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The Communicative Approach: Learners' Perspective

Diploma Thesis

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2001

Univerzita Pardubice
Fakulta humanitních studií
Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky

Komunikativní přístup: Pohled studentů

Diplomová Práce

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2001

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V Pardubicích dne 20.6.2001

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Abstract

This thesis deals with the Communicative Approach in English classes with adult learners. Adult learners represent a specific group of students who have already built their own learning strategies on the basis of previous experience with learning languages that can either help or obstruct further education. These attributes of adult learners are described in the theoretical part that also includes the main aspects of the Communicative Approach. Several linguists representing the proponents as well as the opponents view these aspects. The practical part focuses on the adult learners' perspectives of the Communicative Approach used as a resource of information either to confirm or to disprove the hypothesis that it is not possible to rely on one method/approach to language teaching.

Souhrn

Tato práce se zabývá komunikativním přístupem ve výuce anglického jazyka s dospělými studenty. Dospělí žáci reprezentují specifickou skupinu studentů, kteří si již vybudovali své strategie učení na podkladě předcházejících zkušeností s výukou jazyků, což studentům může buď pomoci nebo ztížit další učení. Tyto atributy dospělých studentů jsou charakterizovány v teoretické části, která také zahrnuje hlavní aspekty komunikativního přístupu. Tyto rysy jsou viděny z různých pohledů několika lingvistů zahrnující jak příznivce tak i odpůrce komunikativního přístupu. Praktická část zkoumá stanoviska dospělých studentů ke komunikativnímu přístupu, která slouží jako podklady k potvrzení a nebo k vyvrácení hypotézy, že nelze ve výuce jazyka spoléhat pouze na jednu metodu/přístup.

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I. Introduction

In recent years, English language teaching in the Czech Republic has undergone an enormous boom. As a result of the political situation after the Velvet Revolution (1989), numerous new opportunities for learning foreign languages have been offered especially English language. The reasons for the high demand of learning English were varied. Some of them involved the integration of Europe, the entrance of the Czech Republic into the European Union, and the better economic prospective of people in the labour market. The considerable demand for learning languages was quickly satisfied. Since 1989 a large number of language schools have been formed, offering not only different approaches to language teaching, but primarily chances for adults to undertake further education.

In the last decades, various developments in language teaching have appeared. Some of them have been associated with the syllabus design, for example, the Wilkins' concept of *notional* syllabuses. In the late 1960s British applied linguists (Candlin and Widdowson) emphasised that "the functional and communicative potential of language" (Richards and Rodgers, 1991:64) was inadequately included in the current approaches of language teaching at that time (e.g. situational language teaching). These applied linguists stressed the importance of focusing on the communicative abilities of learners rather than on the structure of language. The specialists' investigation in developing language teaching was particularly based on a preparatory document by a British linguist called Wilkins, which consisted of functional and communicative aspects of language. It also gave a basis for developing communicative syllabuses for language teaching.

"Wilkins's contribution was an analysis of communicative meanings that a language learner needs to understand and express. Rather than describe the core of language through traditional concepts of grammar and vocabulary, Wilkins attempted to demonstrate the systems of meanings that lay behind the communicative uses of language."
(Richards and Rodgers, 1991: 65)

Wilkins did not describe language in terms of grammar but in terms of meanings. He expanded his preliminary document into a book called *Notional Syllabuses* (Richards and Rodgers, 1991:65).

However, Johnson (1981) points out several key problems with this. On one hand, even though there have been a great number of developments relating to syllabus design, such as the concept of *notional* syllabuses and related methodology (concerned with the growth of new procedures and techniques in the teaching process), they have not yet been put together to make a new, cohesive method for language teaching. On the other hand, a number of assumptions, sharing similar methodological principals of language teaching and referring to the new developments influenced by the *Notional Syllabuses*, are found under the names of "Communicative Language Teaching" (CLT) or "Communicative Approach" (CA)¹. Other works such as the writings of Widdowson, Brumfit, Johnson and other British linguists have also brought the theory of a communicative or a functional approach to language teaching. This theory was applied by textbook writers and was quickly accepted by English language teaching specialists, curriculum development centres and even the government, which "gave the prominence nationally and internationally to what came to be referred to as the CA or CLT" (Richard and Rodgers, 1991:65).

Concerning the terminology, Richards and Rodgers regarded Communicative Language Teaching as an *approach* rather than a *method* (Richards and Rodgers, 1991:16). Cunnigsworth points out that there is no generally accepted methodology for CLT. "There is no single text or authority on it, nor any single model that is universally accepted as authoritative" (Cunningworth, 1995:117). Nevertheless, there is a theoretical core of CLT, including its main characteristics that will be dealt with later by this paper.

¹ Several resources that have been used for this diploma paper speak either about CLT or CA. They stand for the same kind of approach to language teaching and are generally perceived as equal counterparts. Therefore the terms are used interchangeably throughout this paper.

Although CLT is widely accepted by many applied linguists and teachers as the most effective approach and "... has become the accepted *orthodoxy* (Cunningsworth, 1995:116) of TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) over the ten years or more . . . ", a number of critical looks and misconceptions about CLT have appeared (Thompson, Swan). Those views of CLT will also be dealt with in details in later chapters of this paper.

Unlike the Grammar-Translation Method of language teaching, which emphasises the form (grammar rules of a language) of the target language and accuracy, Communicative Language Teaching is focused on the semantic aspects of the target language and fluency. CLT makes use of real-life situations that necessitate communication. What is the nature of communication? The emphasis of the CLT is placed on the learning a language for communicative purposes. The communicative classroom consists of communicative activities and various roles of teacher and learners. What attributes do the communicative activities consist of? What are the roles of teacher and learners in the communicative classroom? The goal of CLT is the development of a learner's communicative competence. What does the communicative competence mean? This paper will focus on those questions and their possible answers.

However, not only the views of linguists and specialists on CLT will be discussed in this diploma paper, but also the learners' perspectives of the main characteristics of CLT. The subject of this diploma thesis therefore is: **(a)** the presentation of the main features of the CLT (language as a means of communication, communicative competence, semantic aspects of the target language, fluency, communicative classroom-including roles of teacher and students, and communicative activities); **(b)** an analysis those features and the views of current influences; and **(c)** a discussion on the different attitudes of adult students to LT, including both current experiences of adult students with CLT and previous experiences with other, differing styles of language teaching.

A research project examining this has been carried out in small groups of students of the Caledonian School, one of the schools that emphasises the Communicative Approach to language teaching, and was established after the Velvet Revolution. The purpose of this diploma paper is either to corroborate or to disprove the hypothesis that it is not possible to rely only on one method/approach to language teaching.

As far as the organisation of the diploma paper is concerned, it is divided into two main parts. The first part deals with the theoretical background of the Communicative Language Teaching and each chapter is divided into a number of sections, including the main features of CLT and a variety of views from several linguists (Swan, Thompson, Widdowson, Corder and others) in an attempt to explain some of the changes and new trends in teaching English as a foreign language. The theoretical part also focuses on the main characteristics of adult learners, their attitudes to learning languages and their background knowledge of language learning. The second part provides a detailed analysis of adult students' opinions regarding the CLT. The individual views of students were gathered by the structural interview method, which consists of questions defined from the start and introduced to the interviewees (Seliger, 1990:167).

As far as the gender is concerned, I have chosen to refer to a learner as masculine and to a teacher as feminine according to generally accepted convention. Many teachers are men and many learners are women.

These are the abbreviations used in this diploma thesis:

CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
CA	Communicative Approach
TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
L1	Mother tongue
L2	Target language

LT	Language teaching
ELTJ	English Language Teaching Journal

II. Theoretical part

1. Adult learners

Adult students represent a diverse group of individuals and therefore I feel it is necessary to consider the following aspects. They will cover several main areas. First the field of motivation, including the motives and reasons of adults to enrol for an English course. Any learner, according to Hedge, "may be influenced by a variety of motivations which will affect such things as anxiety, or attitude, or willingness to try new learning strategies" (Hedge, 2000:22). Secondly, the areas of the adults' background knowledge and experience and finally, the territory of adults' personal circumstances.

1.1. Motivation

What are the reasons that encourage adults to decide to learn English? There are many reasons and incentives that obviously differ from those of children attending school. Adult learners coming back to study can regard language learning as a hobby or a "cultural pursuit worthy of the educated person" (Hedge, 2000:22), or amongst other reasons for wishing to communicate in English. According to Heather, once an adult student decides to attend an English course, and he is not required to do so, his motivation must arise from within him or it must be based on his perception that what he is learning is of interest and of value to him (Heather, 1999:4). Cooper and Seckbach mention economic rewards for knowing English and affirm that these benefits are important stimuli for motivating an individual to learn a language. They claim that:

"Lingua francas, for example, often spread along trade routes and radiate from market centers, carried by traders who need a common language in order to do business. . . . When knowledge of a language becomes associated with material benefits, and

when people have opportunities to learn it, they are likely to do so."

(Cooper and Seckbach 1977, cited in McKay, 1992:25)

According to the comments mentioned above, we can make a distinction, based on a Gardner and Lambert study of foreign language learners in Canada, between *integrative* and *instrumental* motivation (Gardner and Lambert, 1972:2). When a learner is integratively motivated, he wants to study a language "to learn more about the cultural community, because he is interested in it" (Gardner and Lambert, 1972:3). On the contrary, an instrumental motivation describes a group of factors concerned with external goals such as social benefits, financial rewards, getting a job or gaining a promotion. Williams and Burden emphasise the fact that "it was originally found that integrative motivation correlates with higher achievement in the language, leading to a suggestion this is a more important form of motivation" (Williams and Burden, 1997:117). This finding was corroborated by Lambert, among learners of French in Canada. Nonetheless, other research carried by Lukmani, among students of English in Bombay, challenged that view. Lukmani found a high correlation between instrumental motivation and high language proficiency test scores. McKay states that "these contradictory findings suggest that motivational factors need to be assessed within the larger social context" (McKay, 1992:26).

Bailey further distinguishes integrative and instrumental motivation according to whether or not the motivation comes from intrinsic or extrinsic sources. Figure 1. specifies this additional differentiation.

Figure 1. The distinction of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation

	Intrinsic	Extrinsic
Integrative	Learner wishes to integrate with the L2 culture (e.g. for immigration or marriage)	Someone else wishes the learner to know the L2 for integrative reasons (e.g. Japanese parents send kids to Japanese-language school)
Instrumental	Learner wishes to achieve goals utilising L2 (e.g. for a career)	External power wants learner to learn L2 (e.g. corporation sends Japanese businessman to US for language training)

Figure 1.: *Integrative and instrumental motivation contrasted by intrinsic and extrinsic source (Bailey 1986, quoted in McKay, 1992:26)*

McKay explains one example concerning the economic benefits in more detail. These benefits of learning English contribute an important source of instrumental motivation. Such economic benefits, on one hand, can arise from intrinsic sources. In this case, individuals long to learn English because they are convinced this knowledge will lead to a better job or other kind of economic profit. On the other hand, when the motivation comes from extrinsic sources, an employer actually provides economic encouragement for learning languages. The author states that:

“Intrinsically derived instrumental motivation is based on an individual’s belief that economic rewards will accrue from learning English, while extrinsically motivated instrumental motivation is based on actual economic benefits given an individual by a corporation or government.”
(McKay, 1992:26,27)

Although instrumental and integrative motivations are of crucial importance in learning languages, many studies have found that a number of other factors, such as confidence or friendship may be more significant as motivating factors (Ellis, 1994:510). It is very important for a teacher to take all these factors into consideration. As Rogers puts it, all reasons for learning are acceptable because any motivation is better than none (Rodgers, 1989:29).

1.2. Background knowledge and experience

What do adult learners bring to a class? First, adults have already well acquired one language, which is their mother tongue (L1). They are aware of the sound and structure systems of L1, and have already developed their habits and strategies in learning a language (L1), which can either help or obstruct learning the target language². In addition to the experience of L1, Heather argues that adult students also bring their background knowledge gained from work, which can be used by a teacher as a rich resource for a language course (Heather, 1999:2).

Secondly, adult students, especially those who have prior experiences in second language learning, are considerably influenced in their attitudes to further learning. According to Jiránek, an adult student's rich experience in learning languages can make him more critical and conservative, as he has already formed his preferred methods that he applies for most situations. When he faces a new situation, he may be made aware of unknown strategies, which he could perceive by as risky, and he generally wants to avoid these (Jiránek, 1997:110). Therefore, when learning a new language, adult learners are likely to follow their developed learning strategies, which have previously been successful and are likely to prevent a negative experience. Richards and Lockhart write that language learners may value some language learning strategies, which the teacher may try to dissuade. They give an example:

² For more details concerning the mother tongue, see the following section concentrating on L1.

“Students from a culture where rote learning and memorisation are widely used may think that these are useful strategies in learning English. However, their teacher may come from a culture where such strategies are not valued and may try to discourage their use by learners.”

(Richards and Lockhart, 1994:55)

Heather remarks that learners with previous language learning experience are expected to bring with them expectations of how language classes should be organised and taught. In any classes with differences in expectations, it is advisable for a teacher and students to negotiate what and how to learn (Heather, 1999:3).

1.3. Personal circumstances

Apart from individual learning styles and personal characteristics that are specific for almost all groups of learners, this section deals with personal circumstances such as: age, work appointments, attendance, punctuality and concentration. Other circumstances will not be discussed in detail, they are not part of the main focus of this study.

Adult classes usually consist of pupils ranging in age from 18 to 60 years old or more. It seems obvious that the interests and knowledge of an 18-year old student may vary from those of a 55-year old student. The opinions of younger students may be perceived by older ones as irresponsible while on the other hand, younger students may feel that older students are slow and impede them in their learning. However, both groups bring contrary opinions to the classroom, which could be used for classroom discussions, and could enrich and broaden each other's horizons.

Difficulties with regular attendance, punctuality and concentration are closely connected with student work appointments. Those problems usually appear when language classes are scheduled during the work. This usually means that the learners attend language courses from 8:00 to 16:00. As a teacher of such

English language classes, I must face this situation every day. Adult students are often forced to cancel the lessons due to either ad-hoc arranged meetings or unexpected and urgent working problems that have to be solved immediately. Due to the missed lessons it is more difficult to build a sense of community in the classroom. According to my own experience, if students feel that they are a part of a classroom community, they want to talk to each other, to exchange information about themselves and their lives, and in turn to learn more about their classmates. It also increases the students' commitment to learning. Furthermore, students feel more at ease speaking the target language and are consequently more willing to take risks involved in using the L2. Heather emphasises that "although we may not be able to change the students' personal circumstances, we can, by being flexible, provide a source of support" (Heather, 1999:5).

In this chapter we can see many aspects of adult learners that can influence language learning either in a positive way (motivation), or in a negative way (previous negative language learning experience and differences in expectations). It is of primary importance for a teacher to know the backgrounds and interests of students, to know about their previous language learning experience and their attitudes to English. Knowing all this information can enable a teacher to help students to learn more happily and effectively. Concerning the effectiveness of language learning, there can also be psychological barriers such as lack of confidence on the students' part. Those factors need to be overcome in order to create good learning conditions in the classroom.

Lewis points out that any language teaching process has to consider the following:

"Any policy for language, especially in the system of education, has to take account of the attitude of those likely to be affected. In the long run, no policy will succeed which does not do one of three things: conform to the expressed attitudes of those

involved; persuade those who express negative attitudes about the rightness of the policy; or seek to remove the causes of the disagreement. In any case knowledge about attitudes is fundamental to the formulation of a policy as well as to success in its implementation."

(Lewis 1981, cited in Ashworth, 1992:25)

The teachers also need to be able to justify themselves on two main counts:

"First, they need to be able to show that what is being taught is desirable, directly or indirectly, for the good of society at large, and second they need to show that the procedures being used relate explicitly to pupils as they actually are, to the teaching situation as it actually is, and to the desired objectives.

(Brumfit, 1979:185)

Therefore it is important in language teaching to see both sides of the teaching process. On one side there are the aims and conceptions of a teacher and on the other side there are the ideas and attitudes of students, both of which should be taken into consideration for planning, implementing, and evaluating teaching programmes.

2. Communicative Language Teaching

"An English boy who has been through a good middle-class school in England can talk to a Frenchman, slowly and with difficulty, about female gardeners and aunts; conversation which, to a man possessed of neither, is liable to pall. Possibly, if he be a bright exception, he may be able to tell the time, or make a few guarded observations concerning the weather. No doubt he could repeat a goodly number of irregular verbs by heart; only as a matter of fact, few foreigners care to listen to their own irregular verbs, recited by young Englishmen . . . And then, when the proud parent takes his son and heir to Dieppe merely to discover that the lad does not know enough to call a cab, he abuses not the system but the innocent victim".

(Jerome 1900, cited in Swan *A critical look at the Communicative Approach 2*).

This Jerome's extract from his book *Three Men on the Bummel* suggests that the language courses of his day were not efficient and they needed to be improved. It is hard to believe that a pupil, who has studied the language for seven years, is unable to call a taxi using the target language. As a result of this situation, a radical change in the approach to language teaching was necessary. Swan points out that Jerome, according to the above extract, complained that "his school-leaver knew grammar and words, but could not use them appropriately; . . . was not successful in relating code to context; and in general lacked communicative competence" (Swan, ELTJ 39/2, 1985: 76), which is one of the characteristic features of Communicative Language Teaching.

Communicative Language Teaching could be said to be the product of educators and linguists who had grown dissatisfied with the Audio-lingual and the Grammar-translation methods of foreign language teaching. They felt, as Jerome did, that students were not learning enough realistic, 'whole' language. The pupils did not know how to communicate using appropriate social language, gestures, or expressions. The interest in, and the development of, Communicative Language Teaching mushroomed in the 1970s and since then the scope of CLT has expanded (mentioned earlier). CLT aims to: (a) make communicative competence the goal of language teaching and; (b) develop procedures for the teaching of the four language skills including productive skills (speaking and writing) as well as receptive ones (listening and reading) that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication (Richards and Rodgers, 1991: 66).

Even though CLT is one of the most widespread approaches to LT, there is not a single document universally and officially accepted. For several linguists, CLT presents little more than a combination of teaching focused on grammar and function. Littlewood states, "one of the most characteristic features of communicative language teaching is that it pays attention to functional as well

as structural aspects of language" (Littlewood, 1981:1). According to Kiganda the CLT brings the structural (formal) aspect of language and the so-called functional aspect together, "to draw on both" (Kiganda, cited in ELTJ 39/3, 1985:175). For others, it is seen as a learner-oriented style LT. Li Xiaojun says that:

"A communicative approach presupposes that students take the central role in learning. The idea of student centredness is first of all embodied in the design of the syllabus. We claim that our communicative syllabus is student-oriented because it gears its objectives to what students actually need . . . "

(Li Xiaojun, 1984:9)

There is another dimension of CLT. It is an experience-based view of second language teaching. Richards and Rodgers summarise those interpretations as follows:

"Common to all versions of Communicative Language Teaching, however, is a theory of language teaching that starts from a communicative model of language and language use, and that seeks to translate this into a design for an instructional system, for materials, for teacher and learner roles and behaviours, and for classroom activities and techniques."

(Richards and Rodgers, 1991:69)

In the following chapters I shall consider the main characteristics of the CA. They have been chosen from those preferred by Pýchová (1996/97) including language as a means of communication, communicative competence, emphasis on the semantic aspects of the target language, fluency versus accuracy, communicative activities, and the roles of teacher and learner.

2.1. Language as a means of communication

Communication implies a situation more than one person. There is someone (a speaker) who makes use of language to transmit a message and someone (a listener) to receive it. Since the participants are speaking in some way, they must feel a desire to speak, otherwise they would remain quiet (Harmer, 1982:165). According to Malamah-Thomas "communication is undertaken for a purpose. There is always reason for transmitting a message to someone else"

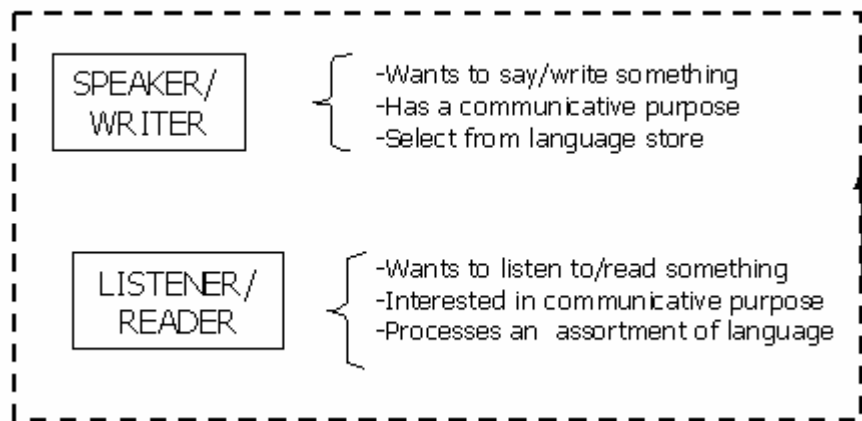
(Malamah-Thomas, 1987:14). The purpose can be to agree or disagree, to give information, or simply to comment on something. In order to do this, the speaker chooses from his or her language store the appropriate language that he or she thinks will best achieve their purpose. Ideally, the listener is supposed to be interested and wants to listen what the speaker is trying to say. Although the listener may perceive the direction of the conversation, "she or he will nevertheless have to be ready to process a great variety of language in order to understand efficiently what is being said" (Harmer, 1982:166). Because communication is a two-sided process, it is therefore essential to have in mind the followings:

"The most efficient communicator in a foreign language is not always the person who is best at manipulating its structures. It is often the person who is most skilled at processing the complete situation involving himself and his hearer, taking account of what knowledge is already shared between them (e.g. from the situation or from the preceding conversation), and selecting items which will communicate his message effectively".
(Littlewood, 1981:4)

According to Littlewood, it is necessary to give opportunities to learners to develop these skills, by being exposed to situations where the emphasis is placed on the learners' resources available for communicating meanings as effectively and economically as possible. Since the classroom environment provides limited opportunities, Littlewood points out that as a result it "may often entail sacrificing grammatical accuracy in favour of immediate communicative effectiveness" (Littlewood, 1981:4).

These comments do not only apply to people in a conversation, but also to people writing and receiving letters, to lecturers giving talks, to novelists and their readers and so on. Harmer represents these generalisations in the following way:

Figure 2. The nature of communication



(Harmer, 1982:166)

We use language to communicate: when people ask a question, it is because they usually do not know the answer; when people speak or write, it is because they have something to say; and when they listen or read, they do it to get information or ideas. In other words there is a need for communication and something to be communicated. In real life outside the classroom, when people are asked a question, they have the freedom to choose an answer.

In many language textbooks, however, students are often instructed to give certain answers, such as affirmative or negative answers, even if it is a conversational practise. Students are often required to give only one form of response according to some prescribed pattern which, in my opinion, does not adequately apply to conversation or interactive communication in real life. It is a matter of some debate as to what extent textbooks can consist of real communicative activities. Cunningsworth mentions that "at most levels it is possible to include *realistic* activities, often based on contrived information gaps of various kinds, which involve, at the least, language use which is communicative in the context in the classroom" (Cunningsworth, 1995:117). However, these activities are useful for communicative language use, but are not based on common situations that occur in a real life, ". . . it is good to

demonstrate structures by using them as they are typically used in the outside world; writing and speaking practise should if possible involve genuine exchanges of information" (Swan, 1985:82). Unlike courses that failed to take the real-life use of language into account, in this field the CA ". . . has without question made an important contribution to language teaching" (Swan, 1985:82). Malamah-Thomas points out that "where there is no interaction, but only action and reaction, there can be no communication" (Malamah-Thomas, 1987:11).

If students do not have a chance to learn to cope with freedom and unpredictability of a situation at school, how can they manage when they face a real communication situation outside the educational walls? Therefore it is important to provide students with real-life practice, though of course, the classroom is not the outside world, and learning language is not the same as using language. However, Swan points out that effective learning can actually involve various kinds of distancing from the real-life behaviour. Therefore there is not anything wrong, with teaching activities that include repetition, rote learning, translation or structural drilling which help to focus on only one language item. Nonetheless, if all the activities have only this character, it is quite another matter (Swan, 1985:83).

Apart from learning languages to be able to use them for certain purposes (mainly for communicative purposes), Pýchová mentions that current language users have found out other aims and functions of foreign languages (Pýchová, 1996/97:76). Grenfell writes that "a language is neither something that we gain as a pile of information nor a means for achieving something, but is a reflection of a person's sense of self-awareness"³ (Grenfell 1991, cited in Pýchová, 1996/97:76). There are also other authors like Widdowson, who emphasise that language is not only a means of communication, but a speaker can also be

³ I translated this quotation myself. Therefore slight differences in the usage of words of the original text and my translation might occur.

associated with a certain social class according to his language knowledge and the use of a particular language (Widdowson 1995, in Pýchová, 1996/97:76). In other words, the speaker is building a new cultural identity by using his foreign language in a new environment. Kramersch believes that there is a *natural* connection between the language spoken by members of a social group and that group's identity.

“By their accent, their vocabulary, their discourse⁴ patterns, speakers identify themselves and are identified as members of this or that speech and discourse community. From this membership, they draw personal strength and pride, as well as a sense of social importance and historical continuity from using the same language as the group they belong to.”
(Kramersch, 1998:65,66)

The aim of this chapter was to show the nature of communication, highlight other functions of a language (such as a means of a social identity), and show the difference between the conditions and opportunities of communication, in the classroom environment, and in the real world.

2.1.1. Mother tongue

In this paper, the mother tongue has been already mentioned in connection with the previous knowledge and experience of adult learners. In CLT the role of L1, on the one hand, has often been ignored⁵. Mumby's *Communicative Syllabus Design*, for example, “makes no significant reference to the mother tongue at all” (Mumby, 1978:73). Larsen-Freeman writes “the students' native language has no particular role in the Communicative Approach” (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:135). On the other hand, Swan emphasises that it is a matter of common experience that the mother tongue plays an important part in learning

⁴ According to Kramersch this is: “The process of language use, whether it be spoken, written or printed, that includes writers, texts, and readers within a sociocultural context of meaning production and reception (Kramersch, glossary: p.126).

⁵ It is not really true that the role of L1 has been “entirely ignored. See, for example, J. Edge (1986) where he suggests that the interactive methods and communicative procedures that have been developed in foreign language teaching should also be applied to the teaching of translation and describes his applications in advanced-level classes.

a foreign language. "Students are always translating into and out of their own language - and teachers are always telling them not to" (Swan, 1985:85). Teachers are reluctant, because they can be afraid of either "the schismatic use of the mother tongue" in case of working in-groups (Kramsch 1981, in Rivers 1987:24) or the interference⁶. In other words, teachers are afraid of the *negative transfer* (Hendrich, 1988:45) of the mother tongue's habits into a foreign language, which often leads to numerous errors. Hendrich, nevertheless, speaks about a *positive transfer* too, which influences the language acquisition in positive way (Hendrich, 1988:44). Leont'jev also stresses the positive side of the L1 transfer and gives the following example: when acquiring a foreign language, it can be more economical to realise and automate the correct forms (with reference to the mother tongue) rather than learning new rules (Leont'jev 1969, in Hendrich, 1988:44). Swan comments on this in similar way:

"Interlanguages notoriously contain errors which are caused by interference from the mother tongue; it is not always realised that a large proportion of the correct features in an interlanguage also contain a mother tongue element. In fact, if we do not keep making correspondences between foreign language items and mother tongue items, we would never learn foreign languages at all."

(Swan, 1985:85)

According to this absence in methodological literature and different attitudes to the mother tongue, it is difficult for teachers to know to what extent to use, or permit the use of the students' native language in the classroom. This chapter considers some causes for the neglect of L1, its general advantages and the danger of its overuse.

Harmer identifies some of the main reasons for the lack of the L1 attention, which are particularly influential. He mentions the association with the

⁶ According to Ellis (1985) interference is the result of what is called *proactive inhibition*. "This is concerned with the way in which previous learning prevents or inhibits the learning of new bits" (Ellis, 1985:22).

Grammar-Translation Method, which is even today treated as something very unfashionable. But Harmer feels that "the worst excesses of the direct method in its 1960s form should serve as reminder that its total rejection of translation and all that it implied was clearly a case in which the baby was indeed thrown out with the bathwater" (Harmer, 1983:103). Atkinson also identifies the fact that, in general, with teacher training very little attention is paid to the use of the native language. "The implication, one assumes, is often that it has *no* role to play" (Atkinson, 1987:241). However, the total prohibition of the students' native language is not now fashionable, but the potential of its use in the classroom needs further exploration.

Larsen-Freeman stresses in his study that the target language should be used not only when the communicative activities⁷ are practised, but also, for example, when the activities are explained to the students or when homework is assigned. He argues that "the students learn from these classroom management exchanges, too, and realise that the target language is a vehicle for communication, not just an object to be studied" (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:135). However, according to Atkinson, the mother tongue has an important place in language teaching too. He writes about some general advantages of mother-tongue use, the most significant of which being translation techniques. He points out that these techniques form "a part of the preferred learning strategies of most learners in most places" (Atkinson, 1987:241) and that their importance should not be underestimated. Bolitho stresses another prominent role of L1, in that it is sometimes to able let the students say what they really want to say. "Clearly once it is established what the learners want to say, the teacher can then encourage them to find a way of expressing their meaning in English or, if necessary, help out" (Bolitho, 1983:237).

⁷ What is common for communicative activities? (see further chapters specialising in this area to find the answers)

Furthermore, Atkinson lays also stress on the fact that techniques involving the use of L1 can be very efficient concerning the amount of time needed to achieve specific aims, which he does not specify, but he mentions some uses of the L1 (Atkinson, 1987:243). He exploited the mother tongue on an experimental basis for various purposes in monolingual classes and subsequently described the principal techniques and activities that he finds useful. Let me consider some of them:

1) *Eliciting language* (suitable for all levels)

He gives this question as an example, "How do you say X in English?" and explains its advantage that it can often be less time-consuming and it can involve better understanding than other methods of eliciting such as visuals aids, mime, etc.

2) *Checking comprehension* (all levels)

This is another useful technique for checking comprehension of the concept behind a structure. He states an example, "How do you say 'I've been waiting for ten minutes' in Spanish?" This can help and encourage learners to develop the ability to distinguish between "structural, semantic and pragmatic equivalence" (Widdowson 1974, cited in Brumfit and Johnson, 1979:65) and as such it is very useful. It is Atkinson's belief that in monolingual classes this technique is often "more foolproof and quicker than more inductive checking techniques developed specifically for use in multilingual classes" (Atkinson, 1987:243).

3) *Giving instructions* (early levels)

Although it is true that explaining activities in L2 is a real communication, at very low levels this advantage must be weighed against one fact. Atkinson stresses that the instructions for many communicative interaction activities for early level students, while very useful in themselves, can be rather complicated (Atkinson, 1987:244). Therefore it is better to make a compromise to give the instructions in L2 and ask for their repetition in L1 to make sure that everybody understands what to do.

Despite the points concerning the advantages and uses of L1 mentioned earlier, it is clear that in any situations "excessive dependency on the mother tongue is to be avoided" (Atkinson, 1987:246). Otherwise some or all of the following problems may appear, and they are generally persistent in nature:

- 1) The teacher and/or the students begin to feel that they have not "really" understood any item of language until it has been translated.
- 2) The teacher and/or the students fail to observe distinctions between equivalence of form, semantic equivalence, and pragmatic features, and thus oversimplify to the point of using crude and inaccurate translation.
- 3) Students speak to the teacher in mother tongue as a matter of course, even when they are quite capable of expressing what they mean.
- 4) Students fail to realise that during many activities in the classroom it crucial that they use only L2.

(R. Gower and S. Walters, 1983:129)

In this chapter I have tried to show that although the L1 is not a suitable basis for methodology, it plays various important roles in activities such as eliciting language, checking comprehension, giving instruction and translation, that are suitable for all levels of students. However, some teachers and linguists often undervalue the importance of L1.

2.2. Communicative competence

The goal of teachers, especially of those employing the Communicative Approach in their lessons, is to "produce" communicatively competent students (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:131). Although, Larsen-Freeman stresses that this has been the goal of other methods too, the notion of communicative competence in the CA is much expanded. As much has been written about communicative competence and many linguists have dealt with it, some confusion may arise over terminology. I shall now have a closer look at the main views and definitions of communicative competence in order to avoid ambiguity.

In 1965 an American linguist, Noam Chomsky, distinguished between the concepts of linguistic competence – an ideal speaker-listener intuitive knowledge of the native language rules and performance – and what a speaker actually produces by applying these rules (cited in Revell, 1979:4). These two concepts have come to be referred to what a person knows about a language (competence) and what a person does (performance). It was a similar distinction to the one that Ferdinand de Saussure (1916) had made between “langue” and “parole”. Chomsky thought that:

“linguistic theory is concerned primarily with an ideal speaker-listener in a completely homogeneous speech community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitation, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance.”

(Chomsky 1965, cited in Richards and Rodgers, 1991:70)

Chomsky's linguistic theory of competence considered only grammatical knowledge – “. . . it is knowledge of the language system” (Johnson, cited in Johnson and Morrow, 1981:10). Hymes defines this language competence, in these terms, as somewhat of a “Garden of Eden” (Hymes 1970, cited in Johnson and Morrow, 1981:10). Language does not occur in isolation, as Chomsky seemed to suggest, rather it occurs in a social context and reflects social rather than linguistic purposes. Many linguists like Campbell, Wales and Halliday agreed with Hymes that Chomsky's competence omitted socio-cultural features and lacked a more general communicative ability.

According to Hymes, Chomsky's theory of competence provides no place for language use, and neither does his category of performance. Campbell and Wales agree with Hymes that Chomsky's competence took no account of the most important linguistic ability, which is “to produce or understand utterances which are not so much grammatical but, more important, appropriate to the

context⁸ in which they are made" (Campbell and Wales, quoted in Mumby, 1978:9).

Hymes' theory of communicative competence "was a definition of what speaker needs to know in order to be communicatively competent in a speech community" (in Richards and Rodgers, 1991:70). In Hymes's view, a person who is communicatively competent acquires both knowledge and ability for language use with respect to the following:

- 1) whether (and to what degree) something is formally possible;
 - 2) whether (and to what degree) something is feasible in virtue of the means of the implementation available;
 - 3) whether (and to what degree) something is appropriate (adequate, happy, successful) in relation to a context in which it is used and evaluated;
 - 4) whether (and to what degree) something is in fact done, actually performed, and what its doing entails.
- (Hymes 1972, cited in Richards and Rodgers, 1991:70)

It can be seen that Hymes' theory of communicative competence provides a much more comprehensive view than the competence, which focuses mainly on abstract grammatical knowledge, which was developed by Chomsky (Richards and Rodgers 1991).

Allwright examines about the relationship that is held between linguistic competence and communicative competence that has already been mentioned, believing that the two terms are not "directly incompatible", and there is a "logical" relationship between them. He suggests that "some areas of linguistic competence are essentially irrelevant to communicative competence, but that, in general, linguistic competence is a part of communicative

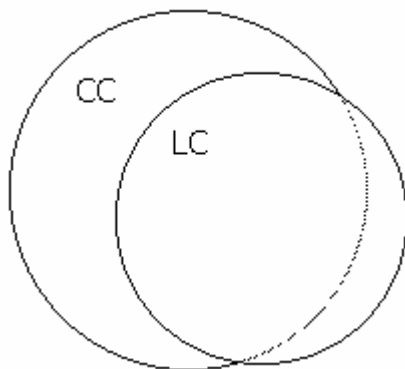
⁸ By context Campbell and Wales mean "both the situational and verbal context of utterances" (1978:9).

competence" (Allwright, cited in Brumfit and Johnson, 1979:168). The following diagram (Figure 3.) makes the point more clearly.

Figure 3. The relationship between linguistic and communicative competence

CC = Communicative Competence

LC = Linguistic Competence



(Allwright, cited in Brumfit and Johnson, 1979:168)

In this section various comments on communicative competence have been introduced. To summarise this chapter I shall now look at the four domains of skill that make up a person's communicative competence, according to Littlewood (1981:6). He emphasises that those domains must be recognised in foreign language learning. They are presented from the learner's perspective in order to simplify it:

- The learner must develop skill in manipulating the linguistic system to a certain level where he is able to use it spontaneously and flexibly to express his intended message in order to achieve as high a degree as possible of linguistic competence.
- The student must make differences between the forms that he has developed as a part of his linguistic competence, and the communicative

functions that they perform. This means "items mastered as a part of linguistic system must also be understood as a part of a communicative system" (Littlewood, 1981:6).

- The learner must achieve not only skills and strategies for using language to communicate meanings as effectively as possible in certain situations, but also he must learn to use feedback to evaluate his success and, in case of a failure, be able to use different language.

- The learner must become aware of the social meaning of language forms to be able to use the generally accepted forms and to avoid potentially causing offence.

(Littlewood, 1981:6)

In my opinion, communicative competence does not mean the ability to just utter words or sentences, but it also involves the ability to react mentally as well as verbally in communicative situations.

2.3. Semantic and formal aspects of the target language

A basic communicative doctrine is that earlier approaches to LT did not deal properly with meaning (the semantic aspect of LT) and they were too often focused on form (Swan, 1985:3). As Li Xiaojun argues it: "the language points are about grammar. . . they concern only the form of language" (Li Xiaojun, 1984:7). Swan highlights other common attributes, or rather beliefs, about older language courses. They are characterised by now they failed to teach students how to express certain things with language, and even if those structure-based courses included teaching meanings as well as forms, it was carried in an inefficient way. Even though it is true that meaning was often neglected in traditional courses, Swan stresses the point that "it is quite false to represent older courses as concentrating throughout on form at the expense of meaning, or as failing to teach people to do things with language" (Swan, 1985:77). He highlights a course from the 1960s that on one hand included the typical teaching attributes of that time, but on the other hand the students

were shown different ways of performing language functions such as greeting, requesting and describing. In addition, Swan points out that it is fashionable to criticise old-style courses for being excessively concerned with teaching structure (Swan, 1985:80).

As the common image of the older courses suggested the neglect of meaning, the central idea or misconception of CLT is the opposite – the neglect of grammar (formal aspects of L2). Several applied linguists, namely Prabhu, Corder or Beeching, have strongly argued that “explicit grammar teaching should be avoided” (Thompson, 1996:10). Various arguments have appeared for that. Some linguists, for example Prabhu, are convinced that grammar teaching is impossible because the knowledge that a speaker needs to use a language is simply too complicated (Prabhu 1987, cited in Thompson, 1996:10). Another example concerned opinions of linguists who suggest teachers should concentrate on the natural process of grammar acquisition through the natural process of enquiring vocabulary. Corder thinks that “from the teacher’s point of view that to concentrate on problems of vocabulary is a good strategy, on the grounds that grammar will look after itself” (Corder, 1986:187). According to Krashen teaching grammar is not necessary because “that knowledge is of a kind which cannot be passed on in the form of storable rules, but can be acquired unconsciously through exposure to the language” (Krashen, 1988:94). Some other authors have even come to the conclusion that “grammar is dead” (Beeching 1989, cited in Pýchová 1996/97:39).

The matter of grammar has been widely discussed among teachers and linguists and it represents in LT a painful problem. Although some linguists, such as Corder or Beeching, underestimated the importance of teaching grammar, the present supporters of CLT like Thompson “deny any neglect of grammar” (Pýchová, 1996/97:39). However, “the exclusion of explicit attention to grammar was never a necessary part of CLT” (Thompson, 1996:10).

According to these comments a large shift could be seen in the attitudes to grammar in CLT. This development moved from a complete omission of grammar and the emphasis on viewing language as a system of communication in the early days of CLT, to the present situation where an appropriate amount of class time is devoted to grammar. Despite this, it does not mean a simple reversion to a traditional treatment of grammar. Thompson explains that learners are first exposed to new language in a context to understand its meaning and then the attention is turned to grammatical forms (Thompson, 1996:11). Also "the necessity to pay conscious attention to the formal aspect of language is generally respected" (Pýchová, 1996/97:39).

2.4. Accuracy and fluency

Another principle of the Communicative Approach is the role of accuracy and fluency in language teaching. Brumfit discusses the fluency/accuracy polarity in detail and proposes that:

" . . . the demand to produce work for display to the teacher in order that evaluation and feedback could be supplied conflicted directly with the demand to perform adequately in the kind of natural circumstances for which teaching was presumably a preparation. Language display for evaluation tended to lead to a concern for accuracy, monitoring, reference rules, possibly explicit knowledge, problem solving and evidence of skill-getting. In contrast, language use requires fluency, expression rules, a reliance on implicit knowledge and automatic performance. It will on occasion also require monitoring and problem-solving strategies, but these will not be the most prominent features, as they tend to be in the conventional model where the student produces, the teacher corrects, and the student tries again."
(Brumfit, 1984:51)

Nunan suggests that accuracy and fluency do not contrast with one another, but are complementary; "however materials and activities are often devised as if they were in conflict, and teachers certainly adjust their behavior in the light of what is important to them at any particular point" (Nunan, 1989:69). The matter of fluency and accuracy is closely related to the correction of errors. It is

acknowledged that on one hand, there is an opinion that a language learner who makes an error must be in need of correction and an error is regarded as a sign of failure (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:12; Murphy, 1986:146). However, "emphasis on correct production at all times can lead to serious inhibitions in the learner" (Revell, 1979:8). In other words, this can lead to the hesitancy among learners to say anything in the L2 for fear of appearing a fool. This kind of behavior has been described by Stevick as "defensive learning" (Stevick 1976, cited in Norrish, 1995:1)

On the other hand, the preference of fluency over accuracy in CLT is connected with the margin of errors (Pýchová, 1996/97:39). This tolerance of errors is "one of the most frequently voiced criticism of a communicative approach to language teaching" (Johnson and Morrow, 1981:64). However, Hedge points out that:

". . . it has been a misconception among teachers that the communicative approach somehow excuses teachers and learners from consideration of how to develop high level of accuracy in the use of grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary."
(Hedge, 2000:61)

Morrow stresses the point that there are probably two factors that may explain this "encouragement" of students to make mistakes. Firstly, the student may be taught by a teacher who is convinced that *trivial* mistakes⁹ of grammar or pronunciation do not matter since the learner gets his message across. Secondly, the student may be coerced into activities he has not been told or shown how to do or which he has not comprehended yet (Johnson and Morrow, 1981:65). Despite the tolerant treatment of errors in CLT Murphy suggests that correction is necessary in communication activities and it is substantial to look at the nature of the correction (Murphy, 1986:146). Hedge further emphasizes:

⁹ In this diploma paper this terms *mistake* and *error* are used as synonyms, and not in the way that Norrish uses them. According to Norrish, when a learner has not learnt something and he consistently gets it wrong, he makes an error. When a learner sometimes uses one form correctly, but sometimes he uses the wrong form, then he makes a mistake. (Norrish, 1995:7,8)

“. . . it is rather a question of how to develop communicative language ability through classroom practice but, at the same time, to ensure an understanding of how language works as a system and to develop an ability to use the system correctly, appropriately, and creatively.”

(Hedge, 2000:61)

Even though some specialists may see errors as “a natural outcome of the development of communicational skills” (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:135), “as reflection of a learner’s stage of interlanguage development” (Hedge, 2000:15), or as “a necessary part of learning a language” (Norrish, 1995:6), Pýchová emphasizes that nowadays several linguists (Quirk 1990, Widdowson 1995) have established a requirement to purify the standard forms of English language. The knowledge of grammatical rules and usage of standard language are emphasized not only on account of understandability, but also “as a means of expressing social identity. Those who have not been able to master the system of grammar are excluded from certain communities”¹⁰ (Widdowson 1995, cited in Pýchová, 1996/97:39). Furthermore, Quirk also highlights that the knowledge of Standard English increases professional and lifestyle opportunities of students (Quirk 1990, in Pýchová 1996/97:39).

2.5. Communicative activities

It has already been mentioned that students must have a desire to communicate, and that there must be some communicative purpose to their communication. This implies that the students’ attention is focused on the content of what they are saying, rather than the form. What characterizes communicative activities then?

According to Morrow, activities that are truly communicative include three features: an information gap, choice, and feedback (Johnson and Morrow, 1981:62,63). An information gap exercise exists when one person in

¹⁰ See note number 3.

an exchange knows something that the other does not. Prabhu suggests that this activity “involves a transfer of given information from one person to another – or from one form to another, . . . generally calling for the decoding or encoding of information from or into language”. He also gives an example. “Pair-work, in which each member of the pair has a part of the total information (for example an incomplete picture) and attempts to convey it verbally to the other” (Prabhu 1987, cited in Hedge, 2000:58). Nonetheless, if both participants know that today is Tuesday and one asks the other, “What is today?” and the other participant answers, “Tuesday,” this is not communicative and there is no information gap (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:132). The second feature is that the speaker has a choice of what he/she will say and how he/she will say it. It means that the participant “must choose not only what ideas he/she wants to express at a given moment, but also what linguistic forms are appropriate to express them” (Johnson and Morrow, 1981:63). Larsen-Freeman highlights that, for example, in chain drills “if a student must reply to the neighbor’s question in the same way as her neighbor replied to someone else’s question, then she has no choice of form and content”, and therefore real communication does not take place (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:132). The third characteristic is connected with the aspect that true communication has a purpose. When two speakers take part in an interaction, there is usually an aim in their minds. A speaker can judge whether or not her/his purpose has been achieved based upon the information she/he gets from the listener. “What you say to somebody depends not only on what he has just said to you (though this is obviously very important) but also on what you want to get out of the conversation” (Johnson and Morrow, 1981:63). In addition, Larsen-Freeman stresses that when the listener does not have a chance to provide the speaker with feedback, then the exchange is not communicative (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:132).

Apart from the *information-gap activity* Prabhu mentions two other types of communicative activities.

1) "*Reasoning-gap activity*, which involves deriving some new information from given information through processes of inference, deduction, practical reasoning, or a perception of relationship or patterns. One example is working out a teacher's timetable on the basis of given class timetables. Another is deciding what course of action is best (for example cheapest or quickest) for given purpose and within given constraints. The activity necessarily involves comprehending and conveying information, as an information-gap activity, but the information to be conveyed is not identical with that initially comprehended. There is a piece of reasoning which connects the two."

2) "*Opinion-gap activity*, which involves identifying and articulating a personal preference, feeling, or attitude in response to a given situation. One example is the story completion; another is taking part in the discussion of a social issue. The activity may involve using factual information and formulating arguments to justify one's opinion, but there is no objective procedure for demonstrating outcomes as right or wrong, and no reason to expect the same outcome from different individuals or on different occasions."

(Prabhu 1987, cited in Nunan, 1989:66)

Littlewood even distinguishes between pre-communicative and communicative activities. Pre-communicative activities mainly serve to prepare the student for later communication and usually include practicing of certain language forms or functions (Littlewood, 1981:85). Some of these pre-communicative activities attempt to make links between "the language forms being practiced and their potential functional meaning" that can be subcategorized as "quasi-communicative" as they consider communicative as well as structural facts about language. On the contrary, there are structural activities such as "performing mechanical drills or learning verb paradigms" (Littlewood, 1981:86).

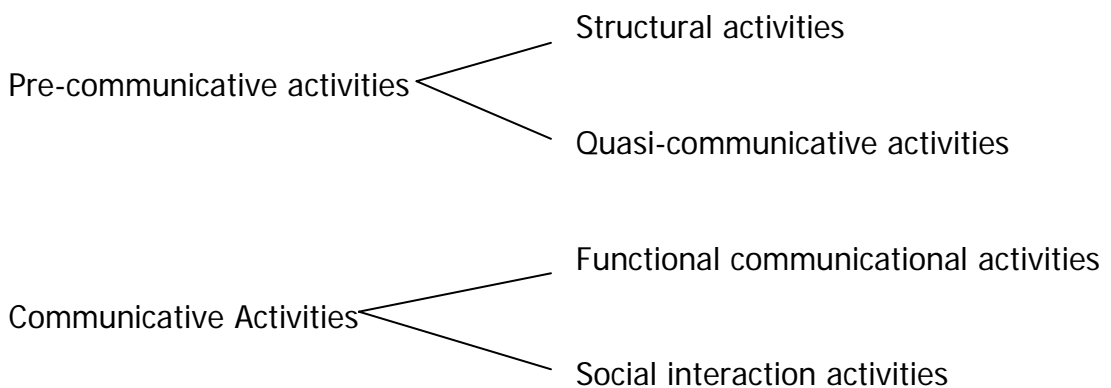
Furthermore, Littlewood suggests differences between "functional communication activities" and "social interaction activities". The distinction of the two subcategories is based "on the degree of importance attached to social as well as functional meaning". In the former, the learner is in a situation where he must perform a task by communicating as best he can, with no matter what

resources he has available (Littlewood, 1981:86). These activities involve such tasks as:

“. . . learners comparing sets of pictures and noting similarities and differences; working out a likely sequence of events in sets of pictures; discovering missing features in a map or picture; . . . following directions; and solving problems from shared clues”.
(Richards and Rodgers, 1991:76)

In social interaction activities, on the other hand, the learner is encouraged to consider the social context and he is required to do more than just “getting the meanings across” (Littlewood, 1981:86). These activities consist of “conversation and discussion sessions, dialogues and role plays, simulations, skits, improvisations, and debates” (Richards and Rodgers, 1991:76). This methodological framework is clearly presented in Littlewood in the following diagram (Figure 4.).

Figure 4. Pre-communicative and communicative activities



(Littlewood, 1981:86)

2.6. The roles of teachers and learners

The social climate of the classroom depends to a great extent on the strength of each individual's contribution and the relationship among students and teacher (who have various roles). In every teaching method the roles are

different. Richards and Rodgers point out that some methods are completely teacher dependent, while others see the teacher as catalyst, consultant or guide. According to them teacher roles are related to the following issues:

- a) the types of functions teachers are expected to fulfill, for example, whether that of practice director, counselor, or model;
 - b) the degree of control the teacher has over how learning takes place;
 - c) the degree to which the teacher is responsible for content;
 - d) the international patterns that develop between teachers and learners.
- (Richards and Rodgers, 1991:23,24)

Nunan states that problems are likely to appear when there is a clash between the role perceptions of the teacher and the learner. He gives an example:

“it is not uncommon in adult classes for the teacher to see herself as a guide and catalyst for classroom communication while the learners see her as someone who should be providing explicit instruction and modeling the target language. In such situations, it is necessary for there to be a consultation and negotiation between teachers and learners.”
(Nunan, 1989:84)

What are the roles of a teacher in the CA? Pýchová mentions that the teacher's role as a facilitator of learning is one of the main principles of CLT and it supposes to abandon the traditional role as a recourse of information and knowledge (Pýchová, 1996/97:40). Littlewood highlights a variety of specific roles in the CA. First, as a manager of classroom activities where she is responsible for grouping activities. Larsen-Freeman adds that the teacher acts here as an advisor too, “answering students' questions and monitoring their performance” (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:131). As a “co-communicator” the teacher “can stimulate and present new language, without taking the main initiative for learning away from the learners themselves”. The teacher may also act as a consultant, helping where necessary and may “monitor the strengths and weaknesses of the learner, as a basis for planning future learning activities” (Littlewood, 1981:92,93).

According to Breen and Candlin, the teacher has three significant roles in the communicative classroom. In addition to the role as a facilitator that has already been mentioned, they make reference to roles such as “a participant, and a observer and a learner” (Breen and Candlin, 1980:96).

Richards and Rodgers suggest that learner roles are closely “linked to the teacher’s status and function” (Richards and Rodgers, 1991:23) and that the roles of students are characterized in the following terms:

“(a) Learners plan their own learning program and thus ultimately assume responsibility for what they do in the classroom. (b) Learners monitor and evaluate their own progress. (c) Learners are members of a group and learn by interacting with others. (d) Learners tutor other learners. (e) Learners learn from the teacher, from other students and from other teaching sources.”
(Johnson and Paulston 1976, cited in Richards and Rodgers, 1991:23)

According to Larsen-Freeman, students are communicators and they are actively “engaged in negotiating meaning – in trying to make themselves understood – even when their knowledge of the target language is incomplete” (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:131). Breen and Candlin present the student’s role within the CLT as like the following:

“The role of learner as negotiator – between the self, the learning process, and the object of learning – emerges from and interacts with the role of joint negotiator within the group and within the classroom procedures and activities within the group undertakes. The implication for the learner is that he should contribute as much as he gains, and thereby learn in an interdependent way.”
(Breen and Candlin, 1980:110)

However, the current methodology is influenced by the ideas that learners are more responsible managers for their own learning and the role of a teacher is less dominant (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:131). The teacher still remains the main organiser of activities though as Widdowson accentuates:

"The increase in learner-centred activity and collaborative work in the classroom does not mean that the teacher becomes less authoritative. He or she has to contrive the required enabling conditions for learning, has still to monitor and guide progress. And all this presupposes an expertise, applied perhaps with more subtlety and consideration and discretion than before, but applied none the less."

(Widdowson, 1987:87)

It is, therefore, necessary for teachers to build competence and confidence in fulfilling a wider range of roles beyond that of providing and presenting new language.

III. Practical part

In the theoretical part I have learned not only of the theoretical basis and different views and opinions of various specialists of the Communicative Approach, but also about the specific contribution of adult learners to the language classroom. In this section we shall turn from a focus on theory to the actual opinions and attitudes of individual adult students to language teaching.

Language teaching is often viewed and discussed from the side of a teacher, who is influenced by her beliefs about the teaching process. Richards and Lockhart write that the belief systems of teachers are based on "the goals, values, and beliefs teachers hold in relation to the content and process of teaching, and their understanding of the systems in which they work and their roles within it" (Richards and Lockhart, 1994:30). The teacher often has to follow the philosophy of teaching in a particular educational institution too. When I started to teach at the Caledonian School, I knew that its philosophy was to follow the principles of the Communicative Approach and to create a learner-centred atmosphere. Even though the school's philosophy remains the same, the school supports and encourages changing teaching styles, as the school is aware of the fact that there are as many teaching styles as there are teachers, and puts emphasis on the learner's needs. Despite the fact that I

believed in the principles of the CA, I wanted to find out what the students' beliefs about the CA are and what is their experience of language teaching up to now.

I decided to obtain the information from individual interviews with my students. These interviews were tape-recorded in order not to disturb the interview process and to enable a detailed analysis of the responses. The time was scheduled and the questions were prepared in advance. The interview was carried out in Czech language on an individual basis in order to prevent any students influencing eachothers' responses and comments. Each interviewee was familiarised with the purpose of the research and assured of the anonymity of the interview. The questions were based on the following areas, concerned chiefly with the reasons and motivation of adult students to learn English language, the learning styles, the roles of teacher and learners, and classroom activities.

3. The composition of classes

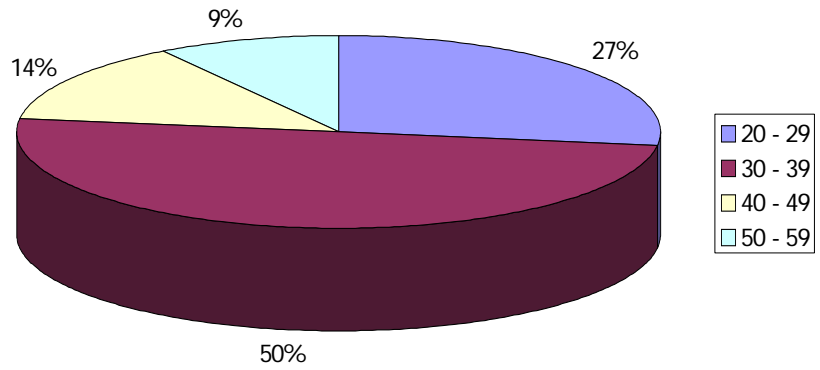
The classes are made up of small groups of adult students. The total number of students is twenty-two. One half of the courses runs for four forty-five minute lessons a week and the second only two forty-five minute lessons a week. The essential information about the age of the students, the students' level of English and the number of students in each course are presented in the following pie charts introducing by tables.

Age of students

Figure 5. Age distribution of students

Age	No of students	No of st. in %
20 - 29	6	27%
30 - 39	11	50%
40 - 49	3	14%
50 - 59	2	9%

Number of students (in %)



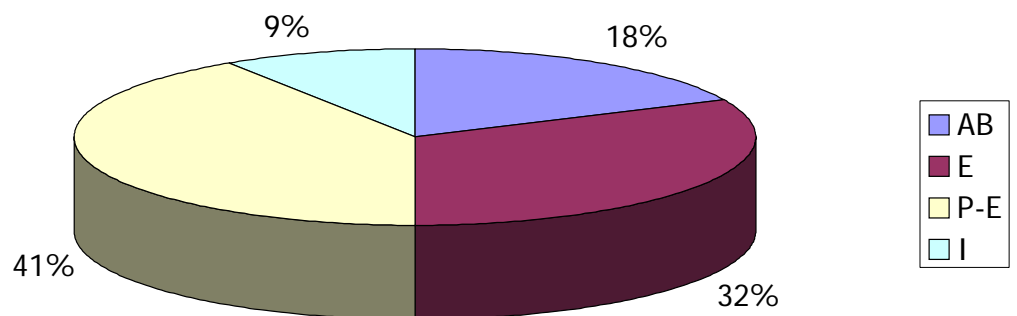
The figure shows that the majority of students belong to the age-group thirty to thirty-nine and the minority of students from fifty to fifty-nine years old.

Level of English language

Figure 6. Students' level of English

Levels	No of students	No of st. in %
AB	4	18%
E	7	32%
P-E	9	41%
I	2	9%

Number of students (in %)



The abbreviations used in the figure 6.

- AB - Absolute beginner
- E - Elementary
- Pre-I - Pre-Intermediate
- I - Intermediate

This presents the students' level of knowledge of the English language starting from absolute beginners to the intermediate level. Students at each level study according to certain textbooks. When the students reach the pre-intermediate, or higher level, they can choose a textbook specialised either in "general English" (like lower levels) or in "business English" (for example *International Express* textbooks). The following information demonstrates which coursebook is used at a certain level:

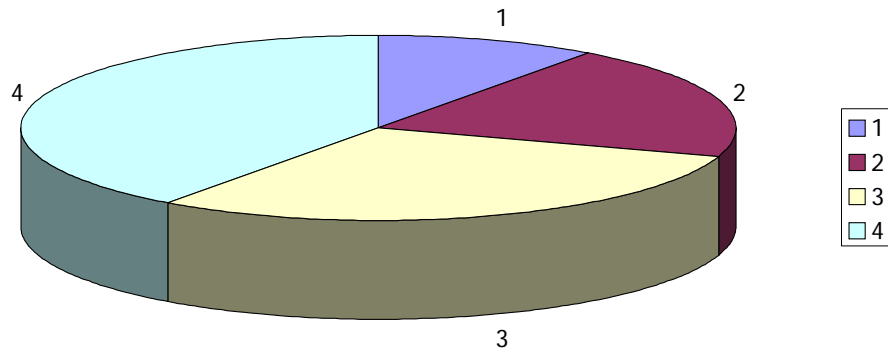
- 1) Absolute beginners - *Headstart*
- 2) Students at elementary level - *Headway Elementary*
- 3) Students at pre-intermediate level
 - *Headw. Pre-Intermediate*
 - *Lifelines Pre-Intermed.*
 - *International Express Pre-Intermediate*
- 4) Students at intermediate level
 - *Headway Intermediate*
 - *Lifelines Intermediate*
 - *International Express Intermediate*

Grouping

Figure 7. Divisions of learners into groups.

No of students in a group	No of groups
1	4
2	1
3	4
4	1

Number of groups



4. Analysis of the interviews

Each area of the research is introduced by a key question and the responses of adult students were analysed and reported. As some other questions relating to a certain area occurred during the interview, they were added and presented within the main subject of that certain area.

1) What are the reasons for learning languages?

If asked to identify the reasons for learning languages at primary or secondary schools, 'it is compulsory subject in a schedule' would probably be the most frequent response of young learners. What would the adult students answer? Every adult interviewee (100%) answered without hesitation that English is necessary for his/her occupation. Their replies were, for example:

- *"I am learning English to be able to communicate with our suppliers on the phone and to write orders."*
- *"I need to speak English on the phone and it is useful when I work with my computer, because the terminology is in English."*

- *"It is an advantage to speak English, because when I receive a letter in English, I do not have to plague anybody with questions constantly."*

Almost 80% of students also expressed a high personal interest in learning English for use in the case of travelling, watching TV, and reading magazines.

Some responses were like:

- *"If I were visiting a foreign country I would like to be able to speak the language of its people."*

- *"It is necessary even here in our country to know English to understand different signs and ads on TV and in magazines."*

Only 3 out of 22 students mentioned that the knowledge of English was useful for helping their children with school tasks and 15 out of 22 would learn the language if it were not necessary for their jobs. Furthermore, one respondent expressed a desire to learn English because he likes the sound of the language and would like to get to know more about the culture through the language.

According to these results, it is obvious that the adult students are highly motivated integratively as well as instrumentally¹¹ to learn English. If English were not needed for work, students would clearly not be so interested. The lower motivation may be concerned with the fact that 21 students out of 22 are fluent in German, therefore it would seem to be enough for them to know only one foreign language to satisfy their needs. The overall feeling about the adult students' incentives to learn a language is that, in comparison with their secondary school experience, now they want to learn, whereas at that time they had to learn it.

2) How do you perceive your present and previous experience with learning and teaching languages in the classroom? Why do you like some activities and why would you leave out other activities?

All the interviewed students had already completed their school education and had therefore been exposed to a variety of different teachers and teaching styles. As a result the learners could evaluate numerous experiences of language courses and have probably formed their views about the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of a certain way of teaching, as well as their preferred learning strategies. This section reflects, on the one hand, the students' views of the most effective ways of teaching and, on the other hand, their negative and unsatisfactory experiences with language teaching. I shall report the comments and responses of the interviewees with various examples.

According to the students' responses, the key factor to learning efficiently is to studying in small groups of students. The students reflected this in the following statements:

- *"When I attended a course with 20 other students, I got the opportunity to speak only 3 times in a whole lesson and besides that, I could prepare the correct answers in advance, as I could count when it was my turn. Therefore the effectiveness was zero."*
- *"It takes much longer to acquire a language in larger groups. The best is to be with one or at the most with three other students in a class."*
- *"Once you have experienced the language learning in a small group (2 or 4 students), you will never want to attend classes consisting of 20 students any more."*

More than a half of the students (14 out of 22) preferred to work with at least one other learner, because they emphasised the fact that they could learn from each other. Particularly, they can notice their own mistakes in the other student's speech. By contrast, 8 out of 22 students considered being in a group with other students as a disadvantage. Those eight students pointed out that each learner in a group usually has different level and pace of learning. As

¹¹ For more details about those two terms see previous chapter concerned with motivation.

a result students must make compromises and can not learn according to their own pace and preferences. For example:

- *"Even though one-to-one learning is very intensive and demanding, I prefer this way to bigger groups, because I can choose the topic, materials and I can discuss in details the problematic areas of grammar I cannot cope with."*

Among the "group learners" that prefer classroom interaction with other students, and "individual learners" that prefer to work alone, there are "visual learners" and "auditory learners" (Richards and Lockhart, 1994:68,69). Almost 90% of the interviewed students belong to the group of "visual learners", who prefer to use visual materials consisting of not only pictures, but also anything that can be perceived by eyes. The remaining 10% of students, which were of different ages and levels, believed that the activities using visuals, mainly the picture stories, were a waste of time. As the area of using visuals in language teaching is very vast, I shall now report the most frequently used activities involving visuals that were mentioned by the students and which reflect their attitudes.

Figure 8. Example 1 – Picture story



The police in the big city were looking for a thief. At last they caught him. But while they were taking photographs of him – from the front, from the left, from the right, with a hat, without a hat – he suddenly attacked the policemen and ran off. They tried to catch him, but he got away.

Then a week later the telephone rang in the police-station, and somebody said,

"You are looking for Bill Cross, aren' t you?"

"Yes."

"Well, he left here for Waterbridge an hour ago."

Waterbridge was a small town about 100 miles from the city. The city police at once sent four different photographs of the thief to the police in Waterbridge.

Less than twelve hours later they got a telephone call from the police in Waterbridge. "We have caught three of the men," they said happily, "and we will catch the fourth this evening, we think".

(Hill, 1965:42)

Students at all levels appreciated this picture story (figure 8.), taken from Hill (1965:42). The book consists of 56 stories and each contains about 150 words. These stories are useful for exploring a range of structures, for example questions. I think students can also bring their own samples of language, and formulate their own hypothesis about language structures and functions, which may be very motivating for them. According to my experience, if students work out the rules and principles of a language by themselves, the information is stored more deeply. To make the processes used involving these exercises with the picture story more explicit for readers I shall describe them as they are used in my classes. They are mainly presented in two ways. Firstly, all students are shown only the picture (only one kind of a picture) and their task is to make up their own story using their imagination. After they have written it, they can compare their stories with others in a class, or with the actual text. Secondly, they are shown both the picture as well as the text. They read their own story (everybody has different stories) and then they have to retell the story orally to others, while the other students are preparing to ask questions in order to make sure they are not passively sitting in the classroom. Some responses to these exercises were:

- *"I think the picture stories are a good fun."*

- *"I like it. Even though it is sometimes difficult to make a story, because my vocabulary is not very rich, it is worth doing it. I wish we had more time for it."*

- *"It is better when we can read the text of the story and then retell it to our classmates than to guess the plot just according to the picture. It is time consuming and I usually do not feel like making up stories."*

The majority of the "visual students" (12 out of 19) like picture stories. In the interview they stressed that they could remember many words and could work out the usage of tenses. However, as a result of the time-consuming effect of those activities with picture stories, the respondents preferred to use pictures just to introduce a topic of a lesson, and then be used later for discussion (for example, pictures of different means of transport). Other suggested examples concerned a revision of tenses as the following example.

Figure 9. Example 2



The picture above (figure 9.) depicts a situation, which does not have to be used only for mechanical practice of such questions as: What are they doing?, but also for a variety of interpretations using the students' imagination. A teacher or classmates can for example ask: What are they going to do? What has just happened to them? What is their relationship? Students need to explore information that cannot obviously be seen in the picture. Furthermore,

the students mentioned other visual devices, like the blackboard or the environment of the classroom. One student remarked that: *"I even liked when we just used our classroom to choose the correct prepositions"*. The use of video is also suitable for the "auditory learners" who learn best from oral explanation and benefit from listening to a tape recorder.

Concerning video exercises, I would like to give more details. Watching a video does not mean simply to let the students watch a one-hour film. Videos presented in my classes are integrated with the *Headway* textbooks, and are linked to the syllabus by consisting of various mini-documentaries and situational language (such as "In a Shop" or "In a Pub"). They can also be used as supplementary material for other textbooks. The students emphasised that they could perceive the video using more senses, and therefore they found it easier to understand and more enjoyable than just listening to a tape. In addition, they stressed that they could also learn about the culture, different places and towns, the fashion and customs of the L2 nation. The practicality of everyday situations included in the video was significantly acknowledged with satisfaction too.

Other predominant activities were also role-plays that simulated real-life. They were situations, for example, set in a shop where one student had the role of a shop assistant and the other was a customer, or in a hotel, at a railway station etc. The respondents stated:

- *"I can remember when I had to buy a ticket at a railway station. It was very useful."*
- *"I like the activities that are applicable in real life situations such as the telephoning."*

Even though most of the students (15 out of 22) were convinced about the usefulness and practicality of role-plays, which usually concerns working in pairs, they have tendency to use the L1, which was criticised by several

respondents (6 out of 22) as a negative factor of these exercises. What is the attitude towards the L1 among the respondents then?

One fact which was very surprising was that 90 % of the interviewees of different levels would forbid using Czech language in classes, except in situations when the grammar is being explained. The other 10% of respondents (consisting of absolute beginners only) remarked that they still needed L1 to avoid possible misunderstandings, confusion, and long explanations in L2 of unknown words, which can be translated into L1 in a matter of seconds. Nevertheless, all interviewed learners (100%) highlighted that it is necessary to include translation exercises (from L1 into L2) that have often been connected with the "traditional" way of teaching represented by the Grammar-Translation Method and is nowadays often criticised. The students' view of the necessity of L1 to be included in the learning can be seen in the following statements:

- *"I do not have time to learn vocabulary at home therefore when I have to translate sentences, I can see what words I can remember and which ones I have forgotten."*
- *"Sometimes it is good to match the sentences in English and in Czech. I can notice the different usage of grammar, especially tenses."*
- *"It is a useful feedback whether I have mastered required vocabulary and certain grammar."*
- *"I simply need it to see if I have made any progress."*
- *"It is very quick and gives you much information about the knowledge of the language."*

The respondents also spoke about the *Information-gap* activities that involve the exchange of information among people. They mainly highlighted the *Information-gap* activities where students exchange information by asking questions of each other.

According to these responses, the students, viewing the skills and subskills, attribute the most importance to speaking, then listening, after which they place grammar and vocabulary, then reading and finally writing (which has the least importance). The answers also imply that the students want to use the time in a classroom as efficiently as possible, speaking and using the L2, being actively employed, because they do not have time to learn the language at home. Even though they prefer the communicative activities, and express aversion to large classes with insufficient language practice, they can not cope without the "traditional" translation exercises.

3) What attributes should a good teacher have?

This is a difficult question for the interviewees to answer in front of their own teacher as it would be hard for them to be objective, so I therefore specified the question. The students were led to recall their previous experiences with teachers, which reflected their overall attitudes. Thus, their answers and comments were not so influenced by the presence of their teacher and an interviewer rolled into one.

As adult students have rich experience with learning languages in various courses, they have already formed not only assumptions and beliefs about language teaching and learning, but also about the role of a teacher. How, then, did the respondents perceive a good teacher?

The interviewees appreciated teachers from various standpoints, but generally two main factors can be seen as contributing to the learners' motivation to participate in learning in the classroom. The first is the personality or nature of the teacher and the second is the way in which the teacher presents activities and works with learners during the lesson.

According to the students' responses (18 out of 22), the personal characteristics of a good teacher should include a good and happy mood, a sense of humour,

and an ability to set a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. Moreover, the students placed values on the human attitude, especially the feelings of understanding.

Their comments were:

- *"My work includes a lot of stressful situations, therefore I would not attend classes with this kind of spirit."*
- *"The situation now is different. At school I preferred to learn under pressure, but now I would be discouraged by this way."*
- *"Once I experienced a very strict teacher who always chose one student in the classroom and made a fool of him. It was horrible and I had to stop attending this language course."*

On the other hand, there were students (4 out of 22) who, on the contrary, demanded strict teachers. They suggested that:

- *"I need the teacher to correct every mistake and I need to feel that the teacher is an authority."*
- *"I attended one language course with a strict teacher. Many students stopped attending it, but I stayed, and as a result I think I mastered the language."*

Furthermore, the majority of the respondents (17 out of 22) mentioned the importance of a natural respect of teachers and their qualifications. Only few students (3 out of 22) highlighted that a good teacher must have a lot of experience in her profession. Three of the respondents also spoke about their experience with native speaker teachers. For example:

- *"Well, it did not suit me very much. Even though I was not a beginner, the teaching was not systematic."*
- *"We did not learn any grammar and the teaching was oriented on only narrow area of vocabulary."*
- *"It was great opportunity to experience and hear English language naturally presented by the native speaker."*

In addition, the interviewed learners (15 out of 22) pointed out that the teacher should be consistent and well prepared. Others (8 out of 22) suggested that the teacher should pay the same attention to all students, monitor the student's pace and help them with any problems. A high proportion (16 out of 22) was concerned with the creativity of the teacher, as is seen in the following statements:

- *"As I am very tired after work, I like it when the lesson includes various activities."*
- *"It is always more interesting to do something new."*
- *"I like when the teacher just does not follow the textbook, but provides some other materials and brings something that lies outside the scope of curriculum."*

The students' comments show that they are likely to be mainly influenced by their personal feelings about their teachers and of the interactions that occur between them. Even though some of the respondents favour a directive strict approach, where the teacher's role is perceived as a source of knowledge and direction, the majority rather prefers to learn in a friendly atmosphere without any fear and stress, where the teacher becomes an advisor, co-communicator, partner and consultant. However, a certain amount of the natural respect must always be present.

4) What is your attitude to mistakes?

As has been mentioned in the previous section, some of the adult learners learn from interaction with other learners, and notice their own mistakes in the mistakes made by their classmates. In addition to that, one half of the respondents (11 out of 22) stated that they were also aware of their own mistakes, which were not corrected immediately, and therefore they did not have to be corrected by the teacher. For example:

- *"I know I am making mistakes, but when the teacher keeps interrupting me and correcting each mistake, then I do not want to speak any more."*
- *"The more I am thinking about the mistakes the more often I am making them."*
- *"I would prefer the teacher to write down notes about the mistakes and after the discussion, he would inform us about the most frequent ones."*

Nonetheless, several (14 out of 22) students pointed out that they wanted to be corrected, but only in case of activities were focussed on accuracy and not fluency. For example: *"If we are in a discussion, I do not need to know my mistakes. It is important whether the other students understand."* The other respondents (5 out of 22) requested to be corrected at all times. Those respondents were of higher level of English (pre-intermediate and higher). Their responses were:

- *"For me, it is necessary to know all my mistakes, otherwise I would never get rid of them."*
- *"If the teacher does not correct me, I think it is right and I start to use it incorrectly."*

The students' answers suggest that more than half are convinced that in activities focused on fluency, such as role-plays and discussions, the correction of every mistake is not needed. However, all the interviewees would not tolerate elementary mistakes remaining uncorrected, as the result is the danger of making it a habit. Another interesting fact is that the more advanced students required the correction of every mistake rather than students at elementary level, who seemed rather frustrated by frequent correction, which is not the purpose of teaching. Nevertheless, the teaching and learning process would not work either without mistakes or without their correction.

IV. Conclusion

Adult learners represent a specific group of students with characteristic needs and background knowledge that often differs entirely from those of children. The more experience with language learning the more specific expectations about language learning the students have. This fact can either help or obstruct learning the target language. A teacher therefore has a difficult role in balancing the diverse group of adult learners. In addition to the various expectations about learning a language they might have, the role of a teacher is perceived differently too. Even though the majority of the interviewed students have qualified a teacher as a co-communicator, a partner, an advisor and a consultant, implying that the relationship between learners and a teacher is almost equal, the students are at the same time the *clients* who know what they want to learn, and how much time and money they are prepared to invest in doing so, while the role of a teacher can be seen as attempting to meet those needs. As a result adult learners should be treated as adults and, therefore, as Heather points out it is advisable for a teacher to negotiate with them what and how to learn (Heather, 1999:3).

The main aim and purpose of this diploma paper has been to discover adult attitudes to language teaching/learning processes and either to confirm or to disprove the hypothesis that is not possible to rely only on one approach/method to language teaching. This hypothesis has been supported by the research carried out at the Caledonian School. The findings of the research shall now be summarised.

Even though Malamah-Thomas points out that without interaction, but only action and reaction, there can be no real communication, and that communication is undertaken for a purpose (Malamah-Thamas, 1987:14), communication in the classroom involves various kinds of distancing from the real-life communication, as activities only simulate real life. Nevertheless, the simulated activities have been highly appreciated by the respondents in the

research. Besides the fact that language functions as a means of communication, the particular language used can also reflect the speaker's placement into a certain social class and how she/he identifies herself/himself within a specific discourse community.

The mother tongue, although rejected in CLT (and excessive dependency on the L1 in general tends to be avoided), plays various important roles in language learning, such as checking comprehension and giving instructions. Moreover, the interviewed students added another advantage of using the L1. Although the majority preferred to use the target language for communicative purposes, all respondents required the inclusion of the L1 in translation exercises, which may reflect their previous experience with traditional language learning.

Another aspect of the CA is that communicative competence has numerous interpretations among the linguists. It starts from the view of the American linguist Chomsky, who distinguished between the concepts of linguistic competence and performance. This has been criticised by Hymes, who is convinced that Chomsky's theory of competence provides no place for language use. In Hymes' view, a person who is communicatively competent acquires both knowledge and an ability for language use. However, few interviewees thought that it was necessary to focus on the grammatical rules of the language, whereas the majority of them agreed with Hymes' view.

Despite the significant omission of grammar in CLT, viewing the language mainly as a system of communication, the present situation suggests that a certain amount of lesson time should be devoted to grammar. Moreover, Pýchová points out that "it is necessary to pay conscious attention to the formal aspect of language" (Pýchová, 1996/97:39). As well as a development in attitudes to grammar differences in the attitudes to mistakes have also been noticed. Despite some specialists and students perceiving errors as "a natural

outcome of the development of communicational skills" (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:135), or "as reflection of a learner's stage of interlanguage development" (Hedge, 2000:15), or as "a necessary part of learning a language" (Norrish, 1995:6), Pýchová places emphasis on the fact that nowadays it is often required to "purify" the standard forms of English language. Several students also agreed with this approach. This view has particularly been the advanced students who have acquired fluency in English, but were not able to always correctly use basic structures, such as forming a correct question.

My research, however, has had certain limitations. Due to the low sample of only twenty-two students, it cannot function as an adequate resource for comprehension of the problems within the diversity of adult students. Nevertheless, the results are of significant value to me as a teacher of those students, and can help me with further pedagogical work. Research results pinpoint the preference of adult learners to study in small classes in order to meet the individual learners' needs. The teacher can benefit from the learners' high instrumental motivation (concerning external goals such as social benefits, financial rewards, and etc.). Also knowledge of specific individuals' motivating factors (travel, culture, work) helps the teacher to more efficiently plan lessons, utilise lesson time, and provide immediate value for students. Furthermore, the hypothesis that it is not possible to rely on only one method/approach has been confirmed, because even if the main aspects of Communicative Language Teaching are positively perceived by the adult learners, they also require translation activities, which are specific to another method, the Grammar-Translation Method.

Resumé

V souvislosti s politickou situací v České republice po roce 1989, která přinesla mnoho změn, se objevil velký hlad po znalostech cizích jazyků. Tato poptávka vycházela nejen z důvodu naší integrace do Evropy, ale také z možnosti lidí lépe se uplatnit na trhu práce. Této příležitosti se dostalo nejen žákům ve školách, ale také dospělým, kteří si mohli doplnit a rozšířit své vzdělání. Tyto nové vědomosti umožnily získávání nových informací a zkvalitnily kulturu cestování, po kterém většina našeho národa dlouhou dobu toužila. Vznik mnoha nových jazykových škol s širokou nabídkou různých metod ve výuce jazyků, brzy uspokojil tuto poptávku.

Zatímco žáci ve školách jsou do studia cizích jazyků většinou nuceni povinnou výukou, dospělí, kteří jsou již určitý čas mimo vzdělávací proces, se obvykle pro další studium rozhodují dobrovolně. Není třeba zdůrazňovat, jak důležitá je role motivace ve studijním procesu. Dospělí žáci, přestože jsou značně motivováni, si již vytvořili své individuální styly a strategie učení na základě jejich bohatých zkušeností z předchozí výuky, které značným způsobem mohou ovlivnit jejich přístup k dalšímu vzdělávání. V případě zapojení některých nových, nekonvenčních metod do výuky cizích jazyků, většina dospělých žáků se specifickými představami co by měla výuka obsahovat, mohou přistupovat k novým metodám s určitým despektem. Je proto důležité, aby učitel využil svou roli manažera a vyřešil případné odlišnosti v představách o výuce mezi jednotlivými studenty.

Jedna z metod, která je v dnešní době často aplikována v jazykových školách, je komunikativní metoda (přístup). I přes značnou oblibu této metody (přístupu) nejen mezi odbornou veřejností, ale také mezi laiky (samotnými žáky), ji někteří lingvisté kritizují. Hlavním záměrem a cílem této práce je zjistit přístup dospělých

studentů k výuce anglického jazyka a na základě výzkumu, který byl proveden v malé skupině dospělých studentů *Caledonian School*, potvrdit nebo vyvrátit hypotézu, že ve výuce jazyků nelze spoléhat pouze na jednu metodu (přístup).

Teoretická část obsahuje dvě sekce. První sekce se podrobněji zabývá společnými atributy dospělých studentů, které jsou pro tuto skupinu studentů tak charakteristické. První kapitola této sekce pojednává o motivaci studentů k učení, oblast, která je předmětem častého zkoumání a považována za jeden z nejdůležitějších aspektů úspěšného učení. Motivaci dále můžeme rozdělit na *integrativní*, motivaci vycházející z vlastního popudu a zájmu studenta, a naopak *instrumentální*, která je vyvolána skupinou faktorů v souvislosti například s lepším finančním ohodnocením, vycházející z vnějších okolností (Gardner a Lambert, 1972:2). Jak již bylo zmíněno, přestože úroveň motivace u dospělých studentů je značná, na druhé straně musíme brát v úvahu jejich odlišné představy o výuce jazyků, jejich zavedené styly a strategie učení, které jsou zpevněny jejich předcházejícími zkušenostmi a z tohoto důvodu mohou značně ovlivnit další učení jak pozitivně, tak i negativně. Tímto tématem se zabývá druhá kapitola a třetí kapitola uzavírá první sekci teoretické části, která bere v úvahu individuální odlišnosti studentů, mezi které patří věk, jako důležitý faktor v procesu vzdělávání.

V druhé sekci teoretické části jsem se zaměřila na hlavní aspekty komunikativní metody, které osvětlují její didaktické zásady ve výuce anglického jazyka a tvoří samostatné kapitoly. Každá kapitola nenabízí pouze výčet definic, charakterizujících určité rysy komunikativní metody, ale také přináší přehled kritických pohledů různých lingvistů, které zahrnují aspekty nových metodických poznatků, ve snaze poukázat na vývoj postoje odborné veřejnosti ke komunikativ-

ní metodě. Charakteristiky, které jsou v této práci, zahrnují preference užití jazyka, jako prostředek komunikace, získání komunikativní kompetence, upřednostňování sémantické stránky cílového jazyka nad jeho formální, nadřazenost plynulého vyjadřování cílového jazyka nad jeho přesností, nejdůležitější atributy komunikativních aktivit, soustředěnost na studenta a posun „tradičně“ dominantní role učitele do jiných dimenzí, jako je role facilitní, monitorské, či partnerské.

Kromě výše uvedených zásad komunikativní metody, poukazuje druhá sekce teoretické části také na významnou roli mateřského jazyka ve výuce cizích jazyků. Přestože používání mateřského jazyka je v komunikativní metodě striktně odmítáno a často spojováno s „tradiční“ překladovou metodou, nabízí širokou škálu jeho využití ve výuce cizích jazyků. Mateřský jazyk je možné aplikovat v případech, kdy například učitel dává žákům (většinou začátečníkům) instrukce ke složitým komunikativním aktivitám (Atkinson, 1987:243). I přes mnoho výhod mateřského jazyka, je potřeba si uvědomit, že přílišná závislost na mateřském jazyce také není vhodná.

Tato diplomová práce se nezabývá jen přístupem odborné veřejnosti k výuce cizích jazyků, ale také reflektuje názory jednotlivých žáků, které jsou vyhodnoceny v druhé části, orientována na praktickou stránku. Výzkum byl provedený metodou „strukturovaného“ rozhovoru na malé skupině dospělých studentů. Oblasti výzkumu jsou rozděleny do čtyř kapitol. První kapitola analyzuje důvody, které přivádějí dospělé studenty do jazykových kurzů. Většina respondentů zdůrazňovala důležitost znalosti cizího jazyka především pro potřeby v zaměstnání a druhý faktor, který byl často zmiňován byla potřeba domluvit se při cestování. Druhá kapitola se zaměřuje na celou ob-

last procesu výuky, v které jsou také uvedena konkrétní jazyková cvičení. V souvislosti s výukou dospělí studenti především oceňovali výuku v malých skupinách, kde se učitel může více věnovat každému žáku individuálně a sami studenti mají častější příležitost si cizí jazyk procvičit. Studenti dále považovali za důležité procvičovat cizí jazyk v situacích, které znají z každodenního života. Cílový jazyk byl také vyzdvihován při aktivitách zaměřujících se na plynulost jazykového projevu. I když většina studentů kritizovala „tradiční“ způsob výuky, která podle nich, byla především zaměřena na překladová cvičení nezáživných textů, považovali by za nedostatečné, kdyby výuka anglického jazyka neobsahovala krátké překlady nejen z jazyka mateřského do jazyka cílového, ale i naopak. Tato skutečnost mohla reflektovat předcházející pozitivní zkušenosti dospělých studentů s výukou jazyků. Z odpovědí studentů dále vyplývá, že jsou tato překladová cvičení pro ně užitečná, neboť nemají dostatek času procvičovat slovní zásobu, při těchto cvičeních nabývají pocitu jistoty s používáním dosažené slovní zásoby. V třetí kapitole se studenti vyjadřují k roli učitele, která naznačuje spíše vztah partnerský s určitým stupněm respektu. Přístup žáků k chybám obsahuje poslední oblast výzkumu ve čtvrté kapitole. Studenti preferovali, býti opravováni jen v činnostech, které jsou zaměřeny na přesnost (překladová cvičení), ale většina souhlasila s faktem, že učení není možné bez chyb, z kterých se žáci také mohou přiučit a dále se jich vyvarovat.

Analýza výzkumu nepřinesla pouze potvrzení hypotézy, že není možné ve výuce cizího jazyka spoléhat jen na jednu metodu (přístup), ale výsledky mají pro mě nesmírnou hodnotu pro další pedagogickou práci, pro plánování vyučovacích hodin a poskytování hodnotné výuky studentům s individuálními představami, potřebami a styly učení.

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ÚDAJE PRO KNIHOVNICKOU DATABÁZI

Název práce	Komunikativní přístup: Pohled studentů
Autor práce	Bc. Pavlína Dvořáková
Obor	Učitelství cizích jazyků – angličtina
Rok obhajoby	2001
Vedoucí práce	PaedDr. Monika Černá
Anotace	Tato práce se zabývá komunikativním přístupem ve výuce anglického jazyka z hlediska studentů. Teoretická část pojednává o charakteristických atributech dospělých studentů a o hlavních rysech komunikativního přístupu. Výzkum, který byl proveden na malé skupině dospělých studentů, je popsán v praktické části. Cílem této práce je potvrdit nebo vyvrátit hypotézu, že nelze ve výuce spoléhat výhradně na jednu metodu/přístup.
Klíčová slova	Komunikativní přístup Metodika Dospělí studenti Motivace ve výuce Komunikativní kompetence Mateřský jazyk