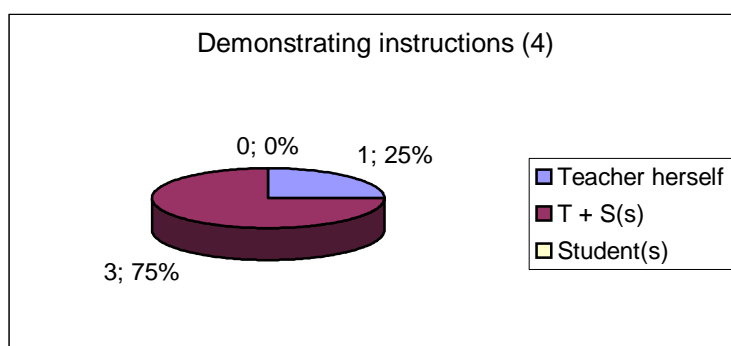
**Figure 18 (Speaking activities)**



**Figure 19 (Communicative activities)**



**Figure 20 (Pre-communicative activities)**





## ÚDAJE PRO KNIHOVNICKOU DATABÁZI

Název práce	<b>Developing Speaking Skills</b>
Autor práce	<b>Erik Vilímec</b>
Obor	Učitelství anglického jazyka
Rok obhajoby	2006
Vedoucí práce	<b>Mgr. Pavel Brebera</b>
Anotace	Teoretická sekce se v první části zabývá teorií mluvení, vztahu mluvení ke konceptu komunikativní kompetence, typologií aktivit pro rozvoj řečových dovedností. Druhá část se věnuje specifikům organizačních forem – frontální výuka, skupinová práce, párová práce. Třetí část se zabývá organizací aktivit pro rozvoj řečových dovedností. Praktická část se soustřeďuje na proces zadávání instrukcí při organizaci aktivit. Formou strukturované observační metody je ověřováno využití teoretických poznatků v této oblasti v reálném prostředí základních škol.
Klíčová slova	Speaking Developing speaking skills Organizational forms Whole-class teaching Pairwork Groupwork Organizing activities Instructions