University of Pardubice

Faculty of Arts and Philosophy

Organizational Forms in ELT with Respect to Language Skills Development

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Master Thesis

2017

Univerzita Pardubice
Fakulta filozofická
Akademický rok: **2014/2015**

ZADÁNÍ DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE
(PROJEKTU, UMĚLECKÉHO DÍLA, UMĚLECKÉHO VÝKONU)

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Osobní číslo:	**H14458**
Studijní program:	**N7503 Učitelství pro základní školy**
Studijní obor:	**Učitelství anglického jazyka**
Název tématu:	**Organizační formy ve výuce anglického jazyka z hlediska rozvoje jednotlivých řečových dovedností**
Zadávající katedra:	**Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky**

Zásady pro vypracování:

Cílem této diplomové práce je prozkoumat využívání organizačních forem ve výuce anglického jazyka v souvislosti s rozvojem řečových dovedností, zejména pak v souvislosti s rozvojem mluvení. V teoretické části práce studentka vymezí řečové dovednosti, specificky pak mluvení, jako cíle a prostředky rozvoje komunikační kompetence. Dále pak analyzuje možnosti využití organizačních forem pro rozvoj dovednosti mluvení u žáků ve výuce anglického jazyka. V praktické části práce bude prozkoumána potencionalita organizačních forem ve vztahu k rozvoji mluvení. Zvolená výzkumná strategie - kolaborativní akční výzkum - umožní studentce nejenom analyzovat stávající situaci v diskutované oblasti, ale i navrhnout možné způsoby modifikace této situace, implementovat je do výuky a provést následné vyhodnocení intervence.

Rozsah grafických prací:

Rozsah pracovní zprávy:

Forma zpracování diplomové práce: **tištěná**

Jazyk zpracování diplomové práce: **Angličtina**

Seznam odborné literatury: **viz příloha**

Vedoucí diplomové práce: **Mgr. Irena Reimannová, Ph.D.**
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Datum zadání diplomové práce: **30. března 2015**

Termín odevzdání diplomové práce: **30. března 2016**

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V Pardubicích dne 30. listopadu 2015

Příloha zadání diplomové práce

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Prohlašuji:

Tuto práci jsme vypracovala samostatně. Veškeré literární prameny a informace, které jsem v práci využila, jsou uvedeny v seznamu použité literatury.

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Souhlasím s prezenčním zpřístupněním své práce v Univerzitní knihovně.

V Pardubicích dne 20. 3. 2017

Alena Keene

Abstract:

This thesis deals with the development of speaking skills as one of the aims and means of communicative competence development. Opportunities for speaking skills development are explored primarily in connection with the use of individual organizational forms, mainly group work and pair work. A strategy of collaborative action research was employed in order to increase the opportunities for speaking skills development in a particular ELT class. The thesis is divided into a practical part and a theoretical part accordingly.

Keywords: speaking skills, communicative competence, speaking activities, pair work, group work

Abstrakt:

Tato práce se zabývá rozvojem řečové dovednosti mluvení, coby jednoho z cílů a prostředků rozvoje komunikační kompetence. Příležitosti pro rozvoj řečové dovednosti mluvení jsou zkoumány primárně ve vztahu k použití jednotlivých organizačních forem, především práce ve dvojicích a ve skupinách. Za účelem rozšíření příležitostí pro rozvoj řečové dovednosti mluvení ve výuce anglického jazyka v konkrétní třídě byla zvolena strategie kolaborativního akčního výzkumu. Práce je rozdělena na část teoretickou a praktickou.

Klíčová slova: řečová dovednost mluvení, komunikační kompetence, aktivity pro rozvoj mluvení, práce ve dvojicích, skupinová práce

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Introduction

The general aim of English language teaching (ELT) in the Czech Republic is the development of communicative competence. Communicative competence, as defined in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment* (CEF), is a complex structure; its components are interrelated and influence each other. Since the individual dimensions of communicative competence are difficult to be observed and developed separately, language skills of speaking, writing, listening and reading have an immensely important role. Language skills represent on the one hand the observable performance through which communicative competence can be assessed, and on the other hand, the means for communicative competence development.

The development of speaking skills as one of the aims and means of communicative competence development has been chosen as a focal point of this thesis. The primary aim of the thesis is to explore the potential for the use of pair work and group work in ELT with respect to the opportunities for speaking skills development.

The theoretical part of this thesis consists of four main sections. Communicative competence as an ultimate objective in ELT is initially focused on. In the first chapter communicative competence is defined and its historical development is outlined. The second chapter concentrates on the concept of communicative competence in CEF, which is reflected in Framework educational programmes, and thus represents the basis for ELT outcome requirements in the Czech Republic.

Language skills and their development as a target and means in ELT are explored in the second section of the theoretical part of the thesis. Three chapters are devoted to receptive skills, productive skills and integration of language skills respectively. Receptive and productive language skills are defined and issues connected with their teaching are elaborated on. In terms of language skills integration a definition is provided and examples regarding language teaching are discussed.

The next section of the theoretical part deals with speaking in a foreign language. The first chapter elaborates on knowledge base, skills and strategies involved in oral communication. The following three chapters focus on teaching speaking: various approaches to teaching speaking are clarified firstly, then a classification of speaking activities and tasks is provided and finally, criteria for selecting and designing speaking activities and tasks are outlined.

The last section of the theoretical part deals in two chapters with pair work and group work. In the first chapter pair work and group work as organizational forms of classroom interaction are defined first, next research into group work and pair work and its theoretical points of departure are discussed and, at the end of this chapter, group work and pair work are contrasted. The second chapter addresses organizational issues connected with successful pair work and group work.

The practical part of this thesis focuses on the potential for the use of pair work and group work with respect to speaking skills development in a particular educational context. The general aim of the collaborative action research that is depicted in the practical part was, through an intervention involving the use of pair work and group work, to increase the opportunities for speaking skills development in a specific ELT class. The primary objective of the research was to investigate the situation in the given ELT class regarding the use of speaking activities, pair work and group work, and to asses overall opportunities that the students have for their speaking skills development. The secondary objective was to create particular speaking activities using pair work and group work, to incorporate them into English language lessons and to investigate whether their use enhances the opportunities for students speaking skills development.

In the first chapter of the practical part the aim and background of the research are introduced and two research questions, corresponding with two main objectives of the research, are formulated. The research method and instruments are clarified within the following chapter. In the next chapter phases of the research are listed and detailed. The fourth chapter of the practical part concentrates on the observations before the intervention, followed by the analysis and interpretation of data collected via observations. The next chapter presents the outcome of the interview with the teacher before the intervention.

The rest of the practical part covers the intervention. First, the intervention plan and design of the activities intended for the intervention are introduced. Second, the data collected via observation during the intervention are analysed and interpreted. The interview with the teacher after the intervention is summarized next. In the final chapter of this thesis the intervention is evaluated.

1 Communicative competence

1.1 Defining communicative competence

The term 'communicative competence' refers to the ability of a person to communicate adequately to a given situation, the context of discourse and sociocultural context. Dell Hymes coined this term to distinguish between the knowledge of language forms and the complex knowledge that is needed for functional communication, i.e. between 'linguistic competence' and 'communicative competence' (Hymes, 1967 in Brown, 2007a). Regarding his conception of communicative competence, Hymes further focused on its broader dimensions, especially the importance of context in terms of the discourse beyond the sentence and the sociolinguistic situation to the appropriate use of language (Hymes, 1972 in Bachman, 1990, pp. 82-83).

Other influential analysis of communicative competence was carried out by Michael Canale and Merrill Swain, who identified four dimensions of communicative competence: grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic and strategic competence (Canale and Swain, 1980). Their 'grammatical competence' refers to what Hymes calls 'linguistic competence' and represents "knowledge of lexical items and of rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar semantics and phonology" (Canale and Swain, 1980, p. 29). This competence is considered to be a fundamental component of communicative competence. Faerch, Haastrup and Phillison point out: "It is impossible to conceive of a person being communicatively competent without being linguistically competent" (1984 in Hedge, 2000, p. 47). 'Discourse competence' is closely connected to grammatical competence, however goes above sentence level grammar, and can be understood as ability to connect sentences to form a meaningful piece of discourse (Brown, 2007). 'Sociolinguistic competence', represents the knowledge of "the social context in which language is used: the roles of the participants, the information they share, and the functions of the interaction" (Savignon, 1983, p. 37 in Brown, 2007, p. 220). The fourth part of communicative competence, 'strategic competence', refers to strategies used for initiation of communication, maintaining effective communication (including repairing and redirecting) and terminating communication (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). Brown (2007, p. 220) claims that actually "strategic competence is the way we manipulate language in order to meet communicative goals."

Canale and Swain's model of communicative competence has been further modified by Lyle Bachman (1990). He proposes a three-component framework of 'communicative language ability', which as the "knowledge of language and the capacity for implementing that knowledge in communicative language use" (Bachman, 1990. p. 107) coincides closely with the term 'communicative competence' introduced above. Those three components of communicative language ability, i.e. 'language competence', 'strategic competence' and 'psychophysiological mechanisms', further interact with 'knowledge of the world' and 'context of situation', see Figure 1.1 (Bachman, 1990).
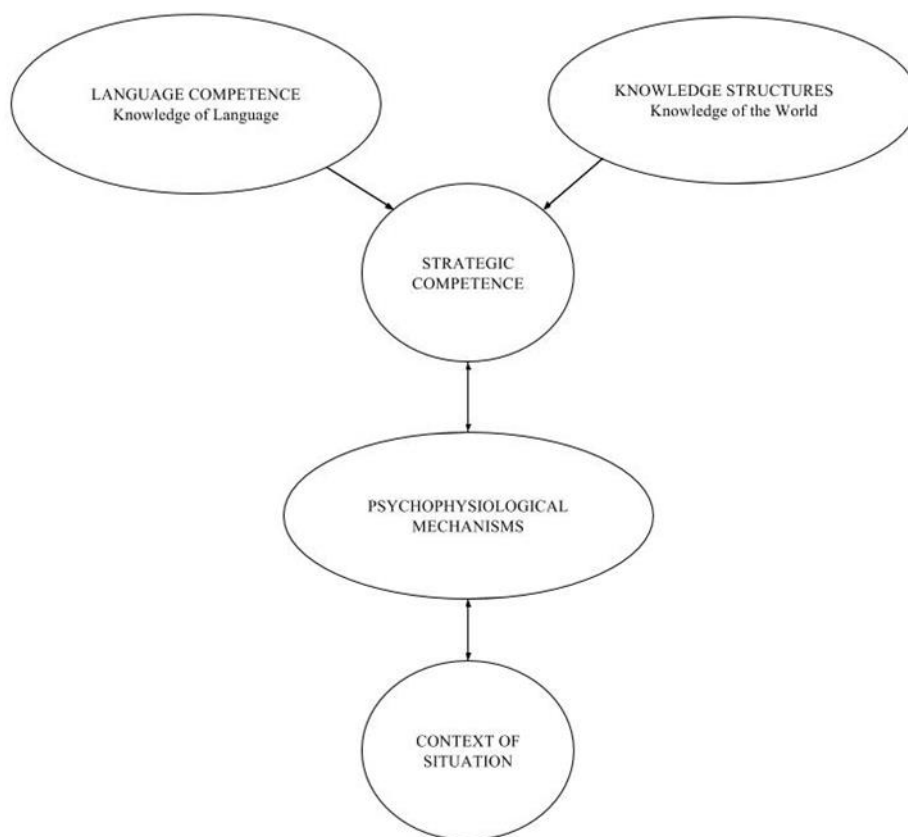
Figure 1: Components of communicative language ability in communicative language use (Bachman, 1990, p. 85)

Bachman's 'language competence' includes three components of Canale and Swain's framework of communicative competence (grammatical, discourse and sociolinguistic competencies), although considerably regrouped and amended. Bachman (1990) classifies language competencies into two main types: organizational competence and pragmatic competence. Organizational competence covers "those abilities involved in controlling the formal structure of language for producing or recognising grammatically correct sentences,

comprehending their propositional content, and ordering them to form texts" (Bachman, 1990, p. 87). Two parts of organizational competence, grammatical and textual competence, basically correspond with Canale and Swain's grammatical and discourse (plus partially strategic) competences. Pragmatic competence consists of illocutionary competence, i.e. the knowledge of pragmatic conventions that enable performing acceptable language functions, and sociolinguistic competence, i.e. the knowledge of sociolinguistic conventions that enable performing appropriate language functions in a given context (Bachman, 1990).

As mentioned above, the second component of Bachman's framework of communicative language ability is 'strategic competence', which interconnects language competence with language user's knowledge structures and a concrete context of the situation, which is also clearly illustrated in Figure 1. Strategic competence is realized through functions of assessment, planning and execution in order to achieve a communicative goal in the most effective way (Bachman, 1990). The third component of Bachman's framework is psychophysiological mechanisms involved in language use, i.e. "channel (auditory, visual) and mode (receptive, productive) in which competence is implemented" (Bachman, 1990, p. 108).

Main frameworks of communicative competence were introduced in this chapter in order to provide a theoretical base for our further discussion, concerning the practical implementation of the notion of communicative competence in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEF).

1.2   Components of communicative competence in CEF

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment (CEF) was released by the Council of Europe in 2002 as a comprehensive framework of reference for the wide sphere of foreign language teaching and learning. The main intended areas of its use are: syllabus creation and analysis, design of language teaching and learning materials, assessment of foreign language proficiency (Council of Europe, 2002). Nevertheless, as discussed further in this chapter, CEF elaborates on many other theoretical and practical issues concerning foreign language teaching and learning.

In order to provide "comprehensible, transparent and coherent frame of reference for language learning, teaching and assessment" CEF adopts a general view of language use and language learning:

Language use, embracing language learning, comprises the actions performed by persons who as individuals and as social agents develop a range of competences, both general and in particular communicative language competences. They draw on the competences at their disposal in various contexts under various conditions and under various constraints to engage in language activities involving language processes to produce and/or receive texts in relation to themes in specific domains, activating those strategies witch seem most appropriate for carrying out the tasks to be accomplished. The monitoring of these actions by the participants leads to the reinforcement or modification of their competences.

(Council of Europe, 2002, p. 9)

Users and learners of a foreign language build on number of competences they have acquired during their life. At the same time these competences are being developed by the language use and participation in communication events (Council of Europe, 2002). Depending on the tightness of the link between those competences and foreign language use and learning, CEF differentiate 'general competences' and 'communicative language competencies'.

General competences are defined in CEF as competences which are "not specific to language, but which are called upon for actions of all kinds, including language activities" (Council of Europe, 2002, p. 9). General competences are divided into four main categories: 'declarative knowledge', 'skills and know-how', 'existential competence' and 'ability to learn'. Declarative knowledge comprises of 'knowledge of the world', 'sociocultural knowledge' and 'intercultural awareness'; skills and know-how covers both 'practical skills and know-how' as well as 'intercultural skills and know-how'; existential competence represents personal attributes, such as attitudes, motivation, values, beliefs, cognitive factors, personal factors; ability to learn consist of 'language and communication awareness', 'general phonetic awareness and skills', 'study skills' and 'heuristic skills'. Although some traits of those competences can be observed in previously mentioned frameworks (Canale and Swain, Bachman), CEF is undoubtedly much broader and complete in terms of the summary of general competences that take part in language teaching and learning.

Communicative language competence in CEF includes 'linguistic competences', 'sociolinguistic competences' and 'pragmatic competences'. Each of these competences is reflected as knowledge (of) and skills and know-how (ability to use). Linguistic competences include: 'lexical competence' ("knowledge of, and ability to use, the vocabulary of a language" (Council of Europe, 2002, p. 110)), 'grammatical competence' ("knowledge of, and ability to use, the grammatical resources of a language" (Council of Europe, 2002, p. 112)), 'phonological competence' (perception and production of phonemes, allophones,

distinctive features, syllable structure, prosody and phonetic reduction), 'orthographic competence' ("knowledge of and skill in the perception and production of the symbols in which written texts are composed" (Council of Europe, 2002, p. 117)) and 'orthoepic competence' (knowledge of spelling conventions and conventions for the representation of pronunciation, knowledge of phrasing and intonation and ability to resolve ambiguity). Linguistic competences in CEF can be considered parallel to Canale and Swain's as well as Bachman's 'grammatical competences'.

The second part of communicative language competence is sociolinguistic competence. Similarly to sociocultural competence, which is a part of the general competences, sociolinguistic competence is concerned with social dimension of human actions. Sociolinguistic competence concentrates on knowledge and skills needed for dealing with social dimension of language use, specifically on: linguistic markers of social relations, politeness conventions, expressions of folk-wisdom, register differences, and dialect and accent (Council of Europe, 2002). Sociolinguistic competence in CEF overlaps with 'sociolinguistic competence' in the framework of Canale and Swain. Bachman also presents corresponding class of 'sociolinguistic competence', however, it is included under superordinate class of 'pragmatic competence'.

The last part of communicative language competence in CEF, pragmatic competences, consists of "knowledge of the principles according to which messages are: a) organised, structured and arranged ('discourse competence'); b) used to perform communicative functions ('functional competence'); c) sequenced according to interactional and transactional schemata ('design competence')" (Council of Europe, 2002, p. 123). The whole group of pragmatic competences in CEF overlaps with 'discourse competence' and 'strategic competence' in Canale and Swain's model. In the Bachman's framework, which is structured in a different way, corresponding competences are 'textual competence' (which is assigned under organizational competence) and 'illocutionary competence' (which is included under a bigger group of competences that Bachman calls 'pragmatic competence').

As presented above, communicative (language) competence is a very complex structure; its components are interrelated and mutually influence each other (Council of Europe, 2002; Bachman, 1990; Brown, 2007). All those individual components "are intended to characterise areas and types of competences internalised by the social agent, i.e. internal representations, mechanisms and capacities", and at the same time "any learning process will help to develop

or transform these same internal representations, mechanisms and capacities" (Council of Europe, 2002, p. 14). The individual components, or rather dimensions, of communicative competence are difficult to be observed, assessed and developed separately. That is the reason why language skills (speaking, writing, listening and reading) play such an important role. Communicative skills represent the core of communicative competence, 'the observable behaviour and performance" (Council of Europe, 2002, p. 14) through which the level of communicative competence can be assessed, as well as the means for communicative competence development.

2 Language skills in ELT

Theory, research and practice in English language teaching (ELT) have been focusing on individual language skills since the second half of the last century (Brown, 2007b). Four core language skills – speaking, listening, writing and reading – are commonly distinguished. Listening and reading are classified as so called *receptive skills*, while speaking and writing are called *productive skills*. Nevertheless, this distinction, based on the fact whether the language user is a recipient of the language or whether they actively produce the language, has been challenged by an increasing number of ELT theoreticians. For instance, Harmer (2007b, p. 265) points out that "reading and listening also demand considerable language activation on the part of the reader or listener". Hamer (2007) can also see mutual features between listening and reading (i.e. receptive skills) and between speaking and writing (i.e. productive skills), mainly regarding ELT methodology (see further).

CEF adopted an action-oriented approach that perceives language users and learners as members of a society, performing acts of speech within language activities. Those activities "form part of a wider social context, which alone is able to give them their full meaning" (Council of Europe, 2002, p. 9). Language skills are thus viewed in CEF from the perspective of 'communicative language activities', and a quite broad classification of them is provided there. CEF claims that communicative language competence of the learner is enhanced "in the performance of the various language activities, involving reception, production, interaction or meditation (in particular interpretation or translating). Each of these types of activity is possible in relation to texts in oral or written form, or both" (Council of Europe, 2002, p. 14). Reception and production are considered to be primary, because they are both required for interaction and mediation. They are, however, elaborated on in isolation in CEF. In reality, effectively, many situations "involve a mixture of activity types. In a school language class, for instance, a learner may be required to listen to a teacher's exposition, to read a textbook, silently or aloud, to interact with fellow pupils in group or project work, to write exercises or an essay, and even to mediate, whether as an educational activity or in order to assist another pupil." (Council of Europe, 2002, p. 57).

2.1 Receptive language skills

As mentioned above, receptive language skills are approached in CEF from the perspective of language activities performed by the user of language. Regarding CEF, receptive activities play a very important role in learning of a foreign language. They enable learners to capture the content of a particular course, to consult a textbook or dictionary, also to listen to radio in a foreign language, to read books in a foreign language, etc. (Council of Europe, 2002). Receptive activities are either listening or reading. The language user as listener in aural reception (listening) activities "receives and processes a spoken input produced by one or more speakers" (Council of Europe, 2002, p. 65). According to CEF, they can involve: listening to media, listening to information and instructions, listening to overheard conversation, etc. In visual reception activities (reading), "the user as reader receives and processes as input written texts produced by one or more writers" (Council of Europe, 2002, p. 68). CEF mentions examples of reading activities, such as: reading for information or general orientation, reading for pleasure, etc. The user can be reading or listening: for detailed understanding, for specific information, for gist, for implications, etc. (Council of Europe, 2002). There is also a class of audio-visual reception distinguished in CEF. That is a situation, where auditory and visual input is received simultaneously, such as following of a text read aloud, watching a film with subtitles, etc. (Council of Europe, 2002).

Majority of ELT textbooks authors approaches language skills strictly individually. One of the exceptions is Jeremy Harmer, who attempts to provide a unique overview of the common characteristics of teaching receptive skills and the common characteristics of teaching productive skills in his *The Practice of English Language Teaching* (2007). Regarding receptive skills, the teaching procedure is recognised as the first feature that is common for teaching both listening and reading. According Harmer (2007b) the basic phases of the receptive skills teaching procedure are a) lead in − enabling the activation of schemata that allow students to predict the content topic; b) comprehension task for general understanding (involving steps: setting the task, reading/listening and filling the task, feedback); c) task involving reading/listening for specific information or language point; d) follow-up activity (text related task) (pp. 270-271). Secondly, Harmer introduces the issue of language difficulty and suggests three ways in which the issue can be addressed, i.e. pre-teaching vocabulary, extensive reading and listening, and authenticity (pp. 272-273). The last element common for the teaching of listening as well as reading is the importance of the right type and level of difficulty of the task chosen. Harmer (2007b, p. 274) points out that "we need to use

comprehension tasks which promote understanding and we need to match text and task appropriately", in order that the task was challenging and thus motivating, but at the same time achievable.

2.2 Productive language skills

Productive language skills are, similarly to receptive skills, approached in CEF from the point of view of language activities performed by the user of language. Productive activities are important in academic and professional areas as well as in everyday social context (Council of Europe, 2002). In CEF productive activities are divided into two groups, i.e. speaking activities and writing activities. Oral production (speaking) activities are based on the fact that "the language user produces an oral text which is received by an audience of one or more listeners" (Council of Europe, 2002, p. 58). They can either have, so called, public address (instructions, information, etc.) or they can be addressing an audience (speeches at various occasions, sport commentaries, etc.). They can, for example, involve: reading text aloud, speaking from notes, acting out a role, speaking spontaneously, etc. (Council of Europe, 2002). See Chapter 3.3 for more details on speaking activities classification. In written production (writing) activities, "the language user as writer produces a written text which is received by a readership of one or more readers" (Council of Europe, 2002, p. 61). CEF includes following examples: completing forms and questionnaires, writing articles and reports, producing posters, making notes, creative and imaginative writing, writing letters of various kinds, etc.

According to Harmer (2007b), mutual characteristics concerning the teaching of productive skills, i.e. writing and speaking, can also be identified. Similarly to receptive skills, the teaching procedure is identified as the first one of them. Harmer presents "a basic methodological model for the teaching of productive skills" that consists of: a) lead-in stage, b) setting the task, c) monitoring the task, d) giving feedback and e) task-related follow-up (Harmer, 2007b, p. 275). The second important feature to be considered when teaching productive skills is the importance of the knowledge of rules concerning the structuring of the discourse as well as sociocultural conventions and differentiation of spoken or written discourse according to the particular audience for being able to communicate successfully (Harmer, 2007b, pp. 276-277). In terms of CEF, we talk about on the one hand pragmatic competences (with all three of its components, i.e. discourse, functional and design competences) and on the other sociolinguistic competences, both as a part of communicative

competence, and also intercultural awareness and intercultural skills and know-how as a part of general competences (Council of Europe, 2002) (see Chapter 1.2). The next problematics mentioned is the necessity of employing and teaching what Harmer calls 'difficulty strategies', mainly improvising and paraphrasing (Harmer, 2007b, 277-278). In CEF these strategies are included under pragmatic competences, specifically under functional competence (Council of Europe, 2002). As the last common characteristics in teaching productive skills, Harmer presents a sequence of steps that should help students to manage a particular task. In order to prevent frustration stemming from the lack of vocabulary or grammar, teacher should a) supply key language and b) plan in advance production activities "that will provoke the use of language which they [students] have had a chance to absorb at an earlier stage" (Harmer, 2007b, p. 278).

2.3   Integration of language skills

Hinkel (2006, p.113) claims that "[i]n an age of globalization, pragmatic objectives of language learning place an increase value on integrated and dynamic multiskill instructional models with a focus on meaningful communication and the development of learners' communicative competence".

Despite the fact that majority of ELT literature studies individual language skills in separation, "[c]ommonly accepted perspectives on language teaching and learning recognize that, in meaningful communication, people employ incremental language skills not in isolation but in tandem" (ibid). Consequently an increasing number of ELT specialists, (Nunan, 1989; Brown, 2007b; Harmer, 2007b; etc.) in greater or lesser extent, pay attention to the integration of the four skills. In their opinion a language lesson and within it tasks integrating the four language skills can provide students with a model of real-life language skills integration and help them to perceive the relations between them (Brown, 2007b, Nunan, 1989).

Interaction can be seen as the most obvious example of integration. Brown (2007b, p. 286) explains that production and reception are actually "two sides of the same coin", and that interaction means "sending *and* receiving messages", i.e. interaction represents integration by its very nature. Richards and Burns (2012, p. 195) add that "[l]istening plays a major interactional role in successful spoken communication". CEF, correspondingly, recognises interaction as a separate category of communicative language activities, which plays a crucial

role in communication, and thus its importance in language learning is undisputable (Council of Europe, 2002). Interaction represents a situation when two or more participants are involved in an oral or written exchange with alternating turns of production and reception (Council of Europe, 2002). Spoken, written and mixed interaction can be distinguished. In spoken interaction a conversational discourse is constructed by one or more participants that act alternately as speaker and listener, while besides reception and production strategies also "cognitive and collaborative strategies (also called discourse strategies and co-operations strategies)" are in use (Council of Europe, 2002, p. 73). The examples of spoken interaction activities listed in CEF are: transaction, informal and formal discussion, casual conversation, negotiation, debate, interview, co-planning and goal-oriented cooperation (Council of Europe, 2002). Written interaction, realized through the medium of written language, includes: exchanging notes, correspondence, negotiation of agreements or contracts, on-line or off-line computer conferences, etc. (Council of Europe, 2002).

Mediation is distinguished in CEF as a separate category of communicative language ability, as mentioned above. In mediating activities the language user acts "as an intermediary between interlocutors who are unable to understand each other directly – normally (but not exclusively) speakers of different languages" (Council of Europe, 2002, p. 87). Mediating activities include spoken interpretation (simultaneous, consecutive or informal), written translation (exact translation, literary translation, summarising gist and paraphrasing) (Council of Europe, 2002).

In terms of language learning, Brown (2007) recognises the influence of one skill on another. "Often one skill will reinforce another; we learn to speak, for example, in part by modelling what we hear, and we learn to write by examining what we can read" (p. 286). Also Harmer (2007b) sees texts (either written or spoken) as models that can show features to draw upon, mainly in situations when students are to work on genre-focused tasks. He also adds categories of "speaking as preparation and stimulus" and "text as preparation and stimulus" to the spectrum of skill integration possibilities (p. 267). Further, he gives examples of complex integrated tasks, such as cooperative writing, which can involve speaking, listening, writing and reading almost on a simultaneous base or project work that may involve "researching (through reading or listening), speaking (e.g. in discussions or when giving a presentation) and writing (e.g. submitting a report)" (ibid). Goh and Burns (2012) refer to the possibility of integration of all four skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) too, for example in a discussion task that involves solving real or hypothetical issue. They offer the example of a

task where the learners work in groups to agree on a story that they write together to be read for the whole class later (ibid).

3 Speaking in a foreign language

3.1 Knowledge base, skills and strategies

Speaking in a foreign language is a complicated process that involves a knowledge base, skills[1] to activate and use this knowledge, and strategies to solve communication problems (Thornbury, 2012; Bygate, 1987, Goh and Burns, 2012). The knowledge base, common for all four language skills (speaking, writing, listening and reading), is represented by the knowledge of grammar, knowledge of lexis and phonological knowledge (Thornbury, 2012; Bygate, 1987; Goh and Burns, 2012). One group of skills that are tied up with an accurate use of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation in spoken language are called by Bygate (1991) motor-perceptive skills. Littlewood (1981) claims that a learner must master linguistic structures and vocabulary, and develop skills in manipulating them in order to express their intended message, i.e. "attain as high a degree as possible of linguistic competence" (p. 6). In terms of CEF the corresponding part of communicative language competence is linguistic competence that represents "knowledge of, and ability to use, the formal resources from which well-formed, meaningful messages may be assembled and formulated" (Council of Europe, 2002, p.109), namely its parts: lexical, grammatical, semantical and phonological competences. For a long time the development of the above mentioned kind of knowledge and skills was the only concern in ELT (Bygate, 1991; Thornbu, 2005; Nunan, 1989; etc.). One of the first ones to speak out against it was David Wilkins (1975), who pointed out that ELT students "are not able to transfer [their] knowledge from a language-learning situation to a language-using situation" (in Bygate, 1991, p. 6).

Undoubtedly, there are other components of knowledge base and skills that play an important role in speaking. One of them is the knowledge of typical patterns of different kinds of speaking situations. Hedge (2000) introduces the concept of genre that "links the purpose of particular type of spoken discourse to its overall structure and it is possible to identify a predictable shape to some genres." (Hedge, 2000, p. 265). Similarly Nunan (2000) sees genre as "a purposeful, socially-constructed, communicative event" which "has its own distinctive

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[1] The term 'skills' was used in previous chapters almost exclusively in the meaning of the actual realisation of language in speaking, writing, reading and/or listening ('language skills', 'productive skills', 'receptive skills', 'speaking skills'). In CEF the term 'activities' is used to convey the same meaning ('language activities', 'productive activities', etc.). In the following text the term 'skill' is also used in more general meaning of 'a particular ability or type of ability' or conveys the meaning of 'the ability to do something well' (Hornby and Turnbull , 2010, p. 1441).

linguistic characteristics, and its own generic structure" (p. 44). He suggests that, when learning a foreign language, learners should have opportunities to examine the generic structures of spoken language, and also that types of interaction learning opportunities in the classroom should resemble the interaction opportunities outside the classroom (Nunan, 2000). Likewise, Scrivener (2011) claims that teachers "must think about the range of speaking acts that a learner may be faced with and give them chances to practise selecting appropriate genres and planning the appropriate language needed for a variety of different speaking situations and audiences" (p. 231). Thornbury (2012) mentions different genres (ranging from informal discussion to formal presentation) and their specific needs in terms of discourse markers and connection devices, knowledge of which is necessary for the production of speaking discourse. In terms of CEF, the issue of typical patterns of speaking situations pervades the whole section of sociolinguistic competences (linguistic markers of social relations, politeness conventions, expressions of folk-wisdom, register differences, dialect and accent), as well as pragmatic competences (especially discourse competence, however, also functional competence, mainly in terms of macrofunctions and general schemata of spoken discourse, see below) (Council of Europe, 2002).

The question of various functions of spoken language, which is closely connected with the variety of speaking situations mentioned above, was raised by Brown and Yule (1983). They draw a basic distinction between transactional and interactional function of spoken language (in Richards, 1990). According to them, transactional uses of language primarily focus on the transfer of information, while interactional uses of language[2] are primarily concerned with the maintenance of social relationships (Brown and Yule in Richards, 1990, pp. 54-56). There is the section concerning functional competence as a part of pragmatic competences that deals with various functions of spoken language in CEF. CEF expresses the need for knowledge and skills to use particular language forms for particular functional purposes (so called microfunctions of spoken language, such as asking, agreement, apologies, suggestion, request, attracting attention, opening, etc.), as well as for the understanding of and skills in operating the process of "an interaction in which each initiative leads to a response and moves the interaction further on, according to its purpose, through a succession of stages from opening exchanges to its final conclusion" (so called macrofunctions of spoken language) (Council of Europe, 2002, p. 125). CEF distinguishes macrofunctions such as: description, narration, commentary, exposition, exegesis, explanation, demonstration, instruction, argumentation,

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[2] Interactional function of language is also quite often referred to as interpersonal function (Brown, 2007b).

persuasion, etc. (ibid). Functional competence in CEF also includes knowledge of and ability to use interactional schemata, i.e. sequencing of macrofunctions that "are ordered according to formal or informal patterns of social interaction" (Council of Europe, 2002, pp. 125-127).

Another set of skills, involving making decisions that are needed for real-life communication in a foreign language, are according to Bygate (1991) so called interaction skills. He divides them into two groups, management of interaction and negotiation of meaning. The first group, management of interaction, is further distinguished into agenda management and turn-taking. Agenda management covers skills of introducing, developing or changing topic, starting and terminating conversation, etc. Turn-taking involves, according to Bygate (1991, p. 39), five abilities: to use devices signalling that one wants to speak (phrases, sounds or gestures), to recognise the right moment to get a turn, to make use of ones turn appropriately, to recognize others' signals of their desire to speak and to let somebody else to speak. The second main group of Bygate's interaction skills, negotiation of meaning, refers to the skill of communicating ideas clearly and the skill of signalling mutual understanding (Bygate, 1991).

Concerning knowledge and skills related to the above mentioned management of interaction, Hedge (2000) sees the factors of status and role as the core ones, since they are generally influencing all the other rules. According to her "the cultural conventions will need to be learned as well as appropriate formality in style of speech and the level of politeness that is appropriate to the relationship between the participants" (Hedge, 2000, p. 267). She claims that oral interactions are also governed by specific rules regarding opening and closing the conversation, fixed routines for appropriate responding, turn-taking rules and topic management principles (ibid). Thornbury (2012) uses the term "knowledge of the sociolinguistic and pragmatic conventions of the targeted language culture" with which he covers "the way politeness and social distance are encoded, and how certain interpersonal speech events – such as greeting and complementing – are locally managed" (p. 201). CEF, similarly as Thornbury, includes the issues connected with interactional skills under both, sociolinguistic competences and pragmatic competences. Regarding sociolinguistic competences, mainly sections dealing with linguistic markers of social conventions (including choice of greetings, address forms, conventions for turntaking, etc.), politeness conventions and register differences are connected with the problematics of interactional skills (Council of Europe, 2002). Pragmatic competences follow up on it within discourse competence (topic management, turn taking, etc.) and partially also functional competence (microfunctions, esp. structuring discourse: opening, turntaking, closing, etc.) sections (Council of Europe, 2002).

When talking about speaking skills development, we also need to take into consideration that there is a significant difference between using a foreign language in speaking interaction with one or more other speakers for transactional or interactional purpose and uninterrupted oral presentation, i.e. between dialogue and monologue (Nunan, 1989). "The ability to have an uninterrupted oral presentation is quite distinct from interacting with one or more speakers for transactional or interactional purposes" (Nunan, 1989). Brown and Yule (1983) point out that "most language teaching is concerned with developing skills in short, interactional exchanges in which the learner is only required to make one or two utterances at a time" (in Nunan, 1989, p. 27). CEF claims: "In learning a foreign language, a learner is likely to start with short turns, usually of single sentence length. At higher level of proficiency, the development of discourse competence, […], becomes of increasing importance" (Council of Europe, 2002, p. 123).

Apart from knowledge base and skills, speaking in a foreign language also involves the use of communication strategies, i.e. techniques that are systematically used in order "to compensate for some deficiency in the linguistic system, and focus on exploring alternate ways of using what one does know for the transmission of a message" (Tarone, 1981 in Thornbury, 2012, p. 201). The importance of communication strategies in learning to participate in a spoken interaction was recently confirmed by several studies (Tarone, 2005 in Brown, 2007b). Typically, they represent either avoidance strategies or compensatory strategies. Avoidance strategies involve abandoning the message completely or replacing it by some less complicated one (Thornbury, 2005). There are many types of compensatory strategies – also called achievement strategies (Bygate, 1991 and Council of Europe, 2002) – that can be used to help to get the intended message across, such as paraphrasing, guessing, approximation, foreignizing a word, using gestures, etc. (Thornbury, 2005; Bygate, 1991; Goh and Burns, 2012; Council of Europe, 2002, p. 63). In CEF, those communication strategies are a part of functional competence under the head of pragmatic competences.

Goh and Burns understand communication strategies in a broader way, as strategies that "enable learners to overcome lexical gaps, […] repair communication breakdowns, and enhance the discourse" (Goh and Burns, 2012, p. 67). Thus they include among them also metacognitive strategies (planning, self-monitoring and self-evaluation) and interactional strategies (exemplification, confirmation and comprehension checks, repetition, request for clarification or repetition, exemplification request and assistance appeal) that are connected with the skill of negotiation of meaning mentioned above (ibid).

3.2 Approaches to teaching speaking in a foreign language

Jack C. Richards (1990) recognises two complementary approaches to the teaching of speaking interaction: indirect and direct approach. The indirect approach secures the development of conversational competence through engaging students in speaking interaction using communicative activities (ibid). On the other hand the direct approach "involves planning a conversation program around the specific makroskills, strategies, and processes that are involved in fluent conversation" (Richards, 1990, p. 77). Hedge concisely summarises the possible limitations of both approaches:

> "The success of an indirect approach will depend on such factors as whether input provides examples of conversational strategies, whether speaking activities generate useful practice, and whether individual students get opportunities to practise within activities. The success of a direct approach will depend on whether students are able to transfer the strategies they practise in more controlled language-focused activity to fluency activities. Both approaches have potential and problems."
>
> (Hedge, 2000, p. 273)

The theoretical base for the indirect approach to teaching speaking interaction is the research in second language acquisition which indicates that learners acquire communicative competence through conversation (Richards, 1990; Nunan, 2000). The opportunities for active engagement in conversation are supplied by the use of communicative pair-work and group-work activities that mostly involve information sharing and negotiation of meaning (Johnson, 1982 in Richards, 1990).

One of the often mentioned limitations of the indirect approach is that the interactional (or interpersonal) function of language is being omitted. "Communication and pair-work activities often focus on using conversation to convey information, to negotiate meaning, or to complete a task but ignore the use of conversation to create social interaction and social relations" (Richards, 1990. p. 79). Richards (1990) suggests that this drawback can be compensated with incorporaiting the use of the direct approach for teaching strategies for conversational interaction. The other possibility would be, as illustrated later, to incorporate role-plays and similar type of activities that enable students to engage in a real-life type of social interaction.

The direct approach, as mentioned above, concentrates on the processes and strategies involved in speaking interaction. Instruction, tasks and activities are focused directly on specific aspects of conversation, such as turn-taking strategies, topic management, repair,

appropriate styles of speaking, conversational routines, pronunciation, etc. (Richards, 1990). This approach requires a systematic analysis of those individual aspects of speaking interaction, and based on that, the creation of a programme of awareness-raising and practice (Hedge, 2000).

David Nunan (1989) distinguishes between top-down and bottom-up approaches to language production. Bottom-up approaches, similarly to the direct approach to teaching speaking, focus on the individual components of language that are combined in producing language (ibid). Top-down approaches "utilize knowledge of the larger picture, as it were, to assist in […] using smaller elements" (Nunan, 1989, p. 38).

H. Douglas Brown (2007b) addresses a connected, however broader, issue of prioritizing either the goal of accuracy or the goal of fluency when teaching speaking. Teachers of a foreign language have to find the right balance between accuracy, i.e. the goal of grammatically and phonologically correct language, and fluency, i.e. the goal of fluent, flowing and natural language. In terms of methodology, that question can be translated to the question, whether language teaching should be message oriented (so called teaching language use) or language oriented (so called teaching language usage) (ibid), which takes us back to the principles of indirect and direct approaches to teaching speaking. According to Brown (2007, p. 324), "current approaches to language teaching lean strongly toward message orientation with language usage offering a supportive role".

3.3   Classification of speaking activities and tasks in ELT

Various types of learning activities and tasks[3] used in ELT are presented in this chapter, with the main accent on the classification of speaking activities and tasks.

William Littlewood (1981) distinguishes two basic groups of learning activities: pre-communicative learning activities and communicative learning activities. Pre-communicative activities are to "equip the learner with some of the skills required for communication, without actually requiring him to perform communicative acts" (p. 8). The aim of this type of

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[3] According to the Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary [on line] a task is "an activity which is designed to help achieve learning goal, especially in language learning". Similarly, Nunan (1989) sees an activity as one of the components of a task (besides input, goal, teacher and learner role and settings) which specifies "what learners will actually do with the input which forms the point of departure for the learning task" (p. 59). Only exceptionally, however, authors make a strictly conclusive distinction in their use of terms 'task' and 'activity'. In the following text, the use of those terms primarily corresponds to the individual authors' usage (e.g. Goh and Burns use the term 'task' where Littlewood and Prabhu use the term 'activity').

activities is to enable learners to acquire linguistic forms and to interconnect them with communicative functions, specific meanings in concrete situations and various social contexts (Littlewood, 1981). However, the accuracy and adequacy of the form, not whether an intended meaning was communicated successfully, is the criterion for success (ibid). This type of activities could be linked to the above mentioned direct approach to the teaching of speaking.

Littlewood's communicative learning activities, which roughly correspond with the indirect approach to the teaching of speaking, are divided in two main categories: functional communication activities and social interaction activities (Littlewood, 1981). The main purpose of functional communication activities is that "learners should use the language they know in order to get meaning across as effectively as possible" (Littlewood, 1981, p. 20). The functional aspect of communication is accented and the activity usually involves information sharing or a problem solving (i.e. processing of information) (ibid). Social interaction activities place emphasis on social as well as functional meanings of language, i.e. not only the functional effectiveness of language, but also the acceptability of the forms used is measured (ibid). Thus that type of activities "approximate more closely to the kind of communication situation encountered outside the classroom, where language is not only a functional instrument, but also a form of social behaviour" (Littlewood, 1981, p. 43).

Communicative learning activities, which are learner centred, enable a complex "whole-task practice", improve motivation, allow natural learning and create a context that supports learning (Littlewood, 1981, p. 17-18), are focused on further on in this chapter. Various later classifications of communicative speaking activities and tasks were provided by a number of ELT theoreticians. We will, in the first place, refer to one of the most recent ones established by Goh and Burns (2012).

Christine C. M. Goh and Anne Burns (2012) divide speaking tasks into three main categories, based on different kinds of knowledge and skills that learners engage during those tasks. These categories are: communication-gap tasks, discussion tasks and monologic tasks. Communication-gap and discussion tasks usually involve both transactional and interactional (interpersonal) use of language, through which "learners practice different core speaking skills, draw on their knowledge about language and discourse, and use strategies to enhance their communication" (Goh and Burns, 2012, p. 202). On the other hand, monologic tasks require the production of longer formal or informal stretches of discourse by an individual;

the function of spoken language us is mainly transactional and the feedback from listeners is commonly received afterwards (ibid).

Regarding communication-gap tasks Goh and Burns (2012) distinguish two types of communication gaps: information and context. For information-gap activities, leaners have different sets of information, and they need to work together and share the information to be able to achieve a given outcome (Harmer, 2007a; Goh and Burns, 2012). In the opinion of Hedge (2000, p. 281) information-gap tasks assist language acquisition and, also, their problem solving aspect enhances students motivation, however "they do not necessarily involve students in conversational strategies in the same way as role-plays or discussions". In context-gap activities, learners obtain the same set of information (a list of words, a set of pictures, and the like) and "[t]hey have to use the information to construct new content for the listeners" (Goh and Burns, 2012, p. 203). Context-gap tasks are generally more challenging for learners, since they involve dynamic relationships (ibid).

N. S. Prabhu (1987), unlike Goh and Burns, differentiates tree types of gap activities: information-gap, reasoning-gap and opinion-gap activity (in Nunan, 1989). The information-gap activity type corresponds with the description above. Reasoning-gap activities involve "deriving some new information from given information [i.e. in contrast to the information-gap activities, the information to be conveyed is not the same as the information initially comprehended] through processes of inference, deduction, practical reasoning, or a perception of relationships or patterns" (Prabhu, 1987 in Nunan, 1989). In an opinion-gap activity (such as story completion or discussion of a social issue) identifying and expressing preferences, opinions or attitude in response to a given situation is involved (ibid). This type of tasks overlaps with what Goh and Burns call discussion tasks (see further).

The second main category of speaking tasks according to Goh and Burns (2012) are discussion tasks in which students have to share their ideas and opinions based on their background knowledge and experience, and also often have to engage in negotiation in order to reach a solution that is acceptable to all of them. Teachers should provide relevant written or spoken prompts (incl. pictures) to be used as a base for the discussion, provide clear instructions for the whole activity and establish clear goals (ibid; Hedge, 2000). Goh and Burns (2012) see an important benefit of discussion tasks in the fact that they potentially help to develop learners' high-level thinking and reasoning skills, and that their real-life background enhance learners motivation to communicate. Hedge (2000, p. 277) also

highlights the opportunity discussion task provides for students to practise the skills "required in interpersonal communication, for example, taking and holding turns, introducing a topic or shifting to a new topic, and encouraging responses and other contributions".

Other authors (Harmer, 2007b; Hedge, 2000; Ur, 1996; etc.) also identify similar class of discussion activities as Goh and Burns, nevertheless they mostly exclude role plays (and similar techniques such as simulations), and present them as a separate class of speaking activities. The term 'role play' is used for various kinds of activities in which students imagine themselves outside a classroom in a particular situation and, possibly, in a particular role (Ur, 1996). While the setting, the situation and the roles (individual or group ones) are provided by the teacher, the language the students use is up to their choice (Hedge, 2000). Role plays are based on real-life situations, and enable to practise interactional as well as transactional function of spoken language (ibid). The phenomenon of role plays and its impact for teaching speaking is very comprehensibly described by Penny Ur:

> The use of role play has added a tremendous number of possibilities for communication practice. Students are no longer limited to the kind of language used by learners in a classroom: they can be shopkeepers or spies, grandparents or children, authority figures or subordinates; they can be bold or frightened, irritated or amused, disapproving or affectionate; they can be in Buckingham Palace or on a ship or on the moon; they can be threatening, advising, apologising, condoling. The language can correspondingly vary along several parameters: according to the profession, status, personality, attitudes or mood of the character being roleplayed, according to the physical setting imagined, according to the communicative functions or purpose required.
>
> Ur (1981, p. 9)

In other words, role plays enable learners to practice the use of a foreign language in various kinds of speaking situations, in a number of social roles, and with different communicative purposes and functions.

Richards (1990) describes the output of a research that collected data on conversational interaction and discourse, which students produced during a particular role play. In terms of interaction skills and strategies, students were found to employ wild range of features, such as "repairs, requests for clarification, short and long turns, openings and closings, topicalization behaviour including strategies for topic nomination and topic change, use of polite forms, and politeness strategies" (Richards, 1990, p. 84).

Role plays of course, as any other type of activity, have their limitations. Hedge, (2000) can see the main limitation in the type of role that a student is to perform. In her opinion students usually perform well in roles that are functional (involving apologising, offering help and so on), social (such as purchaser, guest, etc.) and roles close to their real lives (ibid). While professional roles and roles involving a change of status, personality and gender can be more demanding (ibid). Ur (1981) recognises two main possible limitations. Firstly, students unused to this kind of activity can find it difficult to relax and pretend to be somebody else as well as to keep the talking going. Secondly, some of role plays are "lacking specific direction and purpose" that "sometimes results rather in confusion and uncertainty what to do next; partly because our students are not relaxed and imaginative enough, partly because they are relatively limited in their technical ability to express themselves" (Ur, 1981, pp. 10-11).

The third category of speaking tasks distinguished by Goh and Burns (2012, p. 211) is a monologue, which is defined in the context of language learning as "an extended piece of discourse that an individual produces for an audience in formal or informal situations". They suggest that majority of monologic tasks should be conducted in small groups in order to reduce learners anxiety as well as to maximise the utilization of lesson time (ibid). Monologic tasks can range from planed and rehearsed speeches to spontaneous ones; involving telling stories or jokes, sharing views or personal experiences, describing a person or place, talking about books, films or plays, etc. (ibid; Ur, 1996). In monologic tasks, besides the knowledge base, speaking skills also take an important part. "[L]earners typically have to learn to introduce, maintain, and close a topic; use cohesive devices to organize extended discourse; and anticipate and share listeners' perspectives (Goh and Burns, 2012, p. 212)". A successful monologue is also dependent upon "good grammatical and pragmatic competence, as well as knowledge of appropriate vocabulary for particular topics" (ibid). The knowledge of appropriate organization of the discourse according the type of genre is equally important (ibid).

CEF also provides a classification of speaking activities, however, "activities" in CEF are understood more generally as a type of performance in which communicative competence is activated (Council of Europe, 2002). Nevertheless, this classification can and should be used as a base for designing tasks and activities in ELT, and that is why it is presented here. There are oral production (speaking), as a part of productive activities, and spoken interaction, as a part of interactive activities, distinguished in CEF (see their characteristics in Chapter 1.2). According CEF, speaking activities can involve: reading a written text aloud; speaking from

notes, or from visual aids (diagrams, pictures, charts, etc.); acting out a rehearsed role; speaking spontaneously or singing (Council of Europe, 2002, p. 58). CEF provides illustrative scales for: overall spoken production; sustained monologue: describing an experience; sustained monologue: putting a case (e.g. in debate); public announcements and addressing audiences (ibid). Spoken interactive activities involve: transactions, casual conversation, informal and formal discussion, debate, interview, negotiation, co-planning, practical goal-oriented co-operation (Council of Europe, 2002, p. 73). Illustrative scales are provided for: overall spoken interaction, understanding a native speaker interlocutor, conversation, informal discussion, formal discussion and meetings, goal-oriented co-operation, transactions to obtain goods and services, information exchange, interviewing and being interviewed (ibid).

3.4   Criteria for selecting or designing speaking activities and tasks

Scott Thornbury (2005) presents a comprehensive list of general criteria for selecting or designing a speaking task. Those criteria are: productivity, purposefulness, interactivity, challenge, safety and authenticity (Thornbury, 2005, pp. 90-91).

The maximization of the language productivity of an activity is necessary to secure the best conditions for autonomous language use (Thornbury, 2005). Ur (1996) requests that learners' talk should occupy as much time allocated for the whole activity as possible and that all learners should be guaranteed an even share of speaking. Brown (2007b, p. 323) adds the additional point of giving students opportunities to initiate communication, since a "[p]art of oral communication competence is the ability to initiate conversation, to nominate topics, to ask questions, to control conversation, and to change the subject". In other words, any speaking activity should enable students to acquire interactional skills (in terms of management of interaction and negotiation of meaning) through language production, as well as to practice both transactional and interactional functions of spoken language.

The second criterion of purposefulness relates to the need for a clear outcome of an activity, "especially one which requires learners to work together to achieve a common purpose", such as reaching a mutual decision within a group, producing a report, etc. (Thornbury, 2005, p. 90). Goh and Burns (2012) can see moreover the importance of the clear and specific outcome that is announced to the learners and that will help them to anticipate the language resources needed to complete the task.

By interactivity Thornbury means that activities should always "require learners [to] take into account the effect they are having on their audience" to ensure that they are a good preparation for the real-life use of a foreign language. Thornbury's interactivity is therefore again linked with interaction skills and their development in terms of management of interaction (agenda management and turn taking) as well as negotiation of meaning. Furthermore, communication strategies have to play an important part, for an activity to comply with the criterion of interactivity. Brown (2007b, p. 331) develops Thornbury's ideas further and suggests as frequent integration of speaking and listening goals in one activity as possible, since "skills in producing language are often initiated through comprehension".

The other two of Thornbury's criteria for producing speaking tasks are on the one hand challenge, but on the other hand safety. Any task should be challenging enough for learners to feel the need to communicate with each other. Goh and Burns (2005, pp. 218-219) mention that a gap in actual knowledge or in opinion (so called information-gap or opinion-gap activities, see Chapter 3.3) would create the need to mobilize available oral communication skills; in case of an opinion-gap activity also oral skills, such as negotiating agreement, plus listening skills, including interference and prediction making, would get advanced.

The degree of difficulty has to be certainly adjusted to individual learners' abilities (Thornbury, 2005). In connection with this issue, Ur (1996) emphasises the motivational aspect of an activity that is in her opinion arising from the fact that students are interested in the particular topic or they want to participate in achieving the task objective, i.e. the importance of the choice of the right topic and also the importance of setting the right objectives (discussed above). Brown (2007b, p. 331) in addition advocates for providing intrinsically motivating techniques, which would "appeal to students' ultimate goals and interests, to their need for knowledge, for status, for achieving competence and autonomy".

The aspect of the difficulty of speaking tasks was a focal point of an extensive research conducted by Brown and Yule (1983) and Brown et al. (1984). Their results showed that the task difficulty is determined by the fact whether the task involves static tasks or tasks involving dynamic or abstract relationships (in Nunan, 2000). The least communicatively demanding where static tasks (such as a diagram-drawing task where one speaker had to describe to the listener how to reproduce a coloured diagram); tasks involving dynamic relationships (i.e. a task that required the speaker to describe changing relationships between entities, e.g. describing a car crash) were more difficult than plain static tasks; and finally the

most difficult were tasks involving abstract relationships, e.g. providing an opinion on the topic of corporal punishment (Brown et al., 1984 in Nunan, 2000, pp. 47-48). The degree of the difficulty of a task also increases proportionally to the increasing number of elements, relationships, characters, etc. involved (ibid). Brown at al. tried to explore as well the determining factors that help learners to improve their performance on a particular speaking task. They concluded that learners' performance was enhanced by "rehearsal of the tasks under different conditions" (mainly concerning dynamic tasks) and "the opportunity to review and reflect on the tasks" (Brown et al., 1984 in Nunan, 2000, p.49).

Not only have to be learners challenged and motivated, but they also need to feel safe when attempting autonomous language use (Thornbury, 2005). "The classroom should provide the right conditions for experimentation, including a supportive classroom dynamics and non-judgmental attitude to error on the part of the teacher (ibid, p. 91)".

The last of Thornbury's (2005) criteria, authenticity, calls for an authentic context and meaningful interaction as the vital parts of any tasks. The quality of communication in the classroom should correspond, as much as possible, to real-life communication, which means that learners "will, at times, need to perform in real operating conditions, e.g. spontaneously, unassisted, with minimal preparation, and making do with their resources" (Thornbury, 2005, p. 91). Furthermore, the topics, situations and types of discourse procedures needed for the completion of the task should relate to the possible real-word needs of the learners (Goh and Burns, 2005; Thornbury, 2005).

4 Pair work and group work

4.1 Theoretical background of pair work and group work

Pair work represents a situation where a whole class is divided into pairs, in which students work together. In group work then, similarly, a class is divided to small groups, in which students work together. In other words in pair work students perform a learning task through interaction in pairs, and in group work students perform a given learning task through small-group interaction (Ur, 1996). It is important to point out that all the pairs during pair work and groups during group work work simultaneously (Doff, 1990).

One of the theoretical pillars for the use of pair work and group work in ELT is Swain's comprehensible output hypothesis (Swain, 1985 in Nunan, 2000; Hedge, 2000). Swain emphasizes, based on a study of children learning French as a second language in an immersion programme, the significance of the role of comprehensible output in language learning (Nunan, 2000). Talking in a group, which from its nature involves negotiation of meaning, "provides learners with the opportunity to push to the limit their emerging competence" (Nunan, 2000, p. 50). Learners are pushed to use all the language resources they have required so far (Hedge, 2000), including compensatory strategies (such as paraphrasing, etc.) and interactional strategies (comprehension checks, repetition, etc.) during negotiation of meaning. The output produced in interaction moreover enable learners "to try out hypotheses about how language works, and it may also force learners to impose syntax on their language" (ibid). Group interaction thus pushes learners to produce more language that is accurate and appropriate, and that at the same time provides valuable input for other learners (Hedge, 2000).

Swain's claims have been supported by further research into the role of group work in language learning. Pica and Doughty (1985) carried out a research study concerning differences in language input and output in situations of small-group work and teacher-fronted whole-class work (in Hedge, 2000). They found evidence of negotiation of meaning (mainly clarification and confirmation checks, and also peer correction and completion), which were more common in group work. Students produced more output and were exposed to more input in the case of group work, while the level of accuracy of the output was equal in both cases (ibid). Other studies that focused on various aspects of small-group work have been

conducted. Long et al. (1976) found that significantly more language is used and a wider range of language functions is exploited by learners working in small groups than during teacher-fronted tasks (in Nunan, 2000). The results of other two studies suggest that learners working in small groups do not produce more errors or "learn each other's mistakes" (Porter, 1983, 1986 in Nunan, 2000, p.51) and that they are even able to correct successfully one another (Bruton and Samuda, 1980 in ibid).

Many other ELT theoreticians (Scrivaner, 2011; Harmer, 2007; Ur, 1981, 1996; etc.) simply highlight the maximization of learners' speaking time and interaction as one of the crucial benefits of pair work and group work. Ur (1996, p. 232) claims: "[L]earners in a class that is divided into five groups get five times as many opportunities to talk as in full-class organization". Other advantages of group work for learners that she indicates are: activation, encouragement of autonomy and responsibility, improvement of motivation and cooperation, contribution to a positive classroom climate (ibid). Doff (1990, p. 141) provides a similar list of positive aspects of pair work and group work, containing: more language practice, students are more involved, students feel secure, students help one another. Ur (1996, p. 121) also comments on a specific point of security sense that is connected with group work and pair work. According to her, group work "lowers the inhibition of students who are unwilling to speak in front of the full class". The last but important point concerns students helping each other during pair work and group work or, more fittingly, "peer-teaching" (Ur, 1981, p. 7). During group work students learn from each other in terms of linguistic as well as non-linguistic content (ibid). As also discussed above (regarding the research into interaction in group work), students even provide feedback in correction of each other's mistakes and help in completion of each other's sentences (Ur, 1981; Nunan, 2000; Hedge, 2000).

To compare group work and pair work, group work provides a bigger opportunity for social interaction than pair work. Students have to engage wider range of cooperation and negotiation skills (Harmer, 2007b). There is also a greater possibility that different opinions and more varied contributions appear during group work (ibid). Furthermore, group work represents a wider platform for peer-teaching and correction. On the other hand, pair work is easier to organize (Harmer, 2007b) and, of course, entails a higher amount of available speaking time for each student.

4.2   Organisation of pair work and group work

Ur (1996, pp. 232-233) aptly sums up that the success of pair work and group work depends "to some extent on the surrounding social climate, and how habituated the class is to using it; and also, of course on the selection of an interesting and stimulating task whose performance is well within the ability of the group. But also depends, more immediately, on effective and careful organization". Speaking tasks, majority of which is ideally based on pair work and group work, their types and appropriateness were discussed in detail in Chapter 3.3. Here, we will concentrate on the organisation of pair work and group work.

The procedure of pair work and group work organisation involves several steps. First of them should be the provision of careful instructions and explanation (Ur, 1996; Hedge, 2000). Ur (1996, p. 234) considers the initial instructions to be a crucial point in the whole process, since students need to "understand exactly what they have to do", otherwise "there will be time-wasting, confusion, lack of effective practice, possible loss of control". She even suggests the possibility of giving the instructions partially or fully in learners' mother tongue (ibid). The next step proposed is some kind of demonstration or rehearsal of the activity still in the whole class setting (Ur, 1996; Hedge, 2000, Doff, 1990). This part of course could be omitted in case students are familiar with the activity. Then students are to be divided into pairs or groups (see further) and any materials needed for the activity distributed. Ur (1996, p. 234) emphasises the necessity to inform students about the arrangements for finishing the activity in advance: "if there is a time limit, or a set signal for stopping, say what it is; if the groups simply stop when they have finished, then tell them what they will have to do next".

During the realization of the actual activity the teacher's main role is usually monitoring (Ur, 1996; Hedge, 2000; Scrivener, 2011). This phase and the teacher's role in it are in detail discussed in a separate paragraph bellow. Regarding the ending of the activity: if there is a time limit set up, it is useful to inform students about the approaching end of the activity several minutes before the time actually runs out; if not, it might be advisable to finish the activity on the verge of the time when students are still interested in it and beginning to flag (Ur, 1996; Doff, 1990). Nevertheless, if some groups finish the activity earlier than others, it is advisable to have some related extra activities ready for them, or for instance to engaged them in comparing their results or reporting to each other (Hedge, 2000).

Some of the aspects of the above mentioned process require closer attention. Firstly, we will elaborate on pair and group work organization issues; after that, we will focus on teacher's role during the realisation of an activity.

The organization of pair work and group work involves decisions to be made concerning the size of a group, the mechanism of arranging pairs or groups and selecting their members, and the stability of pairs or groups (Goh and Burns, 2012; Hedge, 2000; Ur, 1981). The opinions on the ideal size of a group differ. Goh and Burns (2012) consider groups of four to be an ideal, however they also recommend three-students groups for some kind of tasks (e.g. monologic tasks). In their opinion a group of five is still possible, however limits the opportunity to speak (ibid). The range of group sizes that for example Ur (1981) suggests for discussion tasks is much bigger, from pairs up to eight-member groups.

Regarding the arranging of groups, some authors promote a mixture of the usage of self-selected groups and groups formed by a teacher, occasionally replaced by randomly selected groups, when it is suitable for a particular activity (Goh and Burns, 2012; Hedge, 2000). Whereas Ur (1981, p. 7) suggests creation of pairs or groups based on a current seating arrangement (for example by letting students to turn to the students behind them), with possible subtle modifications "to ensure that the groups are heterogeneous – or homogeneous, if that is more suitable for the exercise – and that there are no serious personality clashes".

The question of stability of the groups is also closely connected with above mentioned. Hedge (2000, p. 294) presents an argument that groups should be kept together for a period of time "in order for the members to achieve a cohesiveness which will facilitate their interaction". Nevertheless, she supports occasional changes for selected activities (ibid). Ur (1981, p. 7) suggests keeping semi-permanent groups, at least for younger learners, to prevent "restlessness and indiscipline" that could originate from making changes in the composition of pairs or groups for every new lesson.

The last issue, related to pair work and group work organisation, to be discussed is the teacher's role during the transaction of an activity. Scrivener (2011, p. 68) suggest that a teacher should spend first 30 seconds of the activity making sure that "students are doing the activity that you asked them to do and have understood the basic instructions and the mechanics of the activity". In the next phase the teacher should be monitoring the activity, ideally while moving from group to group (Ur, 1996; Scrivener, 2011). During the monitoring the teacher should "either contribute or keep out of the way – whichever is likely

to be more helpful" (Ur, 1996, p. 234). The intervention can take a form of: general approval and support; helping students in need; reminding students to stick to the targeted language; helping to keep balanced participation of all students (ibid).

Problems often mentioned in connection with pair and group work are usually connected with both the organization of pair work and group work on the one hand and discipline on the other (Ur, 1981). Main questions usually concern: the control over students and their work, use of targeted language, participation of individual students, noise, etc. (Doff, 1990; Ur, 1981, 1996). The possible practical organisational issues where up to some extent discussed above, and they can be handled by "thoughtful and efficient organisation" (Ur, 1981, p. 8). Regarding discipline issues, they depend mainly on the personality of the teacher, the character of the class and their relationship, not on the type of organisation form during the activity as such (ibid). In general, it can be stated that "a class which is controlled in frontal work will be controlled also in groups" (ibid). Another issue, often brought up when speaking of group work and pair work, concerning producing errors and mistakes and their correction, was dealt with in the previous chapter (see Chapter 4.1).

5 Practical part

The first part of this paper dealt with the theoretical background of speaking skills development as one of the aims and means of the development of communicative competence in ELT, as well as with the theoretical and organisational background of the use of pair work and group work. The practical part will now focus on the potential for the use of pair work and group work with respect to speaking skills development in a particular educational context. The strategy of collaborative action research was chosen to deal with this issue in a specific ELT class.

5.1 Aim and background of the research

The general aim of this collaborative action research is through an intervention involving the use of pair work and group work to increase the opportunities for speaking skills development in a particular ELT class. The object of the research is one class of 6th graders (more precisely 13 of 16 – 17 year-old students) in a grammar school[4] with 8-year-study programme situated in Pardubice.

The primary objective of the research is to investigate the situation regarding the use of speaking activities, pair work and group work, and to asses overall opportunities that the students have for their speaking skills development in the given ELT class. The secondary objective is to create particular speaking activities using pair work and group work, to incorporate them into English language lessons and to investigate whether their use enhances the opportunities for students speaking skills development.

Specific research questions were formulated based on those two main objectives:

1. What is the ratio of speaking activities in English language lessons? What types of speaking activities are used? Is pair work and group work employed? How much speaking time is allocated to students during the lessons? How much of the allocated speaking time is actually used by students? How does the teacher view the current situation regarding the use of speaking activities, pair work and group work and overall speaking opportunities for students during their lessons? What kind of issues, limitations and opportunities for improvement do they perceive?

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[4] 'gymnázium' in Czech

2. What types of activities and organizational forms would be suitable for the intervention? How much speaking time is allocated to students during the intervention? How much of the allocated speaking time is actually used? How does the teacher asses the intervention? What modifications would be desirable?

5.2 Research method and instrument

The research was conducted, as mentioned above, as (collaborative) action research. According to Cohen and Manion, defining characteristics of action research are: action research concerns a specific situation in which a specific issue is identified and solved, aims at the improvement of "[the] current state of affairs within the educational context in which the research is being carried out", and involves collaboration between teachers (Cohen and Manion, 1985 in Nunan, 1992, p. 18). Nunan (1992) by himself does not see collaboration between colleague teachers as a necessary, although desirable, characteristic of action research. However, he mentions that the feature of collaboration can take a form of collaboration between "a teacher and a university based researcher" (Nunan, 1992, p. 18). From this perspective our research can also be classified as a collaborative one. Nunan also disputes the opinion that the aim of action research must be to change the current status and claims that "[a] descriptive case study of a particular classroom, group of learners, or even a single learner" represents action research if the research question is of an interest for other practitioners and data are generated, analysed and interpreted (1992, p. 18-19).

Anne Burns (1999, p. 17) points out that action research is "grounded in the social context of the classroom and the teaching institution, and focuses directly on issues and concerns which are significant in daily teaching practice". She sums up the characteristics of action research in 4 points:

1   Action research is contextual, small-scale and localised – it identifies and investigates problems within a specific situation.
2   It is evaluative and reflective as it aims to bring about change and improvement in practice.
3   It is participatory as it provides for collaborative investigation by teams of colleagues, practitioners and researchers.
4   Changes in practice are based on the collection of information or data which provides the impetus for change.

(Burns, 1999, p. 30)

Action research primarily uses methods of qualitative research data collection (Nunan, 1992; Burns, 1999). Qualitative research usually deals with small number of participants and naturalistic research contexts, which are studied and described in a detailed way, and extensive explanations and interpretations of collected data are provided (Burns, 1999). The findings of the research, however, do not aspire to be generalized to large populations (ibid).

In qualitative research "[o]bservation and description and the gathering of data from a range of different resources are the main methodological tools" (Burns, 1999, p. 22). For our research a multiple use of two main research methods – observation and interview – was chosen.

Observation is based on documenting and analysing of events that can be perceived with our senses and, as a research method, has to be intentional, purposeful, planned and systematic (Skutil, 2011, p. 101, my translation). Observation as one of the main research methods in action research consists in "taking regular and conscious notice of classroom actions and occurrences which are particularly relevant to the issue or topic being investigated […] [and] using procedures that ensure that the information collected provides a sound basis for answering research questions and supporting the interpretations that are reached" (Burns, 1999, p. 80). Regarding the role of the researcher, participant and non-participant observation can be distinguished (Skutil, 2011; Švaříček and Šeďová, 2007; Burns, 1999; etc.). In our action research direct open non-participant observation, where the researcher is present and openly observes in person, although does not get personally involved in the research context, was chosen (ibid).

The second research method – interview – serves for gathering detailed information from a smaller number of informants (Denscombe, 2003). Very often it is used together with other research methods to supplement their data with detail and depth (ibid). The use of interview enables to understand relative meanings and uncover interpretations of events from the point of view of the participants in the research context (Burns, 1999). Interviews can be differentiated in terms of a degree of formality (Denscombe, 2003; Nunan, 1992; etc.). The type of interview used in our action research can be labelled as a semi-structured interview, in which:

> the interviewer […] has a clear list of issues to be addressed and questions to be answered. However, with the semi-structured interview the interviewer is prepared to be flexible in terms of the order in which the topics are considered, and, perhaps more significantly, to let the interviewee develop ideas and speak more widely on the issues

raised by the researcher. The answers are open-ended, and there is more emphasis on the interviewee elaborating points of interest.

(Denscombe, 2003, p. 167)

5.3   Research phases

According to Kemmis and McTaggart, action research involves four major phases: planning, action, observation and reflection (1988, in Burns, 1999). David Nunan (1999, p.19) comes up with an action research cycle that consists of seven steps: initiation, preliminary investigation, hypothesis, intervention, evaluation, dissemination and follow-up. On the other hand, rather than a cycle or a sequence of cycles, Ann Burns (1999, p. 35) understands the research process as "a series of interrelated experiences" involving:

1   exploring – identifying a general focus area

2   identifying – narrowing the area of focus

3   planning – creating a plan for data collection, including the selection of research methods; planning of the intervention action

4   collecting data

5   analysis/reflecting – analysis and interpretation of collected data

6   hypothesising/speculating – creating hypotheses or predictions based on the data collected and their analysis, which can also be used as a basis for a further action

7   intervening – making changes in the classroom practice or approach based on the hypothesis formed before

8   observing – observing the outcomes of the intervention; commenting on its effectiveness

9   reporting – verbalising the activities, data and results

10 writing – summarising the process of the research, research questions, strategies, analyses and results observed

11 presenting – presenting to a wider audience

Ann Burns (1999, pp. 35-43)

The order of those phases is not strictly given, they can overlap or even not be presented in a particular action research (Burns, 1999). In other words, the process of action research should be always adjusted to the actual circumstances (ibid).

As suggested, the process of our action research was modified according to its specific needs and circumstances. The action research process consisted of four main phases: preparation, planning, assessment of the current status and intervention. The first phase of our action research, which we labelled 'preparation', and which up to some extend corresponds to Burns's (1999) phases: 1 exploring, 2 identifying and 6 hypothesising/speculating (see above), was carried out during my teaching practice that partially involved the respective class. During this phase the focus area was eliminated and the aim of the action research, together with main objectives and research questions, were formulated (see Chapter 5.1).

The next step of our research process was to plan the further phases and methods of the action research (respectively phase 3 planning in Burns (1999)). After that, the assessment of a current status was carried out through observations, an analysis of the data from the observations and an interview with the teacher (corresponds with Burns (1999) - phases 4, 5 and, partially, phase 6). The final step in the research process was the intervention phase, consisting of: planning of the intervention, designing of activities, the actual intervention including observations, an interview with the teacher after the intervention and a data analysis and evaluation of the intervention (similarly Burns (1999) – phases 7-11).

5.4   Observations

The purpose of the observations before the intervention was to collect data that would enable to fulfil the primary objective of the action research, i.e. to investigate the situation in the given ELT class regarding the use of speaking activities, use of pair work and group work, and to asses overall opportunities that the students have for their speaking skills development. For data collection two observation sheets were designed, see Appendix A and Appendix B.

The first observation sheet *Organizational forms/Language skills*, apart from the heading, which marks the class, teacher, date and time of the lesson and number of students, consists of six main columns: *Activity No., Time, Activity type, Short description, Organizational form* and *Language skills focused on*. Each activity[5] used by the teacher in the particular lesson should be listed under the respective number. In the second column *Time* the beginning and end of each activity is to be filled in. The column *Activity type* requires the indication whether the activity is sources from a textbook or whether it is an activity designed by the teacher. For speaking activities the type of the activity based on Littlewood (1981) and Goh and Burns

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[5] Terminology 'activity' vs.' task' was discussed in the theoretical part of the paper.

(2012) typologies (see Chapter 3.3) should also be specified there. The *Short description* column is designated for a description of the activity, including an indication of the textbook and exercise number in case the activity is sourced from a textbook. In the *Organizational form* column the organizational form used in the particular activity, i.e. *Frontal*, *Individual*, *Pair work* or *Group work*, is to be marked. The column *Language skills* requires an indication of whether the activity is focused on speaking skills development or, possibly, specification of other language skills or subskills the activity is aimed at.

The second observation sheet *Speaking time* contains the same heading as the first observation sheet. Under the heading, there are four main columns: *Activity No., Speaking time allocated to Ss, Student X's actual speaking time* and *Comments*. Each activity should be listed under the respective number, which also corresponds to the number of activity in the first observation sheet. The main column *Speaking time allocated to Ss* is divided into three sections: *Pair, Group* and *Individual/Frontal*. In case of pair work and group work, the beginning and end of the time period when students are to speak in pairs/groups should be registered in the respective section. In case when a frontal (possibly individual) organizational form is used, any actual speaking time of any of the students is to be recorded in seconds. In the *Student X's actual speaking time* column the actual speaking time of a randomly selected student (a different one though in each lesson) should be filled in. The last column *Comments* is designated for any additional information or comments that might be useful for the future analyses of the data.

The first versions of both observation sheets were piloted with the same class that was to be the object of our whole action research, and because the pilot turned to be successful, the pilot versions of both of the observation sheets became the final versions to be used in the action research. That is also the reason why the data from the pilot observation sheets were included in the research.

5.4.1 Analysis of data collected via observations

During the observations before intervention seven 45-minute lessons were observed, while both kinds of observation sheets (i.e. *Organizational forms/Language skills* and *Speaking time*) were used to monitor each lesson. All the lessons were taught by the same teacher, who is also the regular English teacher of this class.

The first observation sheet was intended for analysis of the distribution, proportion, organizational forms and types of speaking activities used in the lessons observed. The total number of activities used in those seven lessons was 41. Out of them 10 activities were concentrated on the development of speaking skills (further only 'speaking activities') and 5 activities integrated the focus on the development of speaking skills and some other language skills or subskill (further only 'integrated speaking activities'). For the distribution of speaking and integrated speaking activities among the individual lessons see Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of speaking and integrated speaking activities in lessons observed

Lesson No.	Number of activities	Number of speaking activities	Number of integrated speaking activities		
			Vocabulary + Speaking	Reading + Speaking	Listening + Speaking
1	5	2	-	1	-
2	8	1	1	-	-
3	4	1	-	-	-
4	6	1	-	-	-
5	8	3	1	-	-
6	5	1	-	-	1
7	5	1	1	-	-
Total	**41**	**10**	**3**	**1**	**1**

The time ratio of time devoted to speaking and integrated speaking activities to time devoted to other activities in observed lessons is summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Speaking and integrated speaking activities to other activities time ratio

	Time (min.)	%
Speaking activities and integrated speaking activities[6]	94	**32**
Other activities	198	68
Total	292	100

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[6] For integrated speaking activities the time period of the speaking part of the activity was only included.

Regarding organizational forms used in speaking and integrated activities see Table 3.

Table 3: Organizational forms of speaking and integrated speaking activities

Organizational form	Number of speaking and integrated speaking activities
Pair work	2
Group work	-
Pair work and frontal[7]	2
Group work and frontal[8]	2
Frontal	9
Total	**15**

Regarding time distribution of pair work, group work and frontal organizational form among speaking activities see Table 4.

Table 4: Organizational forms of speaking and integrated speaking activities – time distribution

Organizational form	Time (min.)	%
Pair work	22	23
Group work	9	10
Frontal	63	67
Speaking activities and integrated speaking activities[9]	**94**	**100**

Based on the data in the first observation sheet also the types of speaking activities were summarized. All of the speaking and integrated speaking activities used in the seven lessons observed can be classified as communicative speaking activities (Littlewood, 1981; see Chapter 3.3). The proportion of functional communication activities to social interaction activities is displayed in Figure 2.

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[7] A part of the activity was carried out in frontal organizational form and a part as pair work.
[8] A part of the activity was carried out in frontal organizational form and a part as group work.

[9] For Integrated speaking activities the time of speaking part of the activity was only included.
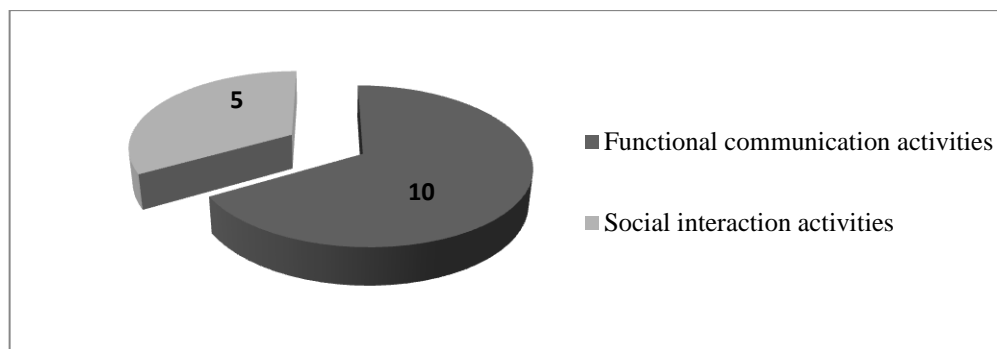
Figure 2: Proportion of functional communication activities and social interaction activities

Further distinction of activity types is captured in Table 5 and Table 6.

Table 5: Occurrence of specific types of functional communication activities

Type of activity	Number of activities
Providing (sharing) information	3
Providing (sharing) opinion	2
Providing definition of vocabulary items	2
Monologue	2
Context-gap activity	1

As Table 5 indicates, five out of ten functional communication activities involved providing (sharing) information/opinion. All of these activities were carried out in frontal organizational form and their communication pattern consisted in the teacher asking questions seeking information/opinions and students answering them. Two activities involving students providing an oral definition of vocabulary items were implemented (one of them in a form of a question-answer pattern: the teacher says an English word and a student is to define it orally; the second one in a form of a game: each student provides their own definition of a word of their choice and other students are to guess the English word), both in frontal organizational form as well. Twice an activity that can be classified as monologue was implemented. The first activity consisted in students describing photos, the second one in students comparing and contrasting two photos. In both of the activities students worked in pairs. Only one activity, in which students worked in pairs and were to create a story based on pictures provided, can be labelled as a context-gap activity.

Table 6: Occurrence of specific types of social interaction activities

Type of Activity	Number of Activities
Discussion	3
Informal social conversation	2

Table 6 shows that there were only two types of social interaction activities used in the seven lesson observed. Three times a discussion type of activity was used (two activities as group work and one as pair work). Twice an informal social conversation activity type took place, in both cases in frontal organization form at the beginning of the lesson.

The last information captured in the first observation sheet was whether the activity is sourced from a textbook or not. See Figure 3.
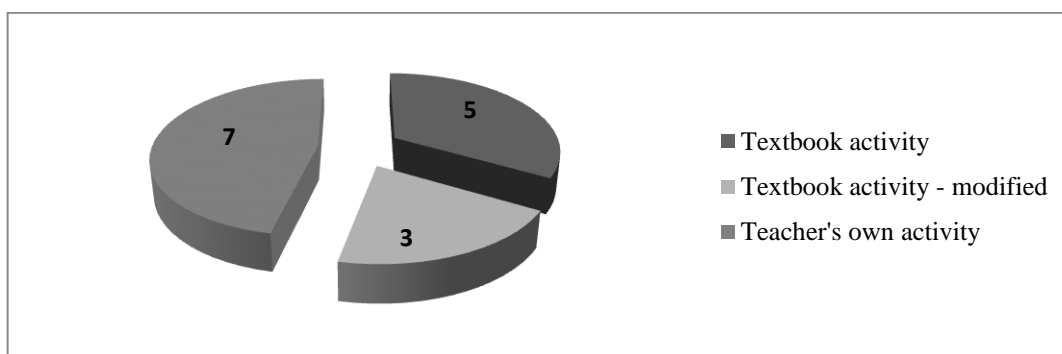
Figure 3: Proportion of textbook activities and teacher's own activities

The second observation sheet enables us to calculate speaking time allocated to a student in an individual lesson. The summary of all the lessons is displayed in Table 7. Data in Column 3 and 4 of Table 7 (Allocated Speaking Time per Student in Pair Work and Group Work) were calculated as a sum of the net time that was allocated by the teacher to all speaking and integrated speaking activities during each lesson carried out in the respective organizational form, divided by the number of participants (i.e. 2 in pair work and an average size of a group in group work). Data in Column 5 in Table 7 (Allocated Speaking Time per Student during Frontal work) were counted as a sum of the actual speaking time of students during the speaking and integrated speaking activities during each lesson carried out using frontal teaching, divided by the total number of students in the class. Data in Column 6 in Table 7

(Total) represent the sum of data in columns 2, 3 and 4.[10] The sum of data in the individual columns in Table 7 indicates that the total speaking time available/allocated to one student during those seven lessons that were observed was 14 minutes 42 seconds, which represents 5% of the total lesson time of 292 minutes. For details see Table 7.

Table 7: Speaking Time Allocated to Students

Lesson No.	Lesson Time	Allocated Speaking Time per Student			
		Pair Work	Group Work	Frontal	**Total**
1	44 min.	2 min.	1 min. 20 sec.	13 sec.	3 min. 33 sec.
2	44 min.	-	-	10 sec.	10 sec.
3	44 min.	-	2 min. 10 sec.	10 sec.	2 min. 20 sec.
4	41 min.	-	-	8 sec.	8 sec.
5	41 min.	5 min.	-	12 sec.	5 min. 12 sec.
6	39 min.	-	-	36 sec.	36 sec.
7	39 min.	2 min. 30 sec.	-	13 sec.	2 min. 43 sec.
Total	**292 min.**	**9 min. 30 sec.**	**3 min. 30 sec.**	**1 min. 42 sec.**	**14 min. 42 sec.**
	100%	**3.2%**	**1.2%**	**0.6%**	**5%**

In order to obtain a better picture of the actual utilization of the allocated speaking time during pair work and group work, the item *Student X's actual speaking time* was added to the second observation sheet. The actual speaking time of a randomly selected student (different one in each lesson) has been measured during each lesson. See Table 8.

Table 8: The actual speaking time of a randomly selected student

Lesson No.	Student X's Actual Speaking Time			
	Pair Work	Group Work	Frontal	**Total**
1	2 min. 5 sec.	2 sec.	9 sec.	2 min. 16 sec.
2	-	-	-	-
3	-	2 min. 5 sec.	8 sec.	2 min. 13 sec.
4	-	-	1 sec.	1 sec.
5	1 min. 41 sec.	-	-	1 min. 41 sec.
6	-	-	18 sec.	18 sec.
7	22 sec.	-	20 sec.	42 sec.
Total	**4 min. 8 sec.**	**2 min. 7 sec.**	**56 sec.**	**7 min. 11 sec.**

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[10] Students were also speaking during other than speaking or integrated speaking activities, however, the sum of that kind of students speaking time in those seven lessons was only 1 min. 10 sec. This time was not included in the sums in Tab. 3.

The difference between allocated time and actual speaking time in pair work and group work (compare Table 7: columns 3, 4 with Table 8: columns 2, 3) was mainly caused by students speaking in Czech instead of English when on task or by finishing the task before the time limit[11]. The lower total figure of actual speaking time in frontal organizational form (compare Table 8: column 4 with Table 7: column 5) could be explained by the fact that there were a few students in the class that were speaking significantly more in comparison with the majority of the class. However, for confirmation of this theory more data exceeding the scope of our research would need to be collected.

5.4.2 Interpretation of data collected via observations

This chapter offers an evaluation and interpretation of data collected via the observations with the primary aim of answering the first part of the first research question: What is the ratio of speaking activities in English language lessons? What types of speaking activities are used? Is pair work and group work employed? How much speaking time is allocated to students during the lessons? How much of the allocated speaking time is actually used?

According to the data in the observation sheets, there were 41 activities in total used in the lessons observed, out of which 10 were speaking activities and 5 were integrated speaking activities. The 37% proportion of speaking and integrated speaking activities to the total number of activities can be evaluated as reasonable, even though ELT theory does not offer any universally prescribed proportion of speaking activities. Regarding the distribution of speaking activities among individual lessons, as a positive fact can be seen that speaking activities were included in each lesson (min. 1 − max. 3 activities). In five lessons also one integrated speaking activity was included, however, less than half of the total time of those activities was focused on speaking development (18 min. out of 38 min. in total). From a time perspective, then, speaking activities and the speaking part of speaking integrated activities constituted almost one third (32%) of the total time of the lessons observed.

The analysis of organizational forms revealed that frontal organizational form was used for the majority of speaking and integrated speaking activities. Out of the total number 15, frontal organizational form was exclusively used for 9 activities and in another 4 activities frontal

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[11] During group work in Lesson 1 the observed group was talking mainly in Czech. The speaking task in pairs in Lesson 5 was finished by the observed pair before the time limit. Similarly, the 5 min. speaking task in pairs in Lesson 7 was finished in 1 min. 15 sec., and after that the pair was off task.

organizational form was used partially (twice in combination with pair work and twice in combination with group work; in total the frontal part represented 24 min. out of 40 min.). Only 2 whole activities were done as pair work and no activity was solely done as group work.

When we connect the analysis of organizational forms with the analysis of speaking time allocated to students (conducted based on the data in the second observation sheet), we can see that the prevailing use of frontal organizational form has significant implications for the amount of speaking time that is actually allocated to students. Even though activities (or parts of activities) conducted in frontal organizational form represent 67% of the total time allowance of speaking and integrated speaking activities, the allocated speaking time per student in frontal organizational form (1 min. 42 sec.) represents only 12% of the total allocation of speaking time per student[12] (14 min. 42 sec.).

The comparison of total allocated speaking time per student with the total time allowance of speaking activities shows that, even though, the total time devoted to speaking and integrated speaking activities is 94 minutes (which represent 32% of the total time of the lessons observed), the total allocated speaking time per student is only 14 minutes 42 seconds (i.e. only 5% of the total time of the lessons observed). The total actual speaking time of a randomly selected student is even lower, 7 minutes 11 seconds (i.e. only 2.5% of the total time of the lessons) (for detailed description see Chapter 5.4.1). In order to bridge the gap between allocated speaking time and actual speaking time, some improvements in terms of organization of pair work and group work would be possible. Students could be encouraged, through instructions, to speak only in English during pair work and group work. That aspect, together with the off task behaviour, could also be focused on by the teacher when monitoring pair work and group work. Additional tasks could be provided for the pairs and groups that finish earlier. Concerning frontal organizational form, a more even distribution of speaking opportunities could be aimed at.

In all the seven lessons observed the teacher employed exclusively indirect approach to teaching speaking (see Chapter 3.2), accordingly all the speaking activities used were

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[12] The figure 'allocated speaking time per student' for pair work and group work represents a sum of the net time that was allocated by the teacher to all speaking and integrated speaking activities during each lesson carried out in the respective organizational form, divided by the number of participants (i.e. 2 in pair work and an average size of a group in group work) and for frontal organization form a sum of actual speaking time of students during the speaking and integrated speaking activities during each lesson divided by the total number of students in a class.

communicative speaking activities. Two thirds (10 out of 15) of them can be classified as functional communication activities and one third (5 out of 15) as social interaction activities.

Two of the functional communication activities were monologues in which students in pairs took turns in describing/comparing pictures. The function of the language was solely transactional. Seven other functional communication activities represented an interaction in frontal organizational form, however the characteristic feature of interaction, i.e. alternating turns of reception and production (see Chapter 2.3)., was reduced to minimum. Those seven activities involving transactional use of language, consisted in a plain one way transfer of information, where a student provides information, an opinion or a definition of a vocabulary item based on a teacher's question/request. Only one of the functional communication activities actually involved an interaction between students in a pair. During this context-gap activity students were to create together a story based on a sequence of pictures provided. This activity was classified as functional communication, since the major part of the task consisted in transfer and processing of information, and thus the function of the language was mainly transactional. The instructions and initiation of the activity did not encourage otherwise, as the activity was originally a written one.

Two types of social interaction activities occurred during the lessons observed. Three times a discussion type of activity (or rather what Littlewood (1981) calls 'discussion sessions') in pairs or groups was used, in all cases sourced from a textbook without or with a slight modification. Two of those three discussion activities involved sharing opinions and ideas in a pair/group. During the third group discussion activity, apart from sharing ideas and expressing their opinions, students also become involved in negotiation in order to agree on a quite complex outcome acceptable for all of them. Mainly transactional but also, up to certain extent, interactional (interpersonal) use of language was involved during those activities. This type of discussion activities (especially the third one) can provide opportunities for students to use a range of communicative functions and also to practise interaction skills, in terms of management of interaction and negotiation of meaning. Furthermore, the opportunity for the use of communication strategies (avoidance and compensatory) also arises during a such kind of discussion activities (for both see Chapter 3.1). In terms of CEF and communicative competence, thus those activities enhance pragmatic competences (see Chapter 1.2). When prepared well and supported with appropriate instructions, this kind of activities can also influence the development of sociolinguistic competences (see Chapter 1.2), nevertheless limited by the social context of the classroom.

Two times a social interaction activity in a form of a brief informal social conversation was used. In both of those cases at the beginning of a lesson, the teacher asked the whole class several questions, concerning their wellbeing/their spring holidays past experience. The main value of this kind of activity is that the teacher tries to exploit interactional (interpersonal) function of language and to promote the development of sociolinguistic competences. However, the social context of this kind of social interaction remains unchanged (the interaction between students and their teacher in a language class) and thus the opportunity for sociolinguistic competences advancement remains quite limited.

It can be concluded that, in this particular class and under particular circumstances, even though speaking activities constituted 32% of the total time of the lessons observed, the total allocated speaking time per student was extremely low (5% of the total time of the lesson), mainly due to the high proportion of frontal organisational form use (67% of the total time devoted to speaking activities). The principal recommendation, therefore, would be to increase the proportion of speaking activities using pair work and group work, and thus increase the allocated speaking time for students. Concerning the types of speaking activities, the use of a wider variation of speaking activities, which would enable students to employ various communication skills and strategies, as well as the implementation of that type of social interaction speaking activities, which would involve various social contexts and thus enrich the opportunities for sociolinguistic competences development, would be desirable.

5.5 Interview with the teacher before the intervention

The next step of our research, which was a part of the phase assessing the current status, was carried out through the interview with the teacher. The aim of the interview was to answer the second part of the first research question: How does the teacher view the current situation regarding the use of speaking activities, pair work and group work and overall speaking opportunities for students during their lessons? What kind of issues, limitations and opportunities for improvement do they perceive? A semi-structured type of interview (see Chapter 5.2) was chosen. For the list of issues and questions see Appendix C.

The teacher claims that she is trying to do her best, nevertheless she is aware of the fact that the number of speaking activities/time devoted to speaking activities in her lessons is not sufficient. The main constraint she perceives is that as an English teacher, according to the SEP (School Educational Programme), she has to follow a textbook and that the number of

speaking activities in the textbook is limited. Based on a teacher's suggestion, I made a brief overview of the proportion of speaking activities to total number of activities in the textbooks which are currently used in the class observed. The first units of the Maturita Solutions Upper-Intermediate Student's Book and Maturita Solutions Upper-Intermediate Workbook (Falla and Davies, 2009) contain 91 activities in total. Out of them 25 are speaking activities and 7 integrated speaking activities. These figures roughly correspond with the results of the analysis of the actual activities that the teacher used during the lessons observed (which showed 10 speaking activities and 5 integrated speaking activities out of 41 activities in total; for details see Chapter 5.4.1). Concerning the possibility of the use of additional speaking activities designed/found by the teacher herself, apart from the time concern discussed above, also difficulties finding the additional activities and printing materials were mentioned as the limiting factor. The possibility of the incorporation of speaking into those textbook activities that are focused on other language skills or subskills, mainly through the implementation of pair work and group work (e.g. in pairs or groups students could discuss/explain a new grammar rule, discuss ideas for a writing task, etc.), was regarded as less efficient and time consuming.

In terms of pair work and group work, the teacher claims that, for roughly one or two years, she has been trying to employ more pair work in her lessons than before. Her students mostly react to pair work and group work positively, although, according to her, individual classes differ in terms of being willing/able to work in pairs and groups. When group work is questioned specifically, the teacher admits that in comparison with pair work, she uses group work much less, approximately 20 : 80 (pair work : group work). The most common group size used by her is 4 students per group. Nevertheless, she still perceives both pair work as well as group work to be an occasional tool of livening up a lesson, rather than an integral part of a lesson and a necessary means of students speaking skills development.

According to the teacher, pair work and group work makes students more lively and thus helps their motivation. Concerning speaking skills development, she admits that much more speaking time is allocated to students when they are working in pairs and groups than in frontal organizational form, in which only one student is speaking at a time. Working in pairs and groups, students are moreover less shy to talk, mainly because they are less afraid of making errors and mistakes than when speaking with a teacher in front of the whole class. The teacher also appreciates the fact that students learn from each other during pair work and group work. Possible changes in the mostly fixed division of pairs and groups are perceived

by the teacher as a tool for boosting peer-learning as well as increasing motivation of students.

The major limitations of pair work and group work usage that the teacher perceives are the additional demands of the execution of pair work and group work on the teacher. She claims that the use of pair work and group work activities is significantly more demanding for the teacher, mainly in terms of a constant noise in the class and requirements on teacher's attention. Some pairs or groups need to be constantly pushed to stay on task or not to speak in Czech, on the other hand other groups are not easy to stop and to focus their attention on the next activity.

5.6 Intervention

5.6.1 Intervention plan and design of activities

Based on the outcome of the research conducted before the intervention, the aim of the intervention and intervention plan were formulated. The aim of the intervention was to increase students speaking time by implementing a maximum amount of pair work and group work[13], and to introduce and implement the types of speaking activities that were not employed adequately to their importance for speaking skills development during the lessons observed. The time scope of the intervention was agreed to cover one lesson and a half[14]. Accordingly, one complex whole-lesson speaking activity (including a two-part lead-in activity, a main activity and a follow-up activity) and another shorter speaking activity were planned. All activities were taught by the regular English teacher and observed by the researcher, mainly in order to keep the teaching conditions as well as the conditions of the research unchanged.

The answer to the first part of the second research question: "What types of activities and organizational forms would be suitable for the intervention?" was based on the findings in the theoretical part of this paper as well as on the outcome of the research (see Chapter 5.4.2). From the general perspective of language teaching approach, the continuity of indirect approach usage was followed, and thus all the activities planned for the intervention were

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[13] Due to the character of this action research in which the researcher was not the regular English teacher of that particular class, there was no space for addressing any specific issues regarding the organization of pair work and group work.

[14] The limitation was on the side of the school.

communicative speaking activities. The main part of the complex whole lesson activity *Part-time job* was decided to be a role play, with the first lead-in activity in a form of a whole class brainstorming, followed by a discussion activity in pairs as the second lead-in, and concluded with a follow-up discussion activity in groups (see Appendix D). A monologic type of activity in groups was chosen for the additional half-lesson activity *One-minute monologue* (see Appendix E).

Part-time job

Lead-in

The first part of the lead-in was planned as a whole class brainstorming, in which students were to come up with various part time job possibilities. This activity was intended to be only a very short warm-up (2 – 3 min.) in a form of brainstorming of part-time job names, in which the whole class participation is ideal, therefore frontal organizational form was chosen.

On the contrary, the second part of the lead-in was entirely conducted as pair work and its time allocation was 10 – 12 min. Both students in a pair were to come up with their ideal/preferred part-time job. Each of them should try to ask as many questions regarding their colleague's job description as possible. In response each of them should invent as many details about their job as possible. Then they were to discuss together what the requirements for the candidates for one of those jobs (or both if finished) could be (i.e. candidate's profile). This type of activity can be classified as a social interaction activity, nevertheless the impact on the development of sociolinguistic competences is limited by the restricted social context of the classroom. Concerning pragmatic competences development, this activity provides opportunity for students to use various communicative functions of language, such as asking, answering, describing, explaining, expressing likes and dislikes, suggesting, agreeing and disagreeing, etc. Interaction skills, in terms of negotiation of meaning and management of interaction, are also employed. In addition, the opportunity for the use of communication strategies (avoidance as well as compensatory ones) arises.

Role play

The main part of the activity was deigned to be a 20-minute role play. The main purpose for the choice of a role play as the major part of the lesson was to add the dimension of the out-of-classroom real-life kind of situation language use that was completely missing in the lessons observed. The organizational form of group work was chosen primarily for similar

reason, i.e. that it was used extremely scarcely during the lessons observed. The use of group work also provides an extensive opportunity for social interaction (see Chapter 4.1). The topic of a part-time job interview was chosen for its "immediate relevance" to students of that age, which brings about greater communication involvement (Littlewood, 1981, p. 63). During the role play students work in pairs of three, in which one of them leads an interview for a part time job of their choice with two candidates (i.e. the roles are: one interviewer and two interviewees). The interviewer is to describe the job, ask questions about the candidates, answer any questions that the candidates may have and at the end of the interview to make the decision about which candidate gets the job. The interviewees/candidates are to answer all the interviewer's questions, ask their own questions about the job and in general try to persuade the interviewer that they are the ideal candidates for this particular part-time job. When finished, they are to swap the roles. Members of the groups which would have finished sooner than the others are to discuss which one of the interviewees was the most successful in the whole role play and why.

This role play, as any other similar kinds of role plays, brings into an English lesson the aspect of the use of language to create social interaction, i.e. interactional (interpersonal) function of communication (see Chapter 3.1). It provides a different social context and thus enriches the opportunities in terms of sociolinguistic competences development. At the same time, this rather complex social interaction activity enables the advancement of various skills and strategies connected with pragmatic competences (see Chapter 3.1).

Follow-up

The second discussion activity in a form of a group discussion session was included as a follow-up activity after the role play. Students work in the same groups of three as during the role play. They are to share with each other their opinions on individual part time jobs (a list of which was written down on the white board by the teacher during the lead-in discussion activity) and then to agree as a group on a list of top three favourite one. This type of activity (as well as the first discussion activity) was included because it provides the opportunity for students to develop their pragmatic competences. They use a wide range of communicative functions (in this particular activity mainly expressing opinions, preferences, likes and dislikes; later suggesting, agreeing and disagreeing, etc.), practise their interaction skills (regarding management of interaction and negotiation of meaning, group work brings further challenges in comparison with pair work; see Chapter 4.1) and the use of communication

strategies (avoidance and compensatory). The activity also, up to some extent, provides the opportunity for the development of sociolinguistic competences, although limited by the social context of the classroom.

One-minute monologue

The type of activity chosen for the additional half lesson was a monologic activity. The main reason for including this particular activity was to introduce a different kind of monologic activity than description/comparison of pictures in pairs, which was the only type of monologic activity used in the lessons observed (see Chapter 5.4.1). Groups of three were chosen as a suitable organization form for this activity.

During this activity, students need to build on their linguistic and partially pragmatic competences. First, they are to read their Role cards, which assign one of three possible roles: speaker, listener A or listener B. The speaker then picks up a Topic card (from a pile of reversed cards on the table) and starts to talk about the topic on the card (Facebook, Solar power, Summer job, etc.), while the listener A times 1minute. The speaker should aim to be as fluent as possible, be accurate (avoiding errors and mistakes) and overall to make sense. Both listeners are to listen carefully. After the speech is finished, the listener A asks one additional question regarding the topic. The speaker answers the additional question in one sentence. The listener B mentions one error or mistake (regrading grammar, use of vocabulary or pronunciation) that the speaker has made during his speech. When one speech is finished, students are to swap the Role cards, read them and continue with the task.

Students practise the production of an unprepared piece of discourse in a form of monologue for an audience in a classroom setting during this activity. The additional tasks for the listeners are aimed at helping them to stay focused on the monologue and, up to some extent, to promote listening skills and linguistic awareness. When students get used to the format of this monologic activity, similar format could be exploited by changing the variables of the task, in order to provide the opportunities for development of various aspects of linguistic competences (with a possible specific emphasis on various aspects of grammar or lexis), pragmatic competences or possibly even sociolinguistic competences.

5.6.2   Analysis and interpretation of data collected during the intervention

This chapter deals with analysis, interpretation and evaluation of data collected via observations during the intervention in order to provide the answer to the second part of the second research question: How much speaking time is allocated to students during the intervention? How much of the allocated speaking time is actually used?

The observations during the intervention covered two lessons. Both of the lessons were taught by the regular English teacher and observed by the researcher. Observation sheets (*Organizational forms/Language skills and Speaking time*) were identical to the observation sheets used before the intervention (see Chapter 5.4). In the first lesson a role play *Part-time job* (consisting of a two-part lead-in activity, a main activity and a follow-up activity) (see Appendix D) was used. For the second lesson a monologic activity *One-minute monologue* (see Appendix E) was chosen. All of the activities were designed by the researcher.

In the first observation sheet data regarding the proportion, types and organizational forms of speaking activities were captured (see Appendix F with a sample of a completed observation sheet). The total number of activities used during the intervention was five, all of them were speaking activities. Out of them, two were functional communication activities and three social interaction activities (see further details regarding those activities in Chapter 5.6.1). In terms of organizational forms, once pair work, three times group work and once frontal organizational form were used. Regarding time distribution of pair work, group work and frontal organizational form among speaking activities see Table 9.

Table 9: Organizational forms of speaking activities – time distribution

Organizational form	Time (min.)	%
Pair work	10	12
Group work	63	79
Frontal	7	9
Total	**80**	**100**

The extent of frontal organizational form usage (7 min.) differs from the original intervention plan. As mentioned before, frontal organizational form was used only for the very first part of the role play *Part-time job*, which was to be a 2 – 3 minute warm-up activity in a form of a whole-class brainstorming. Instead of a brief brainstorming of ideas for various part-time jobs, the teacher asked students to describe their own experience with part-time jobs. Due to

that fact this activity was extended by 4 - 5 minutes, which were originally planned to be used up for the follow-up group work activity (see Appendix D).

Despite of the above mentioned fact, the proportion of time when frontal organizational form was used to the total time during the intervention (9%) significantly differs from the proportion of frontal organizational form to total time of speaking and integrated speaking activities observed before the intervention (67%). On the contrary, the proportion of group work changed from 10% before the intervention to 79% during the intervention (compare Table 9 and Table 4).

The second observation sheet enables us to calculate speaking time allocated per student, actual speaking time of randomly selected student and also it contains detailed information about the actual execution of the activities (see Appendix G with a sample of a completed observation sheet). The summary of speaking time allocated per student is provided in Table 10.

Table 10: Speaking time allocated per student during the intervention

Activity No.	Total Time	Allocated Speaking Time per Student			
		Pair Work	Group Work	Frontal	**Total**
1	7 min.			30 sec.	
2	10 min.	4 min.			
3	20 min.		5 min. 6 sec.		
4	7 min.		2 min. 6 sec.		
5	36 min.		8 min. 27 sec.		
Total	**80 min.**	**4 min.**	**15 min. 39 sec.**	**30 sec.**	**20 min. 9 sec.**
	100%	**5%**	**19,6%**	**0.6%**	**25,2%**

Data in Column 3 and 4 of Table 10 (Allocated Speaking Time per Student in Pair Work and Group Work) were calculated as a sum of the net time that was allocated to speaking activities during each activity carried out in the respective organizational form, divided by the number of participants (i.e. 2 in pair work and an average size of a group in group work). Data in Column 5 in Table 10 (Allocated Speaking Time per Student during Frontal work) were counted as a sum of the actual speaking time of students during the speaking activity carried out in frontal organizational form, divided by the total number of students in the class. Data in Column 6 in Table 10 (Total) represent the sum of data in Column 2, 3 and 4.

Concerning the third and fourth activities, two out of three groups carried on with the third activity also during the time assigned for the fourth follow-up activity (the second group for additional 2 minutes, the third one for whole 7 minutes, i.e. till the end of the lesson). This fact did not have any significant impact on the figure of allocated speaking time per student, since the organizational form was identical for both of those activities (i.e. group work - 2 groups of 3 and 1 group of 4 students).

Two issues, which on the other hand did influence the figure of total allocated speaking time per student, occurred during the intervention. First, the teacher changed the instructions for the warm-up frontal activity which was thus extended by 4 - 5 minutes at the expense of the follow-up pair work activity (see above). In consequence, the overall estimated time allocation decreased by around 1minute. The proportion of total allocated speaking time per student to the total time of the lessons observed would have been by 1% higher (26% instead of 25%).

The other factor that influenced the figure of total allocated speaking time per student was that the teacher decided to let the students form two groups of 4 students and one group of 3 students for the fifth activity. If three groups of 3 and one group of 2 had been formed, the allocated speaking time per student for this activity as well as the total one would have increased by 3 min. 47 sec. The proportion of total allocated speaking time per student to the total time of the lessons observed would have increased by 6% (from 25% to 31%).

The sum of data in the individual columns in Table 10 indicates that the total speaking time available/allocated to each student during the intervention was 20 minutes, which represents 25% of the total lesson time. Similarly to the results obtained before the intervention, we can see a logical disproportion between the fact that even though 9% of total time was covered by a speaking activity conducted in frontal organizational form (see Table 9), the allocated speaking time per student in frontal organizational form (30 sec.) represents only 2.5% of the total allocated speaking time per student (20 mins.). At the same time pair work from its nature represents an opposite disproportion, when the 12% time allowance of a pair work activity brings 20% of the total allocated speaking time per student.

Data about the actual speaking time of a randomly selected student are summarized in Table 11.

Table 11: Actual speaking time per student during the intervention

Activity No.	Total Time	Student X's Speaking Time			
		Pair Work	Group Work	Frontal	Total
1	7 min.			48 sec.	
2	10 min.	3 min. 28 sec.			
3	20 min.		5 min. 48 sec.		
4	7 min.		46 sec.[15]		
5	36 min.		8 min. 23 sec.		
Total	**80 min.**	**3 min. 28 sec.**	**14 min. 57 sec.**	**48 sec.**	**19 min. 13 sec.**
	100%	**4.3%**	**18.7%**	**1%**	**24%**

The total figure of the actual speaking time per student, 19min. 13 sec. (24%), is slightly lower than the total figure of the allocated speaking time per student 20 min. 9 sec. (25.2%) (compare Table 11 and Table 10). The main part of the 1.2% discrepancy was caused by the usage of Czech instead of English during the fourth activity. Other problems regarding the execution of the fifth activity were observed, mainly in a form of a delayed initiation of speaking, prolonged periods of silence or off task behaviour. Those problems, however, occurred only among one group. The randomly selected student observed during this task was not a part of this group, thus the figure of actual speaking per selected student was not affected.

5.6.3 Interview with the teacher after the intervention

After the intervention a short interview with the teacher took place. The aim of the interview was to answer the third part of the second research question: How does the teacher assess the intervention? What modifications would be desirable? A semi-structured type of interview (see Chapter 5.2) was chosen. For the list of issues and questions see Appendix H.

According to the teacher, both of the lessons went very well, students understood the instructions and worked well in pairs and groups. In her opinion, due to the types of activities

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[15] The student observed during the fourth activity was a member of a group that finished the third activity on time. The significant gap between the figures of allocated time and actual speaking time during the fourth activity (compare Table 10 and Table 11) was fully caused by the fact that the members of the group the observed student was a part of were speaking mainly in Czech instead of English when on task.

used, students were producing longer sentences (mainly in comparison with frontal speaking activities consisted in the teacher asking questions seeking information/opinions and students answering them) and had to use various features of grammar.

The teacher's overall evaluation of both the role play and the monologic activity was positive. She commented on the first part of the role play, in which she asked another question than had been planned. Thanks to that a simple brainstorming, which was intended to be a warm-up and a source of part-time job names suggestions for the further activities, turned into a longer unplanned whole class discussion activity. Both of the discussion activities (the lead-in activity in pairs and the follow-up activity in groups) were evaluated positively by the teacher. She implied only that in her opinion it will be useful for the future use of the role play activity if, either within the lead-in activity or the initial part of the main activity, students are provided with a list of vocabulary and phrases connected with the topic of a part-time job interview. Apart from that, she regarded the role play to be successful and did not have other specific comments or suggestions for its modification.

Regarding the monologic activity, the teacher commented on the relation between the number of topic cards and the time planned for the activity, which was in her opinion too short. Otherwise, she evaluated also this activity as a successful one. One suggestion for the future use of this activity was offered by the teacher. When dividing students into groups, she would choose one strong student for each group, so they are able to provide feedback concerning more errors and mistakes that the other students make during their monologues.

The teacher expressed her readiness to use the role play and the monologic activity in other ELT classes in future.

5.6.4 Evaluation of the intervention

The aim of the intervention was to increase students speaking time in the scope of two lessons by implementing a maximum amount of pair work and group work, and to introduce and implement a wide spectrum of speaking activities which would enable students to use various communication skills and strategies, as well as the type of social interaction speaking activities which would involve various social contexts and thus enrich the opportunities for sociolinguistic competences development.

In order to increase the speaking time allocated to students during speaking activities, one pair work and three group work activities were used within the intervention. The implementation of those activities entailed the increase of the proportion of pair work and group work to the total time of speaking activities from 33% before the intervention up to 91% during the intervention. To illustrate the impact of the increase of pair work and group work usage we can compare the change of the figure of total allocated speaking time per student before and during the intervention. According to the data from the observations, there was 5% proportion of allocated speaking time per student to the total time of the lessons observed before the intervention (see Table 7). The proportion of speaking activities to the total time of the lessons observed was 32% (see Table 2). It follows that the proportion of total allocated speaking time per student to the total time of the speaking activities was 16%. In terms of total actual speaking time per student to the total time of speaking activities the proportion was 7.7%. During the intervention the proportion of total allocated speaking time per student to the total time of the speaking activities increased up to 25% (see Table 10). The proportion of total actual speaking time per student to the total time of speaking activities during the intervention increased up to 24% (see Table 11).

Concerning the 9% increase of allocated speaking time per student, from 16% before the intervention to 25% during the intervention, there were two main factors/issues involved that prevented even more significant increase of the allocated speaking time figure. Both of them were the matter of the execution of the activities, in both cases the teacher changed the instructions. In the first case, the time allowance of the warm-up frontal activity was extended at the expense of the time allowance of the follow-up group activity (see Chapter 5.6.2). In the second case, the size of groups during the monologic activity was changed (see Chapter 5.6.2). Without those two issues the total allocated speaking time during the intervention would have been by 6% higher, i.e. 31%.

The second part of the aim of the intervention, i.e. to increase the opportunities for speaking skills development by introducing a variety of speaking activities, was fulfilled through implementing a role play activity (containing a lead-in in a form of pair discussion activity and a follow-up group discussion activity) and a group monologic activity including feedback from the listeners.

 The implementation of the role play provided a different social context and thus enhanced the opportunities for sociolinguistic competences development. The aspect of varied social

contexts was completely missing during the lessons observed before the intervention. This type of social interaction activity also provided extended opportunities for the development of skills and strategies connected with pragmatic competences.

Even though both of the discussion activities had, thanks to the restricted social context of the classroom, only limited impact on the development of sociolinguistic competences, they were included in the intervention because of their extended influence on pragmatic competences development. Both of these activities provided students with the opportunity to use various communicative functions of language, e.g. expressing likes and dislikes, suggesting, agreeing and disagreeing, expressing opinions, preferences, asking, answering, describing, explaining, etc.), to employ interaction skills (in terms of negotiation of meaning and management of interaction) and communication strategies (compensatory and avoidance).

The monologic activity was introduced in order to enable students to initiate the practice of an unprepared piece of discourse in a form of monologue for a small group-size audience in a classroom setting. The activity was implemented with the idea of its possible alternations and further use that would entail further development of various aspects of linguistic competences (in terms of grammar and lexis) and pragmatic competences (especially discourse competence).

In line with the general aim of the intervention, three kinds of possible modifications could be suggested for the future use of the intervention activities. Those are: modifications that would cause further increase of allocated speaking time, modifications in order to increase actual speaking time and modification that would help students to use the knowledge base as well as communication skills and strategies.

In order to increase allocated speaking time during the activities that were used for the intervention, the organizational form of some of them could be changed from group work to pair work. Group work was chosen as the prevailing organizational form during the intervention since it was used extremely scarcely during the lessons observed, and primarily because of its suitability for given activities, mainly from the point of view that it provides wider opportunities for overall social interaction, use of interaction skills, peer-teaching, etc. (see Chapter 4.1). Nevertheless, all of those activities, i.e. the monologic activity, the role play interview and the role play follow-up discussion activity, could have been conducted as pair work activities. In that case the figure of speaking time allocated per student would have increased from 25% to 40%.

The second proposed modification should help to minimize the gap between allocated and actual speaking time. Each speaking activity is to include oral as well as written instructions for students to use the English language exclusively for all the communication during the whole activity.

The last modification, which was recommended by the regular English teacher, would involve the incorporation of a list of useful phrases into the role cards used for the role play. This modification should help students to use their knowledge base and activate their interaction skills.

It can be concluded that the general aim of this collaborative action research, i.e. through an intervention involving the use of pair work and group work to increase the opportunities for speaking skills development in a particular ELT class, was fulfilled through increasing allocated and actual speaking time and providing further opportunities for the development of students speaking skills by implementing a wide range of speaking activities.

6   Conclusion

The development of language skills, specifically speaking skills, as one of the targets and means of communicative competence development was dealt with in this thesis. The focal point was the opportunities for speaking skills development in a particular educational context. Therefore, a strategy of collaborative action research was engaged, with the aim to increase, through an intervention that involved the use of self-designed speaking activities employing mainly pair work and group work organizational forms, the opportunities for speaking skills development in a specific ELT class. The employment of pair work and group work in connection with speaking skills development is well grounded in ELT theory, as it is well illustrated in the theoretical part of this thesis.

Teaching speaking in the given ELT class was researched, on the one hand with respect to the use of individual organizational forms and on the other hand, from the point of view of opportunities for speaking skills development represented by the figure of allocated/actual speaking time per student; and the relation between them. Nevertheless, types of speaking activities and their possible impact for the development of speaking skills were also subjected to the research, in order to ensure that the appropriate kinds of activities were designed for the intervention.

The first part of the collaborative action research revealed that, even though, there is relatively enough time devoted to speaking activities, the figures of allocated and actual speaking time per student are significantly lower. However, it also revealed that not only the time dimension of opportunities for speaking skills development is the issue in the given ELT class, but also the lack of the variety of speaking activities in terms of their influence onto the development of various dimensions of communicative competence.

Consequently, the intervention was planned with the aim to increase the opportunities for students speaking skills development. Activities for the intervention were designed in accordance with the research findings, with the intervention aim and with the theoretical foundation provided within the theoretical part of this thesis.

Through the actual intervention the potential of pair work and group work for the increase of students speaking time, and thus the increase of opportunities for speaking skills development, was verified. At the same time, the intervention brought even further increase of

opportunities for speaking skills development. The implementation of a broad spectrum of speaking activities enabled students to use and practise various communication skills and strategies, and moreover the implementation of a role play type of social interaction speaking activity involving another social context enriched the opportunities for their sociolinguistic competences development.

7 Resumé

Tato práce se zabývá rozvojem řečové dovednosti mluvení, coby jednoho z cílů a prostředků rozvoje komunikační kompetence. Příležitosti pro rozvoj řečové dovednosti mluvení jsou zkoumány primárně ve vztahu k použití jednotlivých organizačních forem, především práce ve dvojicích a ve skupinách. Diplomová práce je rozdělena na část teoretickou a praktickou.

Teoretická část práce je složena ze čtyř hlavních oddílů. První z nich se věnuje komunikační kompetenci, druhý se zaměřuje na řečové dovednosti, třetí se soustřeďuje na mluvení jako jednu z řečových dovedností a poslední oddíl teoretické části je věnován organizačním formám, konkrétně práci ve dvojicích a skupinové práci.

Komunikační kompetence je v první kapitole definována a zároveň jsou zde představeny a porovnány jednotlivé vybrané teoretické koncepty komunikační kompetence. Na tuto kapitolu navazuje kapitola druhá, která se již plně věnuje pojetí komunikační kompetence v dokumentu *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment* (CEF) (Council of Europe, 2002), na jehož základě jsou definovány výstupní požadavky výuky cizích jazyků v České republice. Tato kapitola mimo jiné podrobně pojednává o jednotlivých složkách komunikační kompetence, na které je hojně odkazováno ve zbytku teoretické části i v praktické části práce.

Řečové dovednosti a jejich rozvoj jsou popsány v druhém oddílu teoretické části této práce. Jelikož je obtížné sledovat, hodnotit a rozvíjet jednotlivé komponenty komunikační kompetence odděleně, řečové dovednosti (mluvení, psaní, poslech a čtení) hrají ve výuce anglického jazyka velmi důležitou roli. Řečové dovednosti představují jádro komunikační kompetence, pozorovatelný výkon, prostřednictvím kterého může být úroveň komunikační kompetence posuzována, a zároveň prostředek pro její rozvoj (Council of Europe, 2002). Tři kapitoly jsou tudíž zaměřeny postupně na receptivní řečové dovednosti, produktivní řečové dovednosti a integraci řečových dovedností. Receptivní a produktivní řečové dovednosti jsou zde definovány a je diskutována problematika jejich výuky. Dále je představen princip a možnosti integrace řečových dovedností, včetně příkladů integrace ve výuce anglického jazyka.

Další oddíl teoretické části práce se již detailně zabývá řečovou dovedností mluvení. První kapitola tohoto oddílu řeší řečovou dovednost mluvení z hlediska jejích jednotlivých

komponent, a to znalostní základny, dovedností sloužících k aktivaci a použití této znalostní základny a strategií k řešení problémů v komunikaci. Prezentovaná teoretická východiska jsou v této kapitole reflektována s jednotlivými složkami komunikační kompetence v CEF. Následující tři kapitoly se soustřeďují na výuku řečové dovednosti mluvení. Nejprve jsou rozlišeny základní teoretické přístupy k výuce mluvení. V centru zájmu stojí především „indirect approach", který zabezpečuje rozvoj komunikační kompetence prostřednictvím zapojování studentů do komunikační interakce (Richards, 1990). Dále je pozornost detailně zaměřena na aktivity sloužící k rozvoji řečové dovednosti mluvení a jejich klasifikaci, a to především klasifikaci Williama Littlewooda (1981) a následně Christiny C. M. Goh a Anne Burns (2012). Na závěr tohoto oddílu jsou nastíněna kritéria pro výběr a tvorbu aktivit rozvíjejících řečovou dovednost mluvení, jejichž původcem je Scott Thornbury (2005).

Ve čtvrtém a posledním oddílu teoretické části práce je prostor dvou kapitol věnován práci ve dvojicích a skupinové práci ve výuce anglického jazyka. V první kapitole jsou nejprve definovány organizační formy práce ve dvojicích a práce ve skupinách, dále je představen výzkum týkající se této oblasti, včetně jeho teoretických východisek, a v závěru této kapitoly je práce ve dvojicích a skupinová práce porovnávána. Druhá kapitola tohoto oddílu řeší organizační aspekty práce ve dvojicích a ve skupinách.

Praktická část této práce se soustřeďuje na potenciál využití práce ve dvojicích a skupinové práce s ohledem na rozvoj řečové dovednosti mluvení v konkrétním vzdělávacím kontextu. Obecným cílem kolaborativního akčního výzkumu, kterému je věnována praktická část této práce, bylo skrz intervenci, zahrnující použití práce ve dvojicích a ve skupinách, zvýšit příležitosti pro rozvoj řečové dovednosti mluvení ve výuce anglického jazyka ve vybrané třídě. Primárním cílem výzkumu bylo prozkoumat situaci před intervencí v dané třídě, a to ohledně použití aktivit rozvíjejících mluvení, použití práce ve dvojicích a skupinové práce a posouzení celkových příležitostí, které studenti mají pro rozvoj řečové dovednosti mluvení. Sekundárním cílem bylo vytvoření vlastních aktivit rozvíjejících mluvení s využitím práce ve dvojicích a skupinách, jejich zařazení do hodin výuky angličtiny v dané třídě a následné zhodnocení toho, zda použití těchto aktivit zlepšilo příležitosti pro rozvoj řečové dovednosti mluvení.

V první kapitole praktické části je představen cíl a pozadí výzkumu. Také jsou zde na základě dvou výše zmíněných cílů výzkumu formulovány dvě výzkumné otázky:

1. Jaký je v hodinách anglického jazyka podíl aktivit rozvíjejících řečovou dovednost mluvení? Jaké typy aktivit rozvíjejících mluvení jsou použity? Je zapojena práce ve skupinách a práce ve dvojicích? Kolik času k mluvení je v hodině studentům alokováno? Kolik alokovaného času k mluvení je skutečně studenty využito? Jak učitel pohlíží na současnou situaci ohledně použití aktivit rozvíjejících mluvení, práce ve dvojicích a skupinách a celkových příležitostí studentů k mluvení během hodin anglického jazyka? Jaké problémy, omezení a příležitosti učitel vnímá?

2. Jaké typy aktivit a organizačním forem by byly vhodné pro intervenci? Kolik času k mluvení je alokováno studentům v průběhu intervence? Kolik z tohoto alokovaného času je studenty skutečně využito? Jak hodnotí provedenou intervenci učitel? Jaké modifikace by byly žádoucí?

V další kapitole je popsána metodologie výzkumu a výzkumné nástroje. Výzkum by realizován jako kolaborativní akční výzkum v hodinách anglického jazyka ve vybrané třídě šestého ročníku osmiletého gymnázia v Pardubicích. Pro tento výzkum byly jako výzkumné nástroje zvoleny observace a rozhovor. Byly použity pro zhodnocení situace před intervencí i situace během intervence.

Následující kapitola praktické části uvádí a dále rozpracovává jednotlivé fáze tohoto akčního výzkumu, kterými byly: příprava, plánováni, zhodnocení současného stavu a intervence. Během přípravné fáze byla vybrána oblast zájmu a stanoveny cíle výzkumu, na jejichž základě byly posléze specifikovány výzkumné otázky. Dalším krokem bylo naplánování následujících fází a metodologie výzkumu. Poté byl zhodnocen současný stav za použití observací a rozhovoru s učitelem. Poslední krokem akčního výzkumu byla intervence, která zahrnovala: plán intervence, vytvoření aktivit určených k intervenci, provedení observací během intervence a následné zhodnocení intervence. Ostatní kapitoly praktické části této práce se již detailně věnují popisu realizace těchto jednotlivých fází akčního výzkumu a zároveň odpovídají na výzkumné otázky uvedené výše.

Výuka řečové dovednosti mluvení v dané třídě byla zkoumána zejména z pohledu užití jednotlivých organizačních forem a z pohledu příležitostí k rozvoji řečové dovednosti mluvení, vyjádřených prostřednictvím veličiny *alokovaný/ skutečný čas k mluvení na jednoho studenta*; následně byl také řešen vztah mezi těmito dvěma proměnnými. Objektem výzkumu však byl také typ použitých aktivit rozvíjejících mluvení, a to zejména z hlediska příležitostí

pro rozvoj jednotlivých komponent komunikační kompetence. Tento aspekt byl zkoumán především za účelem výběru vhodných typů aktivit pro následnou intervenci.

Analýza dat z první části tohoto kolaborativního akčního výzkumu odhalila, že i když bylo ve sledovaných hodinách anglického jazyka před intervencí věnováno poměrně hodně času aktivitám rozvíjejícím mluvení, hodnoty *alokovaného a skutečného času k mluvení na jednoho studenta* byly poměrně nízké. Z této analýzy ovšem také vyplynulo, že v této konkrétní třídě je, kromě výše zmíněné časová dimenze příležitostí pro rozvoj řečové dovednosti mluvení, problémem také nedostatek rozmanitosti použitých typů aktivit rozvíjejících mluvení, a to zejména co se týká příležitostí k rozvoji rozličných dimenzí komunikační kompetence.

Intervence byla tedy naplánována s obecným cílem zvýšení příležitostí pro rozvoj řečové dovednosti mluvení. Aktivity pro intervenci byly vytvořeny na základě výsledků výzkumu situace před intervencí, v souladu s cílem intervence a s teoretickým rámcem prezentovaným v teoretické části této práce. Prostřednictvím intervence byl potenciál práce ve dvojicích a skupinové práce pro zvýšení alokovaného času k mluvení, a tím i příležitostí pro rozvoj řečové dovednosti mluvení, verifikován. Zároveň intervence přinesla i další zvýšení příležitostí pro rozvoj řečové dovednosti mluvení studentů, a to, za prvé, díky implementaci typů aktivit, které daly studentům příležitost k použití rozličných komunikačních dovedností a strategií; za druhé, díky implementaci sociálně interakční aktivity zahrnující jiný sociální kontext, tzv. „role play", která poskytla prostor pro rozvoj jejich sociolingvistické kompetence.

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9 Appendices

Appendix A Observation sheet *Organizational forms/Language skills*

Appendix B Observation sheet *Speaking time*

Appendix C Interview with the teacher before the intervention

Appendix D Role Play Part-time Job

Appendix E Monologic activity

Appendix F Completed observation sheet *Organizational forms/Language skills*

Appendix G Completed observation sheet *Speaking time*

Appendix H Interview with the teacher after the intervention

Appendix A   Observation sheet *Organizational forms/Language skills*

				Organizational form				Language skills focused on	
Observation sheet									
Organizational forms/Language skills									
Class:			**Date:**			**Time:**			**No of students:**
Teacher observed:									
Activity No.	Time	Activity type	Short description	Frontal	Individual	Pair work	Group work	Speaking	Other

Appendix B   Observation sheet *Speaking time*

Observation sheet				
Speaking time				
Class:		Time:		No of students:
Teacher observed:				
Ativity No.	Speaking time allocated to Ss			Student X's actual speaking time	Comments
	PAIR	GROUP	INDIVIDUAL/FRONTAL		

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Appendix C   Interview with the teacher before the intervention

Interview with the teacher before the intervention

Type: Semi-structured interview

Research questions to be answered: How does the teacher view the current situation regarding the use of speaking activities, pair work and group work and overall speaking opportunities for students during their lessons? What kind of issues, limitations and opportunities for improvement do they perceive?

List of questions:

Do you think that there is a sufficient number of speaking activities/time devoted to speaking included in your lessons? If not, why?

Is your class used to pair work and group work? How often do you include pair work/group work? Do you think you should/could include more pair work/group work? Are there any constraints?

What size of groups do you use? How do you form pairs and groups?

What kind of issues do you face when using pair work/group work?

What do you think about the possibility of the use of pair work and group work for activities that are primarily focused on the development of other language skills (than speaking) and subskills?

Role Play

Part-time Job

Time / Level

40-45 minutes / B1

Material aids

Role play cards, a WB marker

Lead-in

Topic: Ideal part-time job

1st part - Brainstorming

Org. form: Frontal

Time: 2 – 3 min.

Aim: Warm-up

Teacher's instructions/task: T asks students to come up with ideas for various part-time jobs.

2nd part – Discussion

Org. form: Pairs

Time: 10 – 12 min.

Aim: Students will be able to describe and discuss their favourite part-time jobs, and to agree on a potential candidate's profile.

T's instructions/task: Each student in a pair should come up with their IDEAL part-time job. Each of them should try to ask as many questions regarding his colleague's job description as

possible. In response each of them should invent as many details about their job as possible. Then they discuss together what the requirements for the candidates for one of those jobs (or both if finished) could be (i.e. candidate's profile).

T divides Ss to pairs and starts the activity. T monitors their discussions and also writes a list of the part-time jobs the Ss are talking about on the WB.

Role Play

Topic: Part-time job interview

Org. form: Groups of 3

Time: 20 min.

Aim: Students will be able to perform the role of interviewer and interviewee in a part-time job interview, while appropriately dealing with social as well as functional dimensions of the language use

Roles: 1 interviewer and 2 interviewees

Teacher's instructions/task:

T explains the role play: Ss will be working in groups of 3 (one interviewer and two interviewees/candidates). The interviewer will lead an interview with 2 candidates for a part-time job of their own choice. All of them should act as they were taking a part in a real interview (greetings, appropriately polite formulations of questions, etc.). The interviewer is to describe the job, ask questions about the candidates, answer any questions that the candidates may have and, at the end of the interview, to make the decision about which of the candidates would get the job. The interviewees/candidates are to answer all the interviewer's questions, ask their own questions about the job and in general try to persuade the interviewer that they are the ideal candidates for this particular part-time job. When finished, they will swap the roles.

T asks student to form groups of 3 and distributes the Role cards. Ss are to read their role cards before starting the role play. Ss perform the role play 3 times (each member of a group becomes the interviewer once). Members of the groups which have finished sooner than

others can discuss which of the interviewees was the most successful one in the whole role play and why.

Follow-up

Discussion

Org. form: Groups of 3 (the same groups as for the role play)

Time: 10 – 12 min.

Aim: Students will be able to express their likes/dislikes, supported with arguments, and they will be able, as a group, to agree on a list reflecting their common preference

T's instructions/task: Ss are to discuss which of the jobs listed on the WB they would like to do and which not, and why. Then they are to agree as a group on a list of their TOP 3 favourite ones. If some groups are finished, T can elicit the TOP 3 lists/the TOP 1 from them/each group.

Role Cards

Interviewer

Interview your partners for a part-time job of your choice.

Describe briefly the job.

Ask lots of question about the candidates/interviewees OR ask them to introduce themselves but keep interrupting them with additional questions.

Answer any question about the job that the candidates/interviewees ask.

At the end of the interview make the decision which candidate gets the job.

Interviewee/Candidate

You are an applicant for a part-time job.

Answer all the interviewer's questions.

Ask your own questions about the job.

Throughout the whole interview try to persuade the interviewer that YOU are the ideal person for this particular part-time job.

Interviewee/Candidate

You are an applicant for a part-time job.

Answer all the interviewer's questions.

Ask your own questions about the job.

Throughout the whole interview try to persuade the interviewer that YOU are the ideal person for this particular part-time job.

Monologic Activity

One-minute monologue on a particular topic including feedback from the listeners

<u>Monologic activity</u>

Org. form: Groups of 3

Time: 25 – 30 minutes

Level: B1

Aim: Students will be able to produce an unprepared one-minute monologue on a given topic and to answer an additional question. Students will be able to follow a one-minute monologue and to ask an additional question/to point out one linguistic error or mistake.

Material aids: Topic cards, Role cards, a mobile or stopwatch in each group

Teacher's instructions/task:

T explains the activity: Ss will be working in groups of three. First, they are to read their role cards, which assign one of three possible roles: Speaker, Listener A or Listener B. The speaker then picks up a topic card (from a pile of reversed cards on the table) and, without delay, starts to talk about the topic on the card, while the listener A times 1minute. The speaker should aim to be as fluent as possible, to be accurate (avoiding errors and mistakes) and overall to make sense. Both other Ss listen carefully. After the speech is finished, the listener A comes up with one additional question regarding the topic. The speaker answers the additional question in one sentence. The listener B then mentions ONE error or mistake (regrading grammar, use of vocabulary or pronunciation) that the speaker made during his speech. When one speech is finished, Ss are to swap the role cards, read them and continue with the task.

T asks Ss to form groups of 3, distributes the Topic cards (to be put in the middle reverse side up) and the Role cards (each S is to read their own one). T starts the activity.

Topic Cards

Facebook	Tablet	Email
Computer	Solar power	Atomic power
Text messages	Mobile phone	Music festival
Museum	Cinema	Theatre
Summer job	University	Fashion

Role Cards

Speaker

Take the top card from the Topic cards' pile, read the topic, take a deep breath☺ and start talking about the topic. You can describe how 'the thing' looks, how it works, what it is for, who uses it, express your opinion on it, mention some experience or story connected with it, e.g.

Try to be as fluent as possible, to be accurate (avoiding errors and mistakes) and to make sense.

When your colleague asks one additional question, briefly answer it in one sentence.

Listener A

Time 1 minute for your colleague's speech.

Listen carefully.

After the speech, come up with one additional question regarding the topic.

Listener B

Listen carefully.

After the speech is finished and an additional question answered, mention ONE mistake (concerning grammar or use of vocabulary or pronunciation) that the speaker made during his/her speech.

Appendix F Completed observation sheet *Organizational forms/Language skills*

Intuv. ①

Observation sheet

Organizational forms/Language skills

Class: 6.A   Date: 25.5.2016   Time: $11^{50} - 12^{35}$ No of students: 10

Teacher observed: prof. Mohelková

Activity No.	Time	Activity type	Short description	Organizational form				Language skills focused on	
				Frontal	Individual	Pair work	Group work	Speaking	Other
1.	11^{51-58} 7 min.	Functional con.	Lead - in Brainstorming ⟷ T-Q → S-A autwork	✓				✓	
2.	$11^{58}-12^{08}$ 10 min	Social inter.	Discussion in pairs			✓		✓	
3.	12^{08-28} 20 min	—||—	Role Play				✓	✓	
4.	12^{28-35} 7 min.	—||—	Follow-up Discussion				✓	✓	

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Intervention

Observation sheet

Speaking time

Class: _6.A_ Time: _11⁵⁰ – 12³⁵_ _25.5.2016_ No of students: _10_

Teacher observed: _prof. Mohelská_

Ativity No.	Speaking time allocated to Ss			Student X's actual speaking time	Comments
	PAIR	GROUP	INDIVIDUAL/FRONTAL		
1.			10s, 38s, 45s, 55s, 42s, 44s, 1min 55, 5s	48s	T turned to the whole class discussion, their brainstorm. T asked about their own experience or opinion on an idea (not free). ⇒ Ss mainly discuss their own experience or in general the feelings of their ideal part time job in Eng!
2.	12⁰⁰–08 2 mins T description of the activ.			55s + 12s + 2min 20s ←	S explains (repeats) what they are supposed to do to her partner on task
3.		2 groups × 35s × 14 × 11 – 35s 3 mins T description		Student X was a part of the group of 3 CANDIDATE 1: 1min 38s INTERVIEWER: 2min 45s CANDIDATE 2: 1min 25s	* Interviewer + 3 candidates; Ss were doing what they were supposed to do, including asking arguments, trying to persuade the interviewer. ⑮ summarising, making decision supported with arguments and polite expressions greeting, shaking hands
4.		1st group 12⁰⁸–35 * 2nd group 12³⁰–35 ○		○ 45s	*Ss gave individual opinions, def. some arguments + also argued and tried to come to conclusion. ○ Ss were on task but mostly in Cz
		3rd group T let them continue with the interview – they finished with the self evaluation :)			

Appendix H   Interview with the teacher after the intervention

Interview with the teacher after the intervention

Type: Semi-structured interview

Research questions to be answered: How does the teacher assess the intervention? What modifications would be desirable?

List of questions:

What is your overall opinion on the role play? What modifications would you suggest?

What is your overall opinion on the monologic activity? What modifications would you suggest?

Would you use those activities again?