University of Pardubice

Faculty of Arts and Philosophy

Developing sociolinguistic competence in upper secondary EFL learners

Bachelor Thesis

2023   Soňa Novotná

ZADÁNÍ BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE
(projektu, uměleckého díla, uměleckého výkonu)

.

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Osobní číslo:	**H20029**
Studijní program:	**B0231A090018 Anglický jazyk**
Specializace:	**Anglický jazyk pro vzdělávání**
Téma práce:	**Rozvoj sociolingvistické kompetence v anglickém jazyce u žáků střední školy**
Téma práce anglicky:	**Developing sociolinguistic competence in upper secondary EFL learners**
Zadávající katedra:	**Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky**

Zásady pro vypracování

Cílem bakalářské práce je zjistit možnosti rozvoje sociolingvistické kompetence ve výuce anglického jazyka. V teoretické části práce bude studentka definovat sociolingvistickou kompetenci v kontextu výuky angličtiny na středních školách v České republice. V praktické části bakalářské práce pak navrhne soubor aktivit, pomocí kterých lze tuto kompetenci rozvíjet v hodinách angličtiny a kriticky zhodnotí proces tvorby aktivit a možnosti rozvoje této kompetence.

Rozsah pracovní zprávy:
Rozsah grafických prací:
Forma zpracování bakalářské práce: **tištěná/elektronická**
Jazyk zpracování: **Angličtina**

Seznam doporučené literatury:

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Datum zadání bakalářské práce: **2. dubna 2021**
Termín odevzdání bakalářské práce: **30. března 2022**

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V Pardubicích dne 30. listopadu 2021

Prohlašuji:

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ANNOTATION

This thesis focuses on developing sociolinguistic competence in upper secondary learners in the EFL classroom. The theoretical part deals with the definition of sociolinguistic competence, its individual components, as well as the specifics of teaching upper secondary learners. The practical part aims to explore methods for developing sociolinguistic competence by introducing two sets of activities for the EFL classroom - one set focused on register, and the other on dialect, accent and cultural notions of politeness. These activities are designed based on the knowledge from the theoretical part.

KEYWORDS

sociolinguistic competence, upper secondary learners, ELT, lesson planning

NÁZEV

Rozvoj sociolingvistické kompetence v anglickém jazyce u žáků střední školy

ANOTACE

Tato bakalářská práce se zaměřuje na rozvoj sociolingvistické kompetence v anglickém jazyce u žáků střední školy. Teoretická část obsahuje definici sociolingvistické kompetence, její jednotlivé komponenty, a také specifika výuky žáků této věkové skupiny. Cílem praktické části je představit dva soubory aktivit zaměřené na rozvoj sociolingvistické kompetence ve výuce anglického jazyka - první set je zaměřený na psaní formálního textu, a druhý na dialekt, akcent a různé pojetí zdvořilostních norem v odlišných kulturách. Tyto aktivity byly navrženy s použitím vědomostí představených v teoretické části.

KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA

sociolingvistická kompetence, žáci střední školy, výuka anglického jazyka, plánování hodin

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CEFR - Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

EFL - English as a Foreign Language

ELT - English Language Teaching

INTRODUCTION

It has long been accepted that in order to become proficient in a foreign language, one needs a lot more than just the mere knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. In the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) model, language proficiency consists of four vitally important components, and those are general competences, communicative language competences, communicative language activities and communicative language strategies (2020, 32). It is those communicative competences, and specifically the sociolinguistic competence, that is the focus of this thesis. The reasoning behind choosing this topic was as follows. First, human language doesn't exist in a vacuum, it co-exists with the communities who use it, who give it its meaning, and shape it to fit their social and cultural needs (Everett 2012, 3). Language reflects history, it reflects culture (Everett 2012, 192), and it even reflects social hierarchy and power structures (Romaine 2000, 20). Despite the vital role these sociocultural factors play in the study and use of language, they are rarely addressed in the EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classroom. The unfortunate reality seems to be that in many Czech primary and secondary schools, grammatical competence is given disproportionately more attention than sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences. That is in spite of the fact that the ability to better understand and convey social and cultural meanings, in other words, sociolinguistic competence is widely regarded as a skill essential for effective communication (Geeslin and Long 2014, 7). To address this issue, this thesis aims to examine different possibilities of developing students' sociolinguistic competence in the EFL classroom, namely on the upper secondary level. This aim will be achieved by designing and describing two sets of activities, each targeting a different area of sociolinguistic competence.

This thesis consists of the theoretical part and the practical part. Theoretical part contains three chapters. The first chapter deals with sociolinguistic competence, its historical background, and its place in the larger construct of communicative competence. Several different areas of sociolinguistic competence will be described, namely culture and politeness, register and degree of formality and accent and dialect. The second chapter focuses on the learners. It first specifies the group of learners who are the target audience for these activities, as well as their goal level of proficiency in sociolinguistic competence according to CEFR. The second section of the second chapter focuses on the specifics of teaching this age group of students and describes some

teaching techniques that are recommended by various sources. In the third chapter, different ways of introducing sociolinguistic competence into the EFL classroom will be examined, specifically how sociolinguistic competence can be incorporated while teaching the receptive and productive language skills.

The practical part begins with a chapter on lesson planning, in which key concepts such as educational goal, instructional objective, interaction patterns and feedback will be examined. This, combined with the knowledge from the theoretical part, will serve as a framework for creating two sets of activities and activity plans. The aim of the rest of the practical part is to introduce and describe each plan, as well as critically examine the creative process behind each from a pedagogical point of view.

THEORETICAL PART

1. Sociolinguistic competence

1.1 Communicative competence - historical perspective

In this thesis, sociolinguistic competence is understood as one of several components of the broader communicative competence. Therefore, in order to understand the history and significance of sociolinguistic competence, it is necessary to include a brief section introducing the construct of communicative competence as well.

To provide a general idea of what communicative competence means, we first turn to the definitions of the individual words that comprise it - competence and communication. Merriam-Webster online dictionary defines competence as "the quality or state of having sufficient knowledge, judgment, skill, or strength", while communication refers to "a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behavior" (Merriam Webster 2023). Similarly, according to the Oxford dictionary, when someone is competent, it means that they have "the necessary skill or knowledge to do something successfully" (Soanes, Hawker and Elliott 2005, 176). In the same vein, CEFR defines competences as "the sum of knowledge, skills and characteristics that allow a person to perform actions" (2001, 9). Joining these definitions together, in simple terms, when someone has communicative competence, they have the necessary knowledge, judgment and skill to successfully communicate (or exchange information). It then naturally follows to pose the question, what that "necessary knowledge, judgment and skill" is exactly when it comes to communication.

Searching for an answer to this question brings us all the way back to Chomsky, the father of modern linguistics, and the creator of generative grammar theory, who is credited by Canale and Swain with being the first to use the terms 'competence' and 'performance' in the context of linguistics (Canale and Swain 1980, 3). Chomsky argued that it is the knowledge of grammar which constitutes speakers' competence, the innate understanding of how sentences are put together and structured (1965, 4). Performance meanwhile referred to how language is actually

used in real world conditions, including various mistakes and inaccuracies on the speakers' part (Chomsky 1965, 4). Chomsky further differentiated between the notions of 'grammaticalness' and 'acceptability'. Whereas grammaticalness referred to how correct any given utterance was on a grammar scale, acceptability referred to the likelihood of it actually being produced in the real world conditions (1965, 11). Chomsky believed that "acceptability is a concept that belongs to the study of performance, whereas grammaticalness belongs to the study of competence" (1965, 11). These ideas, however, were not universally accepted.

Dell Hymes wrote his paper (1972) as a reaction to Chomsky and his school of linguists, who elected to study language in its abstract form, removed from society and culture. Hymes (1972) was directly responding to Chomsky's ideas and criticized his grammar-centered view. He argued that the knowledge of a competent speaker cannot consist of grammar only. He gave an example of a child, who would be able to produce any perfectly grammatical sentence, however he or she would do so at random, producing various utterances regardless of context (1972, 277). Hymes concluded that such a child would be considered highly abnormal and despite all the grammatical knowledge, unable to actually meaningfully communicate (1972, 277). Therefore, he reasoned, grammatical prowess is not enough, there also needs to be some other hidden knowledge present in the human mind, that enables us to communicate - the knowledge of how to use language in context (1972, 286). According to him, children develop this knowledge in their first language through the process of socialization, gaining not only the ability to create grammatically correct sentences, but to perform different language functions, as well as learning rules for social use, norms of what is acceptable and what is inappropriate or rude in their community (1972, 279). Hymes called the sum of all this knowledge and abilities for use 'communicative competence' (1972, 281-282). We can now see how in Hymes' concept of communicative competence, the seeds of what would later become known as sociolinguistic competence were already planted - knowledge of appropriateness, with the underpinning sociocultural norms.

Eight years later, Canale and Swain (1980) introduced their own model of communicative competence. According to them, communicative competence consists of at least three different sub-competences, specifically grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence and general

strategic competence (Canale and Swain 1980, 28). Grammatical competence deals with "knowledge of lexical items, rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar semantics, and phonology" (1980, 29). Sociolinguistic competence refers to "sociocultural rules of use and rules of discourse" (1980, 30) while strategic competence is made of up of "verbal and non-verbal communication strategies" that serve to "compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or insufficient competence" (1980, 30). This model was then expanded upon by Canale (1983). According to him, there are four components to communicative competence, which is grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence (1983, 6). Meaning, in comparison with the previous model, sociolinguistic competence split in two - it would only refer to "sociocultural rules of use" while discourse competence would refer to the "rules of discourse", such as communicative functions and genres (Canale 1983, 7-9).

After Canale (1983), several other models of communicative competence gained prominence. For instance, according to Kanwit and Solon (2023, 9), other notable models include Celce-Murcia et al. (1995), Celce-Murcia (2008) and Bachman and Palmer (2010). But perhaps none would become more significant than the CEFR model, which is widely used all over the world to assist with both language teaching and assessment. In the Czech educational context, it is also referenced in the national Framework Educational Programme to describe learners' target level in foreign language upon finishing each stage of education.

1.2 The CEFR model of communicative and sociolinguistic competence

The CEFR model is in many ways similar to the Canale (1983) model. Linguistic competence is close to what Canale called grammatical competence, and in CEFR it includes "lexical, phonological, syntactical knowledge and skills and other dimensions of language as system" (2001, 13). It consists of several different sub-skills, such as general linguistic range, vocabulary range, grammatical accuracy, vocabulary control, phonological control and orthographic control (CEFR 2020, 129). Pragmatic competence, similar to Canale's discourse competence, is "concerned with the functional use of linguistic resources, production of language functions, speech acts" (CEFR 2001, 13) and it consists of flexibility, turntaking, thematic development, coherence and cohesion, propositional precision and fluency (CEFR 2020, 129). Pragmatic

competence is what we call upon when we are performing certain language functions, such as making requests, invitations, asking for directions, etc. (CEFR 2001, 126).

Lastly, sociolinguistic competence refers to "the sociocultural conditions of language use" and includes "rules of politeness, norms governing relations between generations, sexes, classes and social groups, linguistic codification of certain fundamental rituals in the functioning of a community" (CEFR 2001, 13). According to CEFR, sociolinguistic competence includes many different sub-skills. These are the ability to use and understand "linguistic markers of social relations" such as greetings, address forms, "conventions of turn taking" and "use and choice of expletives" (CEFR 2001, 119). The ability to understand and adhere to politeness conventions, with positive politeness, negative politeness and "appropriate use of 'please', 'thank you', etc." (CEFR 2001, 119). Sociolinguistic competence also includes "expressions of folk wisdom", such as proverbs and idioms (CEFR 2001, 120) and register, which refers to various degrees of formality from intimate to formal and frozen (CEFR 2001, 120). And last but not least, it also deals with dialect and accent (CEFR 2001, 121). A learner should be able to recognize for example social class or national origin of a person based on their lexicon or phonology (CEFR 2001, 121).

CEFR (2020) offers an updated scale of sociolinguistic appropriateness for all levels (2020, 137). Broadly speaking, on lower levels (A1-B1) it deals mostly with the ability of the speakers to adapt their language in order to be polite and appropriate while performing simple language functions (CEFR 2020, 137). On higher levels (B2-C2), it deals with the flexibility of language use in different nuanced situations, regarding not only the ability to be polite and diplomatic, but also use and understand humor, cultural references, slang, colloquial language, and idiomatic expressions and various subtle shades of meaning in language (CEFR 2020, 137).

1.3 Sociolinguistic competence in broader context

1.3.1 The study of sociolinguistics and language variation

Hudson defines sociolinguistics as "the study of language in relation to society" (1996, 1). Wardhaugh explains that in traditional linguistics, such as the school represented by Chomsky, the focus was on describing language in universal terms, as a homogenous entity, defining its rules and principles in a highly idealized way, detached from the communities that actually use it (2006, 2-3). However, what sociolinguists such as Hymes soon began to point out, is that no speech community is homogenous, and even within the same community, there are vast differences in the level of competency between the speakers and in ways in which they use langue (Hymes 1972, 276-277). Even within what is generally considered to be one language, we find endless amounts of variations - Wardhaugh gives examples of Canadian English, London English and the English of football commentators (2006, 25). Geeslin and Long mention African American Vernacular English (2014, 30). When analyzing each of these varieties, we can find differences in pronunciation, spelling, vocabulary, sometimes even grammatical differences. The purpose of sociolinguistics then, according to Spolsky, is to "map linguistic variations on to social conditions" (1998, 4).

There are many different socioeconomic and cultural factors that can have an influence on the language of each user, such as their level of education, social class, geographical location, gender, age and ethnicity (Geeslin and Long 2014, 149). Language is widely viewed as a tool for expressing one's identity, and can also express membership to certain social groups, while rejecting others (Wardhaugh 2006, 6).

But in contrast to the identity variables, there are also circumstantial factors that influence what kind of language is used, such as the purpose of the communication, the setting and the relationship between the participants (Romaine 2000, 44). According to Hudson, we can thus separate two types of language variations - "variation according to use" or register, and "variation according to user" also known as dialect (both geographical and social) (1996, 45). Hudson however warns that there are in fact some overlaps between the two concepts, as "one person's dialect is another person's register" (1996, 47). Both concepts will be discussed in

greater detail in the next section. Helping our learners to not only understand these variations in language, but also be able to use some of them and modify their own language according to context, lies at the heart of teaching sociolinguistic competence (Geeslin and Long 2014, 10).

1.4 Areas of sociolinguistic competence

1.4.1 Culture and politeness

According to Crystal's definition, "in sociolinguistics and pragmatics, politeness phenomena is a term which characterizes linguistic features mediating norms of social behaviour, in relation to such notions as courtesy, rapport, deference and distance" (2008, 373).

One prominent model of politeness is the one described by Brown and Levinson (1987). Their model relies on the notion of "face", a term which is not literal, but came from such expressions as "lose face" and "save face" (1987, 61). According to them, face represents a person's social persona, and is tied to concepts of honor, virtue and shame (1987, 13). People naturally want to protect their own face and are also mindful about protecting the faces of others they interact with, using various politeness strategies in the process (Brown and Levinson 1987, 61).

Face comprises two opposing forces, which are the negative face wants and positive face wants (Brown and Levinson 1987, 62). According to Cutting, negative face represents the need of a person to be "independent, have freedom of action and not be imposed on by others" and a positive face refers to the need to be "accepted and liked by others, treated as a member of the group and to know one's wants are shared by others" (2015, 33).

Some actions we take might be threatening to the other person's face, and these are called "face threatening acts" (FTAs) (Brown and Levinson 1987, 65). FTAs can be divided by which face they threaten, whether the positive or the negative face (Brown and Levinson 1987, 65). Some examples of negative FTAs include orders, requests, suggestions, advice, threats, warnings, offers, promises and compliments (Brown and Levinson 1987, 66). Some acts that threaten the positive face are criticism, expression of disapproval, complaints, and disagreements (Brown and Levinson 1987, 66-67).

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When engaging in a potential FTA, people will often employ 'face-management strategies' by using positive or negative politeness (Cutting 2015, 35). In using negative politeness strategies, speakers will attempt to increase the distance between themselves and the addressee in order to recognize their autonomy and not impose on them (Cutting 2015, 35). On the other hand, using positive politeness strategies will mean showing solidarity, closeness and fostering a sense of belonging with the other person (Cutting 2015, 36).

Brown and Levinson propose that some cultures may be more inclined towards positive and some towards negative politeness (1987, 245). They indicate that the USA might be seen as a positive politeness culture, while the UK or Japan possibly represent a negative politeness culture (1987, 245).

The CEFR model also makes mention of both positive and negative politeness (2001, 119). Under positive politeness it includes "showing interest in other person's well being, sharing experiences and concerns, expressing admiration, affection, gratitude and offering gifts" (CEFR 2001, 119). Under negative politeness we find "expressing regret, apologising for face-threatening behaviour (correction, contradiction, prohibitions)" (CEFR 2001, 119).

In summary, when teaching English as a foreign language, it is imperative to teach our students different politeness strategies in order to avoid unintentionally offending the addressee. As we have seen, we can draw a connection between face threatening acts and certain language functions, such as suggesting, giving orders, criticizing, etc. (Brown and Levinson 1987, 66). Therefore, when teaching students a new language function, positive or negative politeness strategies are often included, sometimes as phrases to be remembered (for instance saying "I'm sorry to bother, but…" when asking a stranger on the street for directions). This is reflected in CEFR goals for lower levels of proficiency - for level A1 "Can establish basic social contact by using the simplest everyday polite forms of: greetings and farewells; introductions; saying please, thank you, sorry, etc." (CEFR 2001, 122). And for level A2 "Can handle very short social exchanges, using everyday polite forms of greeting and address." (CEFR 2001, 122).

On higher levels, it is important to make student's politeness strategies more refined, and teach them a variety of linguistic forms they can use to avoid threatening other people's positive and negative face wants, such as hedging, indirect language and being ambiguous, strategies described in Brown and Levinson (1987). Different cultural norms should also be discussed, such as different conceptions of politeness in the UK, the US and other parts of the world, in order to increase students' cultural understanding.

1.4.2 Register and degree of formality

Having gone through the 'varieties according to user', we may now move onto the 'varieties according to use' as Hudson distinguished them (1996, 45). Flowerdew defines register as "a set of linguistic choices associated with a particular situation" (2013, 13). He goes on to describe three contextual parameters of registers - tenor, mode and field (2013, 13-14).

Tenor refers to "relations between participants" (for instance a teacher and pupil, or two friends) and has the largest impact on the degree of formality that will be used (Flowerdew 2013, 13-14). Regarding formality, Crystal defines the term as "a dimension of social behaviour ranging from the most strictly regulated to the least regulated, and reflected in language by varied linguistic features" (2008, 195). He describes highly formal languages as containing "carefully organized discourse, often with complex syntax and vocabulary, which closely follows the standard language" and informal language as "very loosely structured, involving a high level of colloquial expression, and often departing from standard norms" (2008, 195). Joos (1967) developed a five point scale on which registers are ranked by their degree of formality, from most to least formal. According to him, those are the frozen, formal, consultative, casual and intimate register (1967, 11). Danesi provides an example of saying goodbye to a person in a highly formal manner "I'm looking forward to our next encounter!", mid formal manner "See you later!" and informal manner "I'm off!" (2020, 94). He also explains that some lexemes are inherently formal or informal, and offers the pairs alcoholic beverage - booze, and offspring - kids as examples (2020, 95).

Field is the next parameter of register - referring to the area of language activity, such as profession or a hobby (Flowerdew 2013, 13). This will influence the technicality of terms which

will appear, such as the words sodium chloride (technical) and salt (non-technical) (Hudson 1996, 47).

Mode refers to whether a given register is spoken or written (Flowerdew 2013, 14). However Flowerdew also points out that this distinction can in some cases be blurred, such as the example of public speeches that had been written in advance to be read aloud (Flowerdew 2013, 14).

Biber and Conrad identify three key properties of register - "situational context, linguistic features, and the functional relationship between the first two components" (2009, 6). The functional relationship refers to the fact that linguistic items are not chosen at random to appear in a given register, they have a specific function (Biber and Conrad 2009, 6). One example Biber and Conrad provide is the frequent appearance of the personal pronouns "I" and "you" in conversation, as they are personal and involve direct interaction (2009, 8). They contrast it with newspaper discourse which usually will not contain these personal pronouns, as it does not involve direct interaction with another person, and there is an effort to be objective and impersonal (2009, 8). To summarize, in register, various linguistic features (past passive, pronouns, technical terms, etc.) will be chosen with specific functions in mind (conveying objectivity, communicating interest, providing technical information).

In summary, when teaching our EFL students different registers, it is important to bring their attention to situational context, including the degree of formality and technicality as well as the corresponding linguistic features. To help them connect situational context with linguistic features, it might be beneficial to ask open ended questions, such as "Why do we find more personal pronouns in conversation than in newspaper articles?" (fact mentioned in Biber and Conrad, 2009, 8). It is also important to help students identify which lexical items are formal and which are informal or colloquial, as well as differentiating technical terms from neutral ones. According to Flowerdew, learners of language frequently make the mistake of mixing together items belonging to different registers, such as using the address "Hi Sir" in a formal email (2013, 13). However, we need to keep in mind that the students will already have some knowledge of registers from their first language, as a wide variety of registers in L1 is acquired naturally through socialization and also through education (Biber and Conrad, 2009, 2-3). Thus, it will be

beneficial to assume a constructivist approach to teaching this concept, and build on the knowledge that students already have.

In CEFR, it is recommended to teach beginner students up to level B1 a relatively neutral register, as inappropriate use of more formal or familiar registers "may well lead to misinterpretation and ridicule" (2001, 120). It is recommended that students' receptive competence of distinguishing and understanding different registers is fostered first, perhaps through reading different text types (CEFR 2001, 120). CEFR states that learners are expected to gain greater competence with regards to register from level B2 (2001, 121).

1.4.3 Dialect and Accent

Crystal provides the following definition of the term dialect:"A regionally or socially distinctive variety of language, identified by a particular set of words and grammatical structures. Spoken dialects are usually also associated with a distinctive pronunciation, or accent." (2008, 142).

The distinction between what constitutes a language and what is considered a dialect is a complex matter (Crystal 2008, 142). If a dialect is different from a language by having slightly different pronunciation, lexical items and grammatical structure, at which point do these differences become so great that the dialect is considered a separate language? According to Trousdale, it has been often proposed that dialect and language need to be mutually intelligible, and once they are different enough that they become unintelligible they are considered separate languages (2010, 5). However, there are multiple counter-examples that disprove this distinction - Swedish, Norwegian and Danish are mutually intelligible, yet they are considered distinct languages (Crystal 2008, 142). Mandarin and Cantonese are incomprehensible to each other in spoken form, and only share a system of writing, yet they are both considered dialects of Chinese (Crystal 2008, 142). Another example is Scots and English - while Scots is viewed as a dialect, it is completely incomprehensible to many English speakers (Trousdale 2010, 6). In our own context, we could ponder why Czech and Slovak are separate languages and not dialects of each other, despite being so linguistically similar. The simple explanation is that in order to establish themselves as a sovereign nation and people and garner some political power, nations will elect to have their variety recognized and codified as a separate language rather than dialect (Romaine

2000, 13). Language is extremely important for self-identification, sense of identity, unity, or conversely sense of separation from another group or nation (Wardhaugh 2006, 27).

Sociolinguists therefore arrived at the conclusion that the distinction between language and dialect is a cultural and social one rather than linguistic one (Hudson 1996, 31). In any language with a large enough number of speakers there are bound to be many dialects, however in many modern languages, one dialect may be chosen (due to political and historical reasons) to become the Standard language (Crystal 2008, 142). In the case of British English, the dialect from around the city of London was chosen as a base for Standard English, thus becoming more powerful and influential than the other English dialects, which once were viewed as equal (Wardhaugh 2006, 40). Oftentimes the Standard variety will be associated with the elites and higher social class (Wardhaugh 2006, 34-35). The power of the Standard language cannot be overstated - because of its significant social prestige, many people may perceive other varieties that are not the Standard language as "wrong" or "bad", even if they are relatively common (Trousdale 2010, 8-10).

Accents can be viewed in much the same way. The difference between dialect and accent is that accent refers only to the phonological varieties of spoken language (Crystal 2008, 3). As Crystal notes, accent can reveal where a person is from, both regionally and socially (Crystal 2008, 3) making it a possible target of prejudice. Spolsky offers the example of having difficulty booking a hotel room in the northern US by phone if one has African-American or Southern accent (1998, 27). On the other hand some accents are held in high regard, such as the RP accent in Britain associated with upper class and elite schools (Wardhaugh 2006, 46).

The implications of this for ELT are quite significant. First, a variety that is chosen as a model for EFL learners will usually be one that is viewed as the most powerful or prestigious, which overwhelmingly turns out to be either Standard British or Standard American English (Trousdale 2010, 102-103). In order to make the classroom experience more diverse, teachers should make note of carefully introducing different varieties as input in the classroom when the learners are ready (Geeslin and Long 2014, 255). Dialect and accent is often dealt with in terms of receptive skills, for instance in CEFR learners should be able to recognize for example social class or

national origin of a person based on their dialect or accent (2001, 121) or be able to understand a speaker who uses "non-standard accent or dialect" (2001, 75).

However, dialect and accent has some implications for production as well. According to Geeslin and Long, teachers should recognize when learners start using any non-standard variation, and provide an explanation of their social implications (whether it is for example colloquial term or a regional variety) (2014, 256-257). Teachers should also potentially address any usage of non-standard pronunciation that might reflect poorly on the learner, such as making them more likely to be perceived as less educated or as belonging to a lower social class by others (Geeslin and Long 2014, 34).

2. Upper secondary learners

2.1 Upper secondary education in the Czech Republic and its educational goals

This thesis focuses on teaching English at the upper secondary school level, specifically the Upper Secondary General Education (gymnázium) with maturita examination. The duration of this program is typically 4 years and students usually begin this program at 15 years of age and finish at 19 by passing the Maturita examination. According to the National Framework Educational Programme for Upper Secondary General (gymnázium) Education (RVP G), the goal of this programme is to reach CEFR B2 level (2022, 13). The activities appearing in this thesis are designed for students who are closer to the B2 level, most likely in their last two years of upper secondary school.

This level of education was chosen for several different reasons. Firstly, many aspects of sociolinguistic competence start getting developed between the levels B1-B2, as described in CEFR (2001, 122). In lower levels of CEFR, learners are expected to develop only "simplest everyday polite forms" (2001, 122), use and understand "relatively neutral register" (2001, 120), understand speech "clearly articulated in a generally familiar accent" (2001, 66) and in "standard dialect" (2001, 66). It is generally only from the level B2 learners are required to widen their linguistic repertoire, start using multiple registers, employing nuanced politeness strategies and understanding more varied utterances (CEFR 2020, 137). The expected outcome for sociolinguistic competence for the B2 level is as follows:

B2	Can with some effort keep up with and contribute to group discussions even when talk is fast and colloquial.
	Can recognise and interpret sociocultural/sociolinguistic cues and consciously modify their linguistic forms of expression in order to express themselves appropriately in the situation.
	Can express themselves confidently, clearly and politely in a formal or informal register, appropriate to the situation and person(s) concerned.
	Can adjust their expression to make some distinction between formal and informal registers but may not always do so appropriately.
	Can sustain relationships with users of the target language without unintentionally amusing or irritating them or requiring them to behave other than they would with another proficient user.
	Can express themselves appropriately in situations and avoid crass errors of formulation.

Figure 1 - B2 descriptors for sociolinguistic competence in CEFR (CEFR 2020, 137)

The second reason for choosing upper secondary school is the age of students. According to Phelps (1990, 27), during adolescence the brain develops the ability to think abstractly, which Piaget called the stage of formal operations in his model. That means, we may discuss abstract concepts and ideas with our adolescent students and engage their higher level thinking (Phelps 1990, 28). This makes it worthwhile to discuss the more abstract linguistics concepts such as register and have students reflect on the nature of language itself. At the same time, according to Kuchař, Vojtěch and Kleňha, almost all graduates from the general upper secondary programmes apply for college, and almost all of them get accepted (2014, 10). Consequently, it might be beneficial to help students develop their academic register, which will be useful for them in the long run. At the same time, they might be inclined to find a part time job, so practicing more formal register in order to appear professional likewise seems like a worthwhile endeavor. Thus, upper secondary school was chosen, as it represents both the transition from lower levels of English to higher levels, and from upper secondary school to college and employment, and consequently it is the ideal place to introduce the following set of activities focusing sociolinguistic competence for the highest benefit of the students.

2.2 Teaching adolescent students

Many teachers may be worried at the prospect of teaching adolescent students. Adolescence is a time when people search for their own identity, and therefore are likely to challenge rules and values that have been imposed on them by adults in their life (Erlam, Philip and Feick 2021, 3). With adolescents, it is necessary to maintain good classroom management practices as well as to establish personal authority (Petty 2009, 98). Petty recommends at first to rely on teachers'

formal authority, by asserting one's presence in a confident manner, using strong body language such as posture, eye contact and proximity and expecting to be obeyed without question (2009, 98-99). In the second phase, teacher should focus on establishing good rapport with the students by learning their names, using ordinary polite respect (such as saying please and thank you), having a clear set of rules that is applied fairly and consistently, never using put-downs or sarcasm, showing interest in students' work and what they have to say, as well as using encouragement and praise where it's warranted (Petty 2009, 101). This will, according to Petty, gradually lead to establishing personal authority with the students (2009, 101). Harmer also stresses the importance of being seen as a successful professional by the students, well-organized, well-prepared and having demonstrable knowledge of the subject one is teaching (2007, 113).

According to Erlam, Philip and Feick, one of key factors for successful learning for adolescents is a positive learning environment (2021, 4). In order to maintain a positive learning environment, the teacher should not only have good rapport with the students, but also encourage support and collaboration between peers, including peer feedback (Erlam, Philip and Feick 2021, 6). Adolescents also appreciate having greater autonomy, which can be accomplished by giving students choice from different topics and activities as well as letting them co-decide classroom rules and procedures (Legutke 2012; quoted in Erlam, Philip and Feick 2021, 28). Students should also feel sufficiently challenged, and feel like they are given enough trust that they can become responsible for their own learning (Erlam, Philip and Feick 2021, 7).

One thing to keep in mind is that teenagers may have low self-esteem or be anxious about public speaking (especially in a foreign language), therefore the teacher should be sensitive about correcting their mistakes, and avoid embarrassing them in front of the class (Erlam, Philip and Feick 2021, 2). Group work is great for teenagers, not only can it help students that are shy or anxious to get more involved (Petty 2009, 230) it is also engaging and enjoyable to them (Erlam, Philip and Feick 2021, 29).

When teaching English as a foreign language, it is always important to keep the target learners in mind and choose and modify the activities and lesson plans in order to meet their specific needs.

3. Sociolinguistic competence in the EFL classroom

3.1 Teaching receptive skills

Receptive language skills are listening and reading (Scrivener 2011). According to Harmer, both written and spoken texts can be processed in two ways, which is the top-down processing and bottom-up processing (2007, 270). Scrivener explains that bottom-up processing is when the learners use individual sounds and words to construct the larger meaning from these smaller parts (2011, 257). On the other hand, top-down processing is when the learners use the knowledge they already have about the world, to help them fill in the gaps of the words and phrases which they might not know and construct the meaning of the text (Scrivener 2011, 258). According to Harmer, for receptive skills, there are Type 1 and Type 2 tasks - the former helps with top-down processing, make sense of the text without trying to understand every single word or point made, while the latter is more detailed, and focuses on specific meanings and language points (2007, 270). Harmer recommends to start with Type 1 tasks and move onto Type 2 tasks (2007, 270). Starting with a lead in a task is also recommended in order to activate students' schemata (Harmer 2007, 271). Scrivener divides the reading sequence into pre-text, text and post text phases (2011, 267). The pre-text phase includes the lead-in, where the learners should be introduced to the topic and engaged, and they can also be asked to make predictions (Scrivener 2011, 267). The text phase should proceed from reading from gist or skimming towards reading for detailed information and meaning (Scrivener 2011, 267). The focus on language points and vocabulary should be done last (Scrivener 2011, 267). After finishing the text, students should do something with the information they had learned, such as connecting it to their personal experience, having a roleplay, debate, or write a response (Scrivener 2011, 267).

If we want to incorporate sociolinguistics into teaching receptive skills, Geeslin and Long suggest increasing the variability of the input (2014, 262). We can include speakers from diverse geographical and social backgrounds, as well as texts which are varied in terms of formality (Geeslin and Long 2014, 262). For example, in a listening activity proposed by Flowerdew and Miller (2005, 118), the students listen to an American, British and Canadian speaker having a conversation. After answering some comprehension questions, Flowerdew and Miller suggest having a discussion with the students about how accent relates to class and prejudice (2005, 119)

and also for the students to personally evaluate which accent they like the most and what their own target accent would be like and why (2005, 121).

We can also include texts that are varied in terms of formality and ask students to analyze how the language differs from one context to another (Geesling and Long 2014, 262-265). Geeslin and Long propose for example playing a recording for the students and asking them about the degree of formality and likely relationships between the participants, as well as which linguistic features they used to infer this information (Geeslin and Long 2014, 266).

3.2 Teaching productive skills

Productive skills consist of speaking and writing (Scrivener 2011, 211). Harmer explains that the teacher might want to get the students to practice any necessary language (such as phrases, grammar and vocabulary) before a productive task is done (2007, 278). He stresses that it is likely that the students will not be able to use the language immediately upon hearing it for the first time, so the teacher should plan in advance and make sure students get plenty of exposure and opportunity to practice the target language before wanting them to produce it themselves (2007, 278).

According to Scrivener, when teaching speaking activities, the teacher should make an effort to choose a topic that is interesting and relevant to the students and get them engaged, creating a need for expressing themselves or communicating meaning (2011, 211). He suggests for example providing them with a text to respond to, as well as some open-ended discussion questions (2011, 212). Scrivener also suggests reducing teacher talking time in order to give more room to the students (2011, 212), as well as not interrupting speaking activities aimed at fluency by correcting students' mistakes (2011, 214). Another way of increasing student talking time is to have them talking in pairs or small groups, instead of having one student speak at a time (Scrivener 2011, 213). Harmer suggests this might also have the benefit of helping shy students who might not wish to speak in front of the whole class to get talking (2007, 345). Harmer describes many activities that are excellent at getting students speaking, such as student drama, acting out dialogues, various games, discussions, buzz groups, formal debates, giving presentations, simulation and role play (2007, 349-353).

According to Scrivener, when teaching writing, students might benefit from doing some preparatory tasks (2011, 236). These may include practicing grammar and vocabulary useful for the type of writing we want the students to do, as well as studying model texts of the same type (2011, 236). We can encourage students to analyze these texts in terms of grammar, vocabulary, content or organization (2011, 237). Scrivener recommends having students practice such types of texts that will be useful for them in real life, such as writing emails, blogs or reviews (2011, 238). According to Harmer, the teacher might want to focus on students' genre awareness when writing, getting students examine texts of the same genre and getting them acquainted with the conventions of the style (2007, 327).

When it comes to sociolinguistic competence and writing, Polio and Montgomery claim that "sociolinguistic competence relates most closely to the concept of register" (2023, 152). They also provide an example of having to write an apologetic email to a professor and using the knowledge of politeness conventions, which belongs to sociolinguistic competence (2023, 155). They criticize the use of classic classroom essay, as it is devoid of the social dimension, and thus does not contribute to the development of sociolinguistic competence (2023, 157). According to them, when choosing writing tasks, communicative purpose should always be considered and include real-life genres (2023, 157).

When it comes to speaking, Littlewood makes mention of the so-called "social interaction activities" (1981, 43). These activities are aimed not only at communicating functional meaning, but integrating social dimension as well (Littlewood 1981, 43). In these activities, "The learner is expected to let social as well as functional considerations affect his choice of language" and "the language he produces will be evaluated in terms of its social acceptability as well as its functional effectiveness"(Littlewood 1981, 43). He suggests that we may change functional activity into social interaction activity by for example specifying the relationship between participants and the level of formality of the event (Littlewood 1981, 43). Littlewood proposes that role play and simulation can be particularly useful for this type of activity due to it including some real-life social context and participants with specific social roles (1981, 49). Integrating social interaction activities into our lessons can be extremely useful for development of

productive sociolinguistic competence, because, as Littlewood states:"In activities which bear resemblance to recognisable social situations, learners will not need to be prompted but will attempt automatically to conform to an appropriate social role in the way they speak" (1981, 43).

PRACTICAL PART

Introduction

The practical part is divided into four chapters. In the fourth chapter, the subject of lesson planning is introduced. The fifth chapter includes the overview of digital tools used for the creation of the materials. The sixth and seventh chapters aim to introduce the activities designed to improve sociolinguistic competence in upper secondary learners. These activities are designed into two sets - Set A and Set B. Set A deals with register and degrees of formality, while Set B is concerned with culture and politeness - namely dialects, accents, and cultural differences in politeness norms. Set A contains 12 activities, while Set B contains 7 activities. It is important to note that these are activity plans and not full lesson plans. Both sets contain some Engage type activities, Study activities, as well as Activate type exercises (according to Harmers' ESA model which will be described in the section Lesson Planning). They also proceed from lower cognitive levels to higher ones (according to Bloom's taxonomy, likewise described in the fourth chapter). The activities also progress from receptive to productive, for instance if students read something, they are asked to react to it in a discussion, or they watch a video and respond to it in writing. Set A is targeted more at precision and accuracy, and there is some overlap with linguistic and pragmatic competences. It contains mainly activities that deal with writing and reading. In Set A, activities 1-10 provide plenty of input, building up to the final Activity 11-12 which is classified as productive and communicative. Regarding set B, the focus is placed much more on fluency, and listening and speaking, even though a writing activity is included as well. In Set B, many communicative productive tasks can be found, usually in reaction to spoken or written text. The order of activities in Set A is relatively rigid, and the activities should not be taken out of sequence. The order of activities in Set B is quite flexible, especially Activities 4-6, which contain similar topics and themes, and can be used in any order. Some plans are merged, specifically Activity 2-3, 7-10 and 11-12 in Set A. The reason for this is that these activities should be done directly following one another during the span of one lesson. With the other activities a teacher may for example choose to include one or two of them into a regular lesson and then move on to something else. In this manner, the activities can be spread out over a span of a week or several weeks. All the activity plans and materials are included in the appendix.

The overall educational goal of both sets is "Students will improve their sociolinguistic competence". In alignment with Petty's conception described in chapter four, this is a very broad and general goal and probably can never fully be achieved, since there will always be room for improvement - some dialect the student does not know, some folk saying never heard before, a new register to master. It, however, serves as the "compass direction" (Petty 2009, 410) in which our plans are heading. Set A deals mostly with the skills of writing and reading, but there is also some speaking involved when the students are working in groups and cooperating. Set B on the other hand is concerned mostly with listening and speaking, but contains some reading and writing as well. Therefore, the activities should be relatively balanced when it comes to the four skills.

4. Lesson planning

4.1 Aims and objectives

According to Petty, the process of teaching can be divided into four steps, which are deciding on aims, planning the action, carrying out the action, and evaluation (2009, 409). Which means that in order to plan a lesson effectively, we must first decide on the aim. Aims can be divided into two categories - educational goals and specific learning outcomes (Petty 2009, 410-414). Pasch et al. use the same categorization but call learning outcomes 'instructional objectives' instead (1995, 70).

Goals are usually long-term (often times spanning the duration of the whole course, or a year), general and broadly defined (Pasch et al. 1995, 71). Educational goals may be impossible to fully achieve or quantify, and their purpose is to serve as a direction in which progress should be made (Petty 2009, 410). Goals can be found in a syllabus or programme of study (Petty 2009, 410). In the context of Czech education, they can be found in the Framework Education Programme, which contains educational goals for all subjects in all stages of education, from preschool to tertiary technical school. In the context of teaching English as a foreign language, general education goals can also be found in CEFR.

On the other hand, specific learning outcomes (or instructional objectives in Pasch et al.) are very different. They are short-term (often set for a week or single lesson), and they are to be as specific as possible (Pasch et al. 1995, 71-73). According to Petty, they should be formulated from the perspective of the student, and define "precisely observable learner performance" (2009, 411). That means specific learning outcomes should not describe what goes on in the learner's mind, but rather their external behavior which we are able to observe from the outside (Petty 2009, 414). Pasch et al. recommend starting the objective statement with "The students will be able to…" followed by a description of their behavior, conditions in which the behavior is to be carried out and criteria based on which we can judge whether the students have succeeded or not (1995, 71-74).

Petty also mentions general objectives, which are in between educational goals and specific learning outcomes (2009, 414-415). Any educational goal can then be broken down into a number of general objectives, which then consist of many smaller instructional objectives (Petty 2009, 421). Petty puts forward a very useful metaphor of a journey - educational goals are like a compass which points us to a direction we want to travel, specific learning outcomes are individual steps we take on this road, and general objectives are like milestones along the way (2009, 412).

Aims and objectives can be further classified into three domains - the affective domain, cognitive domain and psychomotor domain (Pasch et al. 1995, 30). Affective domain has to do with emotional behavior, feelings, attitudes, preferences and values, psychomotor domain entails motor skills, performing various movements and hand-eye coordination, while cognitive domain deals with intellectual learning (Pasch et al. 1995, 30). Aims in cognitive domain can be further divided based on Bloom's taxonomy (Pasch et al. 1995, 51). Bloom's taxonomy was first published in 1956, and included six levels of cognitive domain ordered from lowest to highest levels as knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation (Krathwohl 2002, 212-213). However, it was later revised by Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) to change the order of the last two tiers, making synthesis (or "create" as it was newly called) the highest level (Krathwohl 2002, 215). Pasch et al. suggest that using Bloom's taxonomy can help teachers with planning lessons and choosing activities, helping to choose such activities that employ students' higher cognitive abilities, making lessons more engaging and beneficial for them (1995, 51).

After choosing the instructional objective, or the specific learning outcome, the teacher can decide on activities which will lead to achieving it. Purgason presents various models that can be utilized while deciding on activities for our EFL lesson, such as the Hunter model, the PPP model, Sheltered Immersion Observation Protocol or SIOP model, the ECRIF model and the ESA model (2014, 363-364). For the purposes of our lesson planning, we will use Harmers' ESA model here, which consists of three steps - engage, study and activate (Harmer 2007, 66-67). Engage segment describes an activity where students' become interested and the teacher captures their attention (Purgason 2014, 364). Study describes a phase where students focus on language, such as teacher explaining grammar points or students doing restrictive exercises, and activate is

a sequence when students use all the language they have at their disposal to accomplish a particular communicative task (Purgason 2014, 364). The order of the sequence can be changed in order to suit the learners, Harmer for example recommends EAS pattern for more advanced learners (2007, 67). Patchwork lessons can also be created which combine and repeat the three elements in various orders, such as EASA or EAASASEA (Purgason 2014, 364).

When considering the activity and what actions we want the students to take, it is also vital to think about the role of the teacher and their involvement. According to Harmer, the teacher should be able to change their role fluidly from one activity to the next (2001, 57). In Harmer (2001, 57-63) we find eight roles - controller, organiser, assessor, prompter, participant, resource, tutor and observer. The role the teacher will choose will depend not only on the objective of any given activity, but also based on what is needed in the classroom at any particular moment (Harmer 2001, 63).

4.2 Interaction patterns

Harmer also suggests including the interaction patterns for every activity into the lesson plan (2007, 374). Some common interaction patterns during EFL classes according to Ur are teacher talk, close-ended/open-ended teacher questioning, choral responses, individual work, group/pair work, collaboration and full-class interaction (1991, 228). Countless authors recommend making use of group work and collaborative learning, as well as maximizing student activity and minimizing teacher talking time. Petty insists that in order to learn, students have to be active, engage with the content and process it, instead of being passive recipients of what the teacher is saying (2009, 425-426). Skalková also warns against lack of variety in organizational forms, which might lead to the lessons getting stale and lowering of students' interest (2007, 223). Skalková claims that in order to achieve educational objectives and build a positive learning environment, it is important to include a variety of different activities, methods and techniques (2007, 223). Ultimately, the interaction patterns should be chosen in accordance with the selected activity and the objective of the lesson, while also keeping the learners and their specifics and preferences in mind.

4.3 Feedback

When planning the lesson, it is also beneficial to decide on the way in which we will provide feedback for the students. According to Ur, feedback can be defined as "information that is given to the learner about his or her performance of a learning task, usually with the objective of improving this performance" (1991, 242). Feedback generally consists of assessment, where the learners are informed of how well they performed, and correction, in which we offer a better alternative to what was said or explanation of why it was wrong (Ur 1991, 242). According to Harmer, the general practice in ELT is to correct mistakes in exercises aimed at accuracy, and refrain from immediate correction if the task is aimed at fluency (2007, 142). Likewise according to Ur in communicative language teaching not all mistakes have to be corrected, and the teacher should focus more on the content of the message (whether the communicative purpose was achieved) than the form (Ur 1991, 244).

Teacher giving feedback to students is not the only valid configuration. According to Petty, self-assessment should also be highly encouraged (2009, 339). When we invite learners to reflect upon and assess their own performance, we are cultivating their ability to improve themselves and take responsibility for their own learning (Petty 2009, 339). The same opinion is shared by Starý, who claims that one of the most important goals of education is to cultivate students' ability to take responsibility for their own learning, developing their study skills, and the ability to regulate their own learning and ability to self-reflect (2016, 27). To help students make progress in this area, Starý suggests working with educational goals, using criteria of evaluation and offering constructive feedback to the students (2016, 28). What can be said about self-assessment also applies to peer-feedback, which also serves a social function of helping foster cooperative and positive learning environment (Erlam, Philp and Feick 2021, 5-7).

According to Laufková, using criteria during our lessons can help "quantify the performance of each student", as well as locate both strong and weak points of each student (2016, 50). Students can be informed of the criteria beforehand and it can help them improve their performance, as well as increase the feeling of fairness in evaluation (Laufková 2016, 50). They can take the form of a simple checklist, which contains all the criteria that are to be fulfilled, such as "very few grammatical errors, originality, the length of two A4 pages, etc." (Laufková 2016, 51). Students

can also be asked to co-create their own criteria (Laufková 2016, 56). This can be very beneficial for students' ability to self-reflect, have more autonomy and become better learners. In ELT, it is our opinion that especially for more advanced adolescent/adult students, using criteria can be very useful, for instance when assessing a complex performance such as giving a presentation or writing a creative text.

In conclusion, lesson-planning is a complex and multifaceted process. It consists of forming a clear instructional objective, which should take into account the more long-term educational goals as well as the general objectives one wishes for the students to achieve. While formulating the instructional objective, it might be advisable to consult Bloom's taxonomy and decide on the target levels of students' cognitive involvement. Next step consists of choosing and sequencing activities, deciding on interaction patterns and the appropriate teacher roles for each, as well as ways of giving students feedback on their performance in order to facilitate their learning. According to Petty, after carrying out the lesson plan, it is also of vital importance to reflect on its success or failure, whether the aims were achieved, or whether it should be adjusted for the future in some way (2009, 409).

5. Overview of digital tools used in creating materials

1. Canva - all worksheets were designed using free online software Canva. It offers free graphics, designs and templates which can be used for both educational and commercial purposes under the free license.

https://www.canva.com/

2. The Online Graded Text Editor - online text editor which allows teachers to assess the difficulty of any English text, as well as identify words which might be unknown to the learners. Its presets range from complete beginner to native proficiency. For the purposes of this theses, the setting of "mid-upper intermediate" was used, which should correspond with the level B2.

https://www.er-central.com/ogte/

3. Kahoot - online application for creating interactive quizzes which the students might take either during the class on their phones, or at home on their phone or PC.

https://www.kahoot.com/

4. Oxford Learner Dictionary Online - used to provide simple English definitions for words which might be unknown to the students.

https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/

6. Set A Register

6.1 Overview and objectives

Set A contains twelve activities with the focus on register. To narrow it down even further, it focuses on formal register of business emails, and differences between formal and informal register. The objectives for this Set are as follows:

- Given a pair of sentences or words with differing levels of formality, the students will be able to identify which is more formal and which is less formal.
- Students will be able to use some formal words appropriately in a given context.
- Given a sample of discourse, students will be able to identify which discourse is formal, which is informal and what is the likely relationship between the participants and the setting.
- Students will be able to rewrite informal sentences into formal ones.
- Students will be able to find mistakes in register in a written work.
- Students will be able to write a formal business email based on a set of instructions and criteria provided.

6.2 Activity 1

Objective: Students will be able to identify which sentences are formal and which are informal and prove this by writing (F) or (I) next to the sentences.

In this activity, students first watch a TikTok video, which contains a woman saying one sentence in an informal register and then "translating" it into formal professional English. After finishing the video, students get a worksheet which contains the same sentences, as well as sentences from another video of the same theme by the same creator. Filling out the worksheet, students match the sentences in a highly formal register to the informal ones of the same or similar meaning. Feedback will be provided by the teacher calling on the individual students to give their answers and confirming whether they are correct.

This activity is categorized as Engage type activity. Teenagers like watching TikTok, and seeing a social media that they like being included might make them more interested, as well as perhaps encourage them to watch some English TikToks in their free time, which would increase their L2 exposure. The video is also humorous, which might make students more engaged.

The main reason why this input was chosen is that it contains the linguistic features that we want to examine - differences between informal register and formal business register, and also some negative politeness strategies. In this video, these linguistic features are slightly exaggerated for comedic effect, which will make them easier to spot for students. The fact that subtitles are included will improve overall comprehensibility of the input for the students. This text also contains many vocabulary items which will be extremely useful to the students in the writing assignment. It is also an authentic text. All those reasons combined make it an ideal material to use in the classroom for this purpose. Some adaptations however had to be made. The text was graded using The Online Graded Text Editor, difficult words identified and their definitions provided using Oxford Learners Dictionary online. Some words which were not considered useful for the students at this time were replaced with similar simpler expressions, such as the word 'hover' with 'watch over'. Another way in which the text was adapted was shortening some of the longer sentences to make them more comprehensible for the students.

This activity is on the low end of the Bloom taxonomy, on the level of remembering and understanding. Students may remember some sentences from the input video or they will understand the meaning of these sentences and match them to their counterparts.

Activity 1 aims to introduce the students to the concept of register and the idea that there is more than one way to express the same meaning based on the context.

6.3 Activity 2

Objective: Students will be able to understand the meaning of certain formal and informal words and prove this understanding by matching the words with corresponding meanings together.

Students are given a list which contains two columns of words - one is formal and the other is informal or neutral. Their task is to match the formal words (some of them being new to them) to

their more informal counterparts with the same meaning, such as "inquire" and "ask". Feedback will be provided by the teacher calling on the individual students to give their answers and confirming whether they are correct.

This activity belongs to the Study category. Students work to complete a very restricted exercise with little creative freedom.

The vocabulary was chosen with two criteria in mind - all of the words should appear frequently in formal writing, and also the informal variants of the words should already be known to the students. With upper-intermediate students it might be difficult to predict which words will be completely new and which will have at least some degree of familiarity to the students. By using Online Graded Text Editor, it was suggested that the following words might be particularly difficult: inquire, comply, enhance, reimbursement and refund. The teacher should be ready to explain the meaning of any unknown words, preferably providing simple definitions in L2.

Activity 2 is staying on the lowest level of Bloom taxonomy of knowledge and understanding.

6.4 Activity 3

Objective: Students will be able to use the formal words from the previous exercise in context, proving their understanding by correctly completing the sentences.

Activity 3 builds on the vocabulary introduced in Activity 2. Students read several sentences, each with one missing word. They are to fill each gap with one formal word from the previous exercise. Feedback will be provided by the teacher calling on the individual students to give their answers and confirming whether they are correct.

The sentences were chosen based on their formality and shared theme of business and commerce. By providing example sentences for the vocabulary, students will have an easier time remembering the words and using them appropriately in a given context.

Activity 3 remains on the lower levels of Bloom taxonomy. Completing this activity is a matter of knowledge and memorization more than anything else.

In these Activities 2 and 3, there is a degree of overlap between the linguistic competence, specifically vocabulary range (CEFR 2001, 112) - knowing the meaning of the individual words, and sociolinguistic competence - knowing which register they belong to.

6.5 Activity 4

Objective: Students will be able to recognize which conversations are formal and which are informal, proving their understanding by writing (F) or (I) next to the conversations. Students will be able to identify likely relationships between the participants using markers of social relations and other content clues as their guide.

In this activity, students are given short conversation, or sometimes a single sentence, and their task is to identify what is the likely relationship between the participants, who they might be, what is the likely setting where the exchange takes place, as well as the degree of formality. They are asked to highlight the markers of social relations and lexical items which signify formality or informality. Feedback will be provided by the teacher calling on the individual students to give their answers and confirming whether they are correct.

With the exception of the courtroom exchange, all samples were created specifically for the purposes of this thesis and are not authentic.

The purpose of this activity is to get the students thinking about the importance of context in every social exchange, and how language is impacted by the degree of formality of the events. Therefore, it is on the apply level of Bloom taxonomy. The students are asked to take what they learned about degrees of formality and apply it to these fictional scenarios by interpreting the scenes.

6.6 Activity 5

Objective: Students will be able to locate formal words and expressions in emails by underlining them. They will be able to provide informal counterparts for formal expressions in written form.

In Activity 5, students are given two sample formal emails on two different topics, that being Termination of Employment and Apology for Delayed Delivery. They are asked to underline all examples of professional or formal language, and write down their informal counterparts, such as the expression "workforce reduction" and "firing people". Another example is "we remain grateful" and "thanks a lot". Feedback will take the form of peer feedback, where students work in pairs to check their answers together. Teacher will be ready to give advice and answer any questions in case of difficulties.

The first criterion for choosing these emails was that they contained the target language. Being professional business emails, they contain some very common phrases used in this type of discourse such as "thank you for your patience", "I am sorry to hear about…" and "it is with regret that we inform you…", which will be very useful to know when the students are working on their final assignment. Another important criterion was that the discourse in these emails is authentic - that is why two real examples of formal emails were chosen and found on the internet. Because of that, the names of the companies and participants had to be changed. Text was again analyzed using the online grading tool and explanations of more difficult words provided. The first email, Termination of Employment, was also shortened considerably in order to be made more concise and comprehensible for the students. The second email, Apology for Delayed Delivery, was slightly modified to better comply with the formal register.

The purpose of these emails is also to serve as a model for the students. As Harmer states, before wanting students to produce their own piece of writing in a specific genre, sufficient exposure to similar texts of that type should be provided (2008, 267).

Locating the formal expressions in the emails is a matter of comprehension and understanding, which is a lower level of Bloom's taxonomy. Providing informal variants of the formal

expression requires recalling the words from memory, which is also the low level of Bloom's taxonomy.

6.7 Activity 6

Objective: Students will be able to rewrite informal sentences into formal ones, applying the knowledge they have learned so far.

In this activity, the students obtain a list of informal sentences, and are to rewrite them using a formal register, similar to Activity 1, however this time they are creating their own sentences instead of matching pre-existing ones. In this exercise there is some room for creativity, as no two sentences that are produced by the students will likely be the same. Feedback will be provided by the teacher calling on the individual students to give their answers, multiple students can be asked to provide their unique answers. In case some grammatical or register mistake is particularly noticeable, the teacher can attempt to hint to the learner to correct themselves, or ask other students to give their correction.

The sentences chosen were created specifically for the purposes of this exercise, and thus are not authentic. They were formulated with some inspiration from Activity 1, and contain some functions such as apologizing and offering feedback that are likely to appear in professional correspondence, which gives the students the opportunity to practice their writing skills. The sentences were written in a very informal manner, sometimes being purposefully rude, so that the students have to think about how to make them more professional and polite, also giving them the chance to practice their negative politeness skills in the process.

In this exercise, the students have some creative freedom to apply the words and principles of formal register they have learned so far. That puts it on the third level of Bloom's taxonomy - application.

6.8 Activity 7

Objective: Students will understand the information in this infosheet and apply the knowledge in Activities 8-10.

This activity is very short, students merely receive a text containing information on the structure of formal emails, such as the Subject, Greeting, Opening line, Sign off, etc. They are given several examples of each, such as "I am writing with regard to…" or "I regret to inform you that…" being some examples of Opening lines. The students then move on to Activity 8.

The structure of the emails as well as the sample sentences were compiled from two different authentic websites, giving advice on how to write formal emails in a professional context.

6.9 Activity 8

Objective: Students will be able to compare two emails and judge how well they meet the instructions, by highlighting mistakes and assigning grades A-F. Students will be able to justify whether these emails use formal register correctly or not by having a discussion with their classmates and supporting their opinions with arguments.

In this activity, the students are provided with two emails, which are framed as two students' outcome of a writing assignment. Their task is to read the emails and mark any mistakes they might find. After doing that, they are asked to provide a final mark for each assignment, based on how well they think they did complying with the instructions. Afterwards, they are asked to discuss the grades assigned in pairs. Following this, a class wide discussion is launched in which students are invited to give their opinions. If the grades chosen differ widely, students are invited to debate the topic, providing reasons for why their position is correct.

The two emails originated as two pieces of authentic text, however they were modified heavily. The first email was composited using two different sample covered letters, shortened, and students' "errors" were included. The second email was almost entirely rewritten to contain heavy "mistakes" and serve as the "bad example" of a students' assignment.

This task is designed to encourage students' higher level thinking of evaluation in Bloom's taxonomy. By first identifying the mistakes in both emails, comparing them and grading them, and then explaining their opinions and justifying them, the students are activating their higher level thinking.

6.10 Activity 9

Objective: Students will be able to design a set of criteria for evaluating a written assignment dealing with formal emails.

In this activity, the students are asked to work in pairs, to design a set of criteria for evaluating an assignment of writing a formal email, similar to Activity 8. After some time, the pairs are merged into groups of 4, and asked to pick only five criteria they find the most salient. A class wide discussion is then launched, in which the teacher helps students to pick five criteria which they all agree are the most important. It should be noted that the teacher should also use his or her judgment, and make sure the criteria are reasonable and fit with the objective of Activity 11. After the students have decided, the teacher writes the top five criteria on the whiteboard, using them as a guideline in Activity 10 and 11. These criteria will also be used to evaluate the final assignment in Activity 11.

It is important to note that allowing students to play a role in deciding on the evaluation criteria will encourage their learner autonomy, which might lead to a positive classroom environment and higher motivation of the students, as was already mentioned above. However, the teacher should still be there to make sure everything is going smoothly and rules of conduct are being followed. The activity should inspire some level of debate, but should not be allowed to get out of hand. If some important criterion is missing (such as the level of formality), the teacher can add it to the list. At the same time, if there is a criterion that was not expected and is not assumed to be important by the teacher, he or she can start a debate with the students on why they think it is important, and respond to their opinions. In general, all interaction should be kept respectful and positive.

This activity aims at the highest levels of Blooms' taxonomy, evaluation and creation. Applying everything they have learned so far about degrees of formality and structure and genre of professional emails, the students design their own set of criteria. They are then invited to debate it and justify it to other students, providing reasons for their choice and deciding which criteria are the best. Not only does this activity exercise their cognitive skills, it's also an opportunity to work on their soft skills of debating and cooperating with others.

6.11 Activity 10

Objective: Students will be able to implement the criteria they created as well as their overall knowledge of formal register by rewriting Email 2 from Activity 8 from informal to formal register.

In this activity, the students rewrite Email 2 from Activity 8. It is assumed that at first the students assigned this email significantly lower grade, and thus are now asked to rewrite it in order to be graded A in their opinion, using the criteria they created. They are given 20 minutes to write and after that, the teacher collects the assignments and provides written feedback for the students. The teacher should highlight what the students did right, as well as any potential mistakes.

This activity serves as preparation for the final assignment. It provides significant room for creativity for the students, but also offers some guidelines. Because the students are writing their original work, using the previous email mostly only as an inspiration, it is placed on the create level of Bloom's taxonomy.

6.12 Activity 11

Objective: Students will be able to write a professional apology email in a formal register in the length of 140-190 words, meeting the criteria which were previously agreed upon.

In Activity 11, students are given the task of writing a professional email, complying with the instructions and criteria agreed upon in Activity 9. They can choose from two different prompts, either writing an apology to their boss apologizing for not being able to meet the deadline, or

working in customer service and writing an apology in response to customers' complaint. While working, the students will have available to them the list of criteria that were jointly agreed upon in Activity 9. During the assignment, dictionaries will not be allowed as students should demonstrate their own productive vocabulary. The reason for choosing the format of the assignment to be hand written is to minimize the possibility of students going around the rules and relying on outside help (such as using an online dictionary, using tools such as Grammarly, etc.). The aim is for the students to create with what they know and find strategies to compensate for the gaps in their vocabulary. However, in case any students have special needs such as dyslexia, they will be allowed to type on their notebook or have the requirements otherwise adjusted to accommodate their special needs. During the activity, the teacher should monitor the students and make sure all the rules of conduct are being followed. Afterwards, the teacher collects the assignments and grades them using the criteria. This should provide the feeling of fairness to the students, as they knew well beforehand what they will be graded on and designed the criteria themselves.

The length of the assignment was chosen based on the FCE (B2) exam, which is 140-190 words. In the FCE exam, the students have 1 hour and 20 minutes to complete two assignments, so the time limit was chosen to be 45 minutes, or the full lesson, which should be sufficient time.

This activity also engages the highest level of Bloom's taxonomy, because the students are required to produce their own creative piece of writing.

6.13 Activity 12

Objective: Students will be able to evaluate the work of their classmates based on the criteria previously agreed upon and prove this by giving feedback to their classmates and discussing their assignment with them.

The last activity is a feedback session for the previous assignment. The students are first paired off, and reach each other's assignment. They are then asked to correct the assignment based on what they think is correct and provide feedback for their classmate. Afterwards, the teacher then

hands out the assignments which contain feedback and grade from the teacher, and is available to discuss any questions.

As was already discussed, peer feedback is a very useful tool, good for fostering a positive learning environment and teaching students the value of cooperation. It also makes the job of the teacher easier. It is almost impossible to give one on one feedback to 15 students, so by pairing them up and making them give feedback to each other, the whole process becomes much more efficient. This approach has its advantages not only for the teacher, but for the students too. First, by evaluating the work of a classmate and comparing it against the list of criteria, the students will exercise their critical thinking. Second, by having a feedback conversation with each other, every student gets personalized feedback, which the teacher would not have the time to give to everyone. This conversation provides yet more opportunity to use L2 in the classroom.

 A question arises whether the students should also give grades to each other. However, the common experience is that the students go to great lengths to give each other a good grade rather than an honest grade because of the solidarity they have with one another. It is therefore our opinion that the teacher should grade the work, trying to be as objective as possible, using the criteria that were agreed upon in advance.

This activity falls into the evaluate level of Bloom's taxonomy. By critically evaluating the work of their colleagues, the students exercise their higher cognitive skills.

7. Set B Culture and Politeness

7.1 Overview and objectives

Set B consists of seven activities and focuses on the areas of culture, politeness, dialect and accent. Its objectives are as follows:

There are several different objectives for this set:

- Students will be able to understand and explain the meanings and interpretations of some famous idioms and proverbs from different countries.
- Students will be able to identify which commonly used words are part of British and which are part of American English.
- After listening to a 30-40 second sample of a speaker with a distinct accent, the students will be able to identify their national origin.
- Students will be able to discuss their personal opinions and views on accents.
- Students will be able to discuss major differences between British, American and Czech norms of politeness.
- Students will be able to express their own opinions on cultural differences between Americans and Czechs in writing.

7.2 Activity 1

Objective: Students will be able to explain the meanings and interpretations of some famous idioms, slang words and proverbs from different countries.

In this activity, the students take a Kahoot quiz, which asks students to take a guess at some funny idioms and expressions, and see if they can interpret their meaning correctly. They might also already know some of them. The purpose of this quiz is to foster a relaxed and fun learning atmosphere. After answering each question, the correct answer is shown together with an explanation and example of each expression used in a sentence. This encourages the students to learn passively by learning interesting new facts. Feedback on whether the right or wrong answer was chosen is provided instantaneously to the students by the app. After the activity is finished, the teacher calls on volunteers to give some expressions that surprise the students, or which they found the most interesting.

As is often recommended, the main purpose of the first activity is to get students interested and engaged with the topic. That is the reason why a Kahoot quiz was chosen as its format. Kahoot is not only fun, but interactive, and gets students engaged by allowing them to show some healthy competitiveness.

The point is not to make students remember every single saying, but rather focus on ones which they personally found interesting. It is important to get the students thinking about cultural differences, and possible reasons why some sayings are popular in one area and not in another. Free online idiom dictionary was used in providing explanations and definitions for the phrases.

This set once again begins at low levels of Bloom's taxonomy, on the levels of knowledge and understanding. By getting the students to talk about the idioms they found interesting, it helps them process the new information.

7.3 Activity 2

Objective: Students will be able to identify which expressions are part of British and which are part of American English by grouping them into pairs based on their meaning.

In Activity 2, students work in pairs to sort out words written on slips of paper into two columns - British and American, and also put the words with the same meanings in the same row (for instance fall - autumn). After this activity is finished, the teacher asks each group to read one pair of words. Based on this, all students are able to correct their exercise.

The main criterion for choosing the words for this activity was that the words should be useful and commonly used in the target country, and not have meanings that are too specific or situational. It is assumed that at least one variant of the words is already known to the students. The most important thing is to get them to increase their knowledge about the words, their sociolinguistic implications.

Pairwork was chosen because of the need of teenagers to work together in groups and cooperate, as was mentioned in the section on teaching adolescents. Another reason is that each of the students may have different experiences with the language and know different words, making each pair more successful in the activity than if they worked alone. The role of the teacher is to monitor the activity, make sure students stay on task and keep using L2 and offer help or hints if necessary.

This activity remains on the same level of Bloom's taxonomy as the previous one.

7.4 Activity 3

Objective: After listening to 30-40 second audio samples, the students will be able to identify the national origin of the speakers based on their pronunciation.
Students will be able to give their opinion on different accents, which they like the best, which is the hardest to understand, and whether there might be some prejudice against a speaker with a "foreign" accent.

In this activity, students work in groups of three or four. Each group gets a set of flags (Indian, American, Scottish, British and Australian). After playing each sample, the teacher leaves a small room for discussion among the group. He or she then counts to three and every group reveals their flag simultaneously. If there is a positive learning environment and the learners are interested, this can take the form of a competition. Each group chooses their name and gets one point for every correct answer. This could be a fun game activity for the students. After the listening is finished, students are paired off and asked to discuss following questions:

"Which accent did you have the hardest time understanding?"
"Which accent did you like the best?"
"Do you think people are sometimes judged based on their accent?"

After the students have had some time to discuss, the teacher organizes a feedback session. First, the teacher asks about all five accents, asking:"Who liked the best… the X accent?" And students raise hands based on their opinion. Next, the teacher asks volunteers to give their

opinion on which accent did they have the hardest time understanding. Finally, students give opinions regarding possible prejudice against "non-native" accents, the teacher can also keep the discussion going by asking how the Czech accent might be perceived by the outsiders.

The success of this activity is not guaranteed. It depends quite a bit on the proficiency of the students and their previous exposure to different regional varieties of language. However, whenever possible, very distinct accents have been chosen, to make this activity as simple as possible.

This activity is authentic, meaning the speakers are using the language naturally and do not make any adjustment for learners. The main criterion for choosing these samples was the prominence of the accents, the meaning was considered secondary. This is slightly different from regular listening exercises, where the main purpose is to understand the meaning of what the speaker is saying. In this exercise, the listening for meaning is secondary, and the main aim is to listen for different phonological features that make up any particular accent, so that the origin of the speaker could be identified. The specific timing of the samples was chosen in such a way that some very prominent phonological features are present (such as the distinct Indian "r" pronunciation) which should give the students as many clues as possible.

British, American, Australian, Indian and Scottish accents were chosen for the sample. The first two were picked because they are most widespread and students are likely to already have some degree of familiarity with them. Australian and Scottish accents were chosen for their high distinctiveness, being relatively easy to identify. Lastly, the Indian accent was added in order to add some diversity and not make the exercise exclusionary to the so-called native speakers. Each accent features two samples, so that the students have the opportunity to learn from their mistakes.

The post-listening discussion is the productive communicative task of this activity. Students are first paired off to be given maximum speaking time, but then some opinions can be heard class-wide, to give some conclusion to the activity, and allow the teacher to react to the content of what the students are saying. During this activity, the teacher monitors the students, reminding

them to use L2 if necessary, or offering help if requested. As it is aimed at fluency, the teacher should not correct students' mistakes.

This activity is challenging to place on Bloom's taxonomy. It might be the level of "knowledge" in case the students are already familiar with the accent, or the level of "application" in case the students notice distinct phonological features and apply them in new situations. The debate is on the evaluate level of Bloom's taxonomy, as students are invited to give their opinions, support them with reasons, and justify their stance to their classmates.

7.5 Activity 4

Objective: Students will be able to correctly answer a set of comprehension questions about Brits and Americans based on their reading. Students will be able to respond to information provided in the text by talking about their own opinions and experiences.

In this activity, students read a text called How Brits and Americans See Each Other. Before the reading, the students are paired off into groups, shown the title and asked to make predictions about the content of the article. Next, they are given some adjectives from the article, such as arrogant, ambitious, competitive, pushy, overpowering, stuffy, snotty, loud and are asked to connect them to Brits or Americans. Finally, they are asked to read the first part and see if their predictions were right. Next, they are asked to find the numbers 55, 39, 20, 76 and 32 and write down what they refer to. Finally, they are asked to read the article in detail and answer the comprehension questions. This text discusses different cultural perspectives of politeness, and what difficulties Brits and Americans face when interacting with each other. After finishing this task, the students are then asked to discuss the answers in pairs. After that, the teacher calls on the groups to give their answers which the teacher writes on the board in the form of F or T for each question. Afterwards the students are invited to discuss their opinions in pairs, whether they think what they read in the article is true or whether they might have some different experience, as well as how they think a Czech person would be viewed by a Brit or American.

Pre-task was chosen to activate students' schemata and help with comprehension, as well as raise their curiosity and get them discussing different possibilities. First task was chosen to look for

specific information, in this case numbers, which will improve students' reading skills. Next, they are reading for detailed comprehension and answering comprehension questions. Post-reading activity is using the information they read about in a debate and comparing it with their own experiences.

An authentic text was chosen and modified to fit the students' needs. It was shortened considerably and definitions for more difficult words were provided. The main criterion for choosing this article is that it deals with the topics of cultural differences and politeness norms, thus being relevant to developing students' sociolinguistic competence.

On Blooms' taxonomy, reading the text and answering the questions is on the level of comprehension. The second step of discussing the text is a productive activity which can engage students' higher level thinking on the evaluate level, such as comparing their own experiences with the new information gained from the text.

7.6 Activity 5

Objective: Students will be able to correctly answer questions aimed at listening for detailed understanding. Students will be able to discuss differences between British, American and Czech politeness.

Before starting this activity, the students are given a cartoon from the video and asked to predict what the video is going to be about. Afterwards, the students watch a video of two speakers, one British and one American discussing different norms of politeness in the UK and the US. As they listen, they are asked to answer a set of comprehension questions. After that, students are asked to discuss their answers in pairs. Teacher then calls on each group to give their answer. After that, the students are asked to discuss their thoughts on the video, whether they think it is true, whether they have some personal experience with the British or Americans, and how the cultural norms which were discussed in the video may differ from norms in the Czech Republic.

It is important to note that Activities 4 and 5 should not be done together, as they deal with a similar subject and students could get bored of the same topic.

Pre-task was chosen to activate students' schemata, as well as potentially get them interested in the topic. The input chosen for this activity is again authentic, even though the event seems to be somewhat staged for the purposes of the channel. It does not appear to be scripted however and seems to contain genuine discourse. One parameter of the video which is not ideal is that it contains subtitles that cannot be turned off, which arguably makes it a mix of listening and reading activity. However, this feature at least should make it relatively simple for the students to understand, meaning the sample does not have to be played multiple times. The advantage of the subtitles is that it makes it easier to focus on the content, or the information provided, rather than listening skills and strategies.

The first task of answering comprehension questions is on the knowledge and comprehension level of Bloom taxonomy. The second productive task is asking the students to apply the knowledge they have gained to compare it with the customs of the Czech Republic and draw some parallels and differences.

7.7 Activity 6

Objective: Students will be able to compare different norms of politeness in the Czech Republic and the USA.

Before doing this activity, the students are asked to close their eyes, and picture an average American. What do they look like? How do they behave? Some volunteers are then asked to describe their different ideas. After that, they listen to an American woman describing cultural differences between Czechs and Americans she has noticed after living in the Czech Republic for ten years. While they are listening, they are asked to take notes on what she says about several different areas, such as smiles, sense of humor, and customer service. The students can use these notes for the next step, which is a debate. The students are then asked three questions:"Do you agree with Jen? What do you think she got right? What do you think she got wrong?" "Who do you think is more polite, Czechs or Americans?" and "What do you think is considered impolite in the Czech Republic?" The students are then asked to discuss their opinions in pairs and then with the whole classroom. The role of the teacher is mostly to moderate the discussion and make

sure students remain on task. Feedback should be provided by responding to what the students are saying, rather than correcting their grammar mistakes too much. If some mistake is repeatedly made, the teacher can make a note of it and correct it later anonymously with all the students on the whiteboard. After the discussion has taken place, the students are then asked to react to the content they heard by a) writing a comment underneath Jen's video or b) writing an email to Jen about her video. The writing should be of the length of at least A5 page. The teacher then collects the work of students and provides some written feedback next session.

As with previous Activities 5 and 6, the teacher should refrain from clumping too many of them together, as this may cause boredom with the same topic on the students' part.

Pre-task was chosen in order to activate students' schemata and increase their comprehension. Authentic video was chosen for this activity. It contains the option to turn on the subtitles if the students struggle with the understanding too much. However the speaker talks very clearly, and slowly, and not many complex words are present in the text, so it should be highly comprehensible to the upper-intermediate students.

The purpose of the note-taking is to help students pay better attention to the content and to the information being presented, pick out the key words, as well as use them to potentially remember some areas they might want to give their opinion on. The discussion is productive activity.

The levels targeted on Bloom's taxonomy are the evaluate and create levels. In the first post-listening speaking activity, the students should be able to criticize the opinions stated in the video, compare the information presented with their own experience, give their own ideas and defend them. In the second post-listening writing activity, the students will be able to write their own comment or email reacting to the content in any way they want.

7.8 Activity 7

Objective: Students will be able to create their own dialogues, highlighting cultural differences between different countries.

Activity 7 is a hybrid between roleplay and drama activity. Students work in groups and they are asked to come up with a specific cultural dialogue. Some prompts are offered by the teacher, such as "Czechs and Americans debate who has better beer" or "Americans and Brits discuss their eating habits and who has better cuisine", but students are more than welcome to come up with their own ideas, which should encourage learners' autonomy. After being given some time to prepare, the students are asked to act out the dialogues in front of the class. Their classmates are then asked to give peer feedback by rating and evaluating each scene.

This activity requires several considerations on the teachers' part. Firstly, if the students are not proficient enough to come up with more elaborate scenes, a more simple prompt can be given. Second, if the students are insecure or shy, they should by no means be forced to perform the scene in front of the class. They can remain seated on their chairs which could decrease the anxiety level. And thirdly, it is up to the judgment of the teacher whether peer evaluation is good for this particular group of students. On one hand, if there is a positive learning environment and good relationships between the students, it could be great fun, and make the students in the role of spectators more engaged. On the other hand, if there is any negativity between the students, or if the students are very insecure and shy, this should be avoided. Each group of students is different and it is part of the job of the teacher to personalize the content and methods used.

This activity could be fun for the students, because it gives them room for creativity and to come up with funny and interesting ideas. The tone of the feedback should be kept light and positive.

This activity engages the highest level of Bloom's taxonomy, the create level. By applying everything the students have learned so far about Americans and Brits, they can then add their own ideas and create something new.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this thesis was to examine different ways in which sociolinguistic competence can be developed in the upper secondary learners in the context of the Czech educational system. Two sets of activities were proposed, one dealing with register and degrees of formality, and the second addressing dialect, accent and cultural norms of politeness. Some idioms and expressions of folk wisdom were also included. Thus, these activities cover the whole range of what was discussed in the theoretical part. These activities target all the language skills - writing, listening, speaking and reading, targeting not only sociolinguistic competence but having significant overlap with linguistic and pragmatic competence as well. They aim not only to provide sociolinguistic knowledge, but also to increase students' overall proficiency and communicative abilities.

In Set A, students were introduced to new formal vocabulary which is essential in order to be able to use more formal registers. These words and phrases were chosen for their potential usefulness to the students in their future endeavors, be it academic or professional. It is believed that equipping students with the ability to express themselves professionally and appropriately in the right context will not only increase their sociolinguistic competence, but also help them be more successful in their chosen field.

In Set B, students were able to learn about and discuss different cultural norms regarding politeness, as well as becoming better at spotting phonological and lexical features which hint at the speaker's national origin. This should increase their sociolinguistic competence by knowing which norms of politeness are appropriate to use in each culture, which might potentially help prevent cultural misunderstanding or unintentional offense while traveling, studying or working abroad, or merely interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds. After going through this set, the students should be better equipped on how to interact with Americans and British and understand the nuances in politeness conventions in each country.

These activities are not meant to replace the standard ELT curriculum, but rather enrich it and supplement it. It might break the monotony of the class by disrupting the standard grammar drills and textbook exercises by having an interesting debate about different cultures, or taking an

interactive quiz. Thus, it is recommended to intersperse these activities between regularly scheduled lessons, in order to gradually build students' sociolinguistic competence, as well as the other competences. By doing so, the students will be equipped with new sociocultural knowledge which will be useful to them in their regular lives and interactions outside the classroom, as well as continue to progress towards the target CEFR B2 level.

RESUMÉ

Tato práce pojednává o možnostech rozvoje sociolingvistické kompetence u žáků středních škol, přesněji gymnázií. Toto téma bylo zvoleno proto, že v mnohých českých školách se často stává, že je důraz kladen pouze na gramatickou kompetenci a druhé dvě kompetence, tj. pragmatická a sociolingvistická jsou mnohdy opomíjeny. Cílem práce je proto vytvořit a popsat dva soubory aktivit, které jsou určené pro rozvoj sociolingvistické kompetence u žáků středních škol.

Práce je rozdělena na teoretickou a praktickou část. Teoretická část se skládá ze tří kapitol. První kapitola pojednává detailně o sociolingvistické kompetenci. Začíná stručným historickým přehledem vývoje konceptu komunikační kompetence a popisem CEFR modelu komunikační kompetence, kde nalezneme i sociolingvistickou kompetenci. Kapitola pokračuje krátkým představením sociolingvistiky a hlavně konceptu jazykové variace, jednak podle kontextu, tak podle identity uživatele jazyka. Umění vhodně zvolit variantu jazyka pro daný kontext a zároveň umět porozumět různým jazykovým variantám a jejich sociálním implikacím je klíčový aspekt sociolingvistické kompetence. Každá oblast sociolingvistické kompetence je detailně popsána. Jedná se o teorii zdvořilosti, pozitivní a negativní zdvořilost, pozitivní a negativní tvář, a různé kulturní normy zdvořilosti. Dále jsou popsány různé styly jazyka, podle stupňů formálnosti od intimní, přes neutrální po formální a různé kategorie odbornosti textu. Byly popsány faktory, které které ovlivňují zvolený styl jako vztahy mezi participanty, kontext a oblast činnosti. Poslední část první kapitoly pojednává o dialektu a akcentu, a obtížích, které potkávají sociolingvisty, když se snaží tyto pojmy definovat.

Druhá kapitola se zaměřuje na studenty středních škol a definuje vzdělávací cíle v oblasti cizího jazyka v rámci Rámcového Vzdělávacího Programu pro Gymnázia (RVP G). Také popisuje vzdělávací cíle ohledně sociolingvistické kompetence tak, jak jsou popsány v CEFRu. Druhá část druhé kapitoly pojednává o všeobecných didaktických principech, kterými je dobré se řídit, když učíme studenty dospívajícího věku. Zabývá se takovými tématy jako například jak si zjednat přirozenou autoritu, jak vytvářet pozitivní klima ve třídě a na co si dávat pozor u této věkové skupiny.

Třetí kapitola popisuje, jak se dá sociolingvistická kompetence zakomponovat při výuce produktivních a receptivních dovedností v anglickém jazyce, a také všeobecné zásady při učení jazykových dovedností, které je vhodné mít na paměti vždy když učíme angličtinu jako cizí jazyk. Jsou to principy jako například zařadit před-aktivitu před receptivní dovednosti aby se aktivovaly schémata studentů, nebo před produktivní aktivitou zařadit procvičování jazykových prvků, které chceme, aby studenti použili. Při poslechu a čtení můžeme zařadit sociolingvistickou kompetenci poskytnutím různých textů, které budou zahrnovat mluvčí z různých oblastí, společenských vrstev, a kteří hovoří různě formálně. Při produktivních dovednostech můžeme obohatit aktivitu o sociální dimenzi například specifikováním vztahů mezi účastníky, které mohou vyžadovat různou míru zdvořilosti a formality.

Kapitolou čtyři začíná praktická část práce. V této kapitole nalezneme podrobný přehled plánování hodin. Pojednává o specifických dílčích cílech, obecných cílech a všeobecné vzdělávacích cílech. Všeobecné vzdělávací cíle v českém kontextu nalezneme v Rámcovém Vzdělávacím Programu a CEFRu a již byly popsány v kapitole tři. Specifické dílčí cíle je nutné formulovat pro každou hodinu či aktivitu. Důležité pro formulaci dílčích cílů je, aby byly formulovány z pohledu studentů (co budou studenti umět po skončení dané aktivity) a aby byly co nejvíc specifické a dosažitelné. Užitečný nástroj pro plánování hodin je Bloomova taxonomie, která rozděluje kognitivní procesy žáků do šesti různých hladin. Tak pomáhá učitelům identifikovat, do které hladiny spadá jejich zamýšlená aktivita, a mířit od jednodušších procesů k těm komplexnějším, stejně tak jako zařazovat více aktivit z vyšších hladin, které pomohou studentům rozvíjet jejich kritické myšlení. V kapitole o plánování hodin také najdeme odstavec o podávání zpětné vazby, rolích učitele, organizačních formách a různých způsobech řazení aktivit.

Kapitola pět pojednává o hlavních digitálních nástrojích, které byly použity při tvorbě materiálů. Veškeré ostatní zdroje, zejména autentických materiálů a definicí slov, jsou uvedeny v plánech a na každém pracovním listě.

V šesté kapitole nalezneme popis prvního setu aktivit. Tento set se skládá ze dvanácti různých aktivit, a jeho cílem je seznámit studenty s rozdíly mezi formálním a neformálním stylem, a naučit je psát profesionální emaily ve formálním stylu. Aktivity jsou seřazeny sekvenčně, od

nejjednodušší po nejvíce komplexní. Také se obecně postupuje od receptivních dovedností po produktivní. Řazení aktivit se také řídí Harmerovým schématem ESA, které navrhuje začít sekvenci nějakou zajímavou aktivitou, která zaujme pozornost studentů a probudí jejich zájem o dané téma, pokračovat aktivitami které poskytují studentům příležitost procvičovat si cílový jazyk v uzavřených cvičeních, a nakonec se přesunout na produktivní (aktivní) aktivity, kde studenti mohou sami používat všechen jazyk, co mají k dispozici, aby splnili určitý komunikační cíl. V prvním setu je tento komunikační cíl napsat formální profesionální email o délce 140-190 slov na dané téma.

V sedmé kapitole je představen druhý set aktivit. V tomto setu nalezneme sedm aktivit, jehož cílem je seznámit studentu s různými dialekty, akcenty, a také kulturními normami zdvořilosti. Aktivity není nutné implementovat v pořadí, v jakém se objevují v příloze. V tomto setu se objevuje mnoho produktivních komunikačních aktivit, kde mají studenti prostor vyjádřit svůj názor a zkušenosti. Často například reagují na video diskuzí, nebo po poslechu napíšou vlastní reakci. Studenti mají prostor uvažovat nad takovými tématy jako jsou předsudky vůči lidem co nemají "rodilý" přízvuk, různé kulturní zvyklosti v Británii, Americe a České Republice, a také různými příslovími a idiomy z různých koutů světa.

V závěru jsou shrnuty cíle a jejich splnění. Cílem práce je prozkoumat různé možnosti rozvoje sociolingvistické kompetence u studentů střední školy, což bylo splněno v praktické části za pomocí předložených plánů aktivit. Těmito aktivitami mohou studenti rozvinout svou schopnost používat formální registr, zdvořilostní normy a poznávat různé dialekty a idiomy, což pokrývá oblasti sociolingvistické kompetence. Aktivity byly navrhovány pro cílovou skupinu teenagerů, a proto byly zařazeny takové materiály a aktivity, které by je mohly zaujmout, jako video na TikToku, kvíz na Kahootu, nebo psaní komentářů na internetu. Úroveň autentických materiálů byla co nejvíce přizpůsobena předpokládané úrovni studentů, tj. B2, a vybrané organizační formy a způsoby poskytování zpětné vazby také byly co nejvíce přizpůsobeny všeobecným preferencím této věkové skupiny. Celkově by tedy tyto dva soubory aktivit mohly obohatit výuku angličtiny na středních školách zajímavou formou o sociolingvistickou kompetenci, která je tak často odsunována do pozadí.

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APPENDIX

Activity	Material and aids	Time	Interaction patterns	Objectives	Link(s) to CEFR
1. How do professionals say....? In this activity, students first watch a TikTok, in which a woman first says an informal sentence, such as "I am getting underpaid for all the work I'm doing", and then says the same sentence as if it was written in a formal email, such as "My salary does not accurately reflect my current role and responsibilities." After that, they fill in a worksheet that contains 6 formal sentences and their informal counterpants. The students are to decide which sentence is formal, which is informal and match sentences expressing similar meaning. Dictionary is also included for the more difficult wods.	- PC - worksheet - TikTok sources: https://www.tiktok.com/@loewhaley/video/7237101772395826437 https://www.tiktok.com/@loewhaley/video/7226699124257623301 https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/	7 min	individual work, T-S	Students will be able to identify which sentences are formal and prove this by writing (F) or (I) next to the sentences. The students will be able to recognize which sentences express similar meanings and prove this by matching them into pairs. Feedback: - the teacher calls on individual students to give their answers and confirms correct answers.	p. 120 "register differences" "The term 'register' is used to refer to systematic differences between varieties of language used in different contexts." "• formal, e.g. May we now come to order, please. • neutral, e.g. Shall we begin? • informal, e.g. Right. What about making a start?" (CEFR 2001, 120) p. 122 "Can express him or herself confidently, clearly and politely in a formal or informal register, appropriate to the situation and person(s) concerned." (CEFR 2001, 122)

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REGISTER
formal x informal

The level and style of a piece of writing or speech, that is usually appropriate to the situation that it is used in.

1. Decide which sentences are formal (F) and which are informal (I).
2. Match sentences expressing similar meanings.

1. I appreciate you sharing that feedback and I will keep it in mind as we move forward.

2. I am getting underpaid for all the work I'm doing.

3. My calendar has become consumed with meetings and the work you are assigning me requires greater time investment than I have within my working hours.

4. If you book me in meetings all day, when do you expect to get this work done?

6. There is work I need to prioritize during that time but should my input be essential to the discussion, I will be reachable through Teams.

5. To ensure we are setting realistic timelines, let's break down our milestones to create a more detailed picture of what this project will look like.

7. I can't do my job with you watching over everything I do.

9. It's not possible to finish the work in this limited time, you need to adjust your expectations.

11. Regardless of what you say I'm gonna do it this way.

12. I'm not attending the meeting because it's a waste of my time.

10. My salary does not accurately reflect my current role and responsibilities and I would like to understand the process of reviewing my total compensation.

8. This work could be completed more efficiently if I had the opportunity to work more independently.

Dictionary
www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com

underpaid = not paid enough

compensation = money that an employee receives for doing their job

assign = to give somebody some work or responsibility

milestone = a very important stage or event in the development of something

prioritize = to put tasks, problems, etc. in order of importance, so that you can deal with the most important first

feedback = advice, criticism or information about how good or useful something or somebody's work is

Activity	Material and aids	Time	Interaction patterns	Objectives	Link(s) to CEFR
2. Formal or informal? Students get two lists of words - one formal and one informal. Their task is to match the formal words to their informal counterparts.	- worksheet source: https://www.lessonsfor english.com/speaking/ 160-informal-and-form al-words-list-in-english/ Some words were selected from this list, others were added based on their usefulness for upcoming activities.	4 min	individual work, T-S	Students will be able to understand the meaning of certain formal and informal words and prove this understanding by matching the words with corresponding meanings together. Feedback: - teacher calls on individual students to provide the correct answers.	p. 120 "register differences" "The term 'register' is used to refer to systematic differences between varieties of language used in different contexts." "• formal, e.g. May we now come to order, please. • neutral, e.g. Shall we begin? • informal, e.g. Right. What about making a start?" (CEFR 2001, 120)
3. Using formal words in context. Students will complete a set of sentences using formal words from the previous activity.	- worksheet source: https://sentencedict.c om/	5 min	individual work, T-S	Students will be able to use the words from the previous exercise in context, proving their understanding of the words. Feedback: - teacher calls on individual students to provide the correct answers.	p. 122 "Can express him or herself confidently, clearly and politely in a formal or informal register, appropriate to the situation and person(s) concerned." (CEFR 2001, 122)

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1. Match formal words to informal (neutral) ones.

FORMAL	INFORMAL
inquire	check
purchase	help
demonstrate	talk
opportunity	buy
reimbursement	get
acquire	show
terminate	ask
assistance	chance
comply	fix
examine	obey
communication	refund
apologize	improve
solution	end
determine	decide
enhance	say sorry

2. Complete sentences with <u>formal</u> words from the previous exercise.

a) He received _____ for his travel expenses.

b) I rang up to _____ about train times.

c) The factory was closed for failing to _____ with government safety regulations.

d) Getting the right qualifications will _____ your employment prospects.

e) We _____ for any inconvenience caused during the repairs.

f) The company needs more financial _____ from the Government.

g) There's no simple _____ to this problem.

h) It was decided the school should _____ new software.

i) Present decisions will _____ the future of the company.

j) Thank you for giving me the _____ to begin my career in the NBA.

k) You have no right to _____ the contract.

Activity	Material and aids	Time	Interaction patterns	Objectives	Link(s) to CEFR
4. Formal and informal conversations In this short exercise, the students read seven different conversations and decide whether they are formal or informal and what is the likely setting and relationship between participants.	- worksheet source for the courtroom conversation: http://www.lacourtreporterboard.org/pdfs/Court_Transcript_Format.pdf	5 min	individual work	Students will be able to recognize which conversations are formal and which are informal, proving their understanding by writing (F) or (I) next to the conversations. Students will be able to identify likely relationships between participants using markers of social relations as their guide, and prove this by writing down their answers and discussing them. Feedback: - the teacher calls on individual students to give their answers and confirms correct answers.	p. 120 "register differences" "The term 'register' is used to refer to systematic differences between varieties of language used in different contexts." "• formal, e.g. May we now come to order, please. • neutral, e.g. Shall we begin? • informal, e.g. Right. What about making a start?" (CEFR 2001, 120) p. 122 "Can express him or herself confidently, clearly and politely in a formal or informal register, appropriate to the situation and person(s) concerned." (CEFR 2001, 122)

Read the following conversations. Decide whether they are formal (F) or informal (I). Where do you think each conversation takes place? Who are the participants?

1.

Hey man, do you wanna hang out later?

Sure!

2.

It is my pleasure to invite you to a social gathering which takes place on February the 3rd.

3.

Good morning, Mrs. Brown.

Good morning, Jen. Can I talk to you for a minute?

4.

Please have a seat, Mr. White. Your results just came back, and I'm afraid I have some bad news for you.

Oh my god, what is it doc?

5.

Your Honor, I'm going to object. I don't think it's relevant who did the physical detention of the defendant.

I will permit it. I will overrule. Would it refresh your recollection, Officer, if you reviewed the police report?

http://www.lacourtreporterboard.org/
pdfs/Court_Transcript_Format.pdf

6.

Hey there, beautiful.
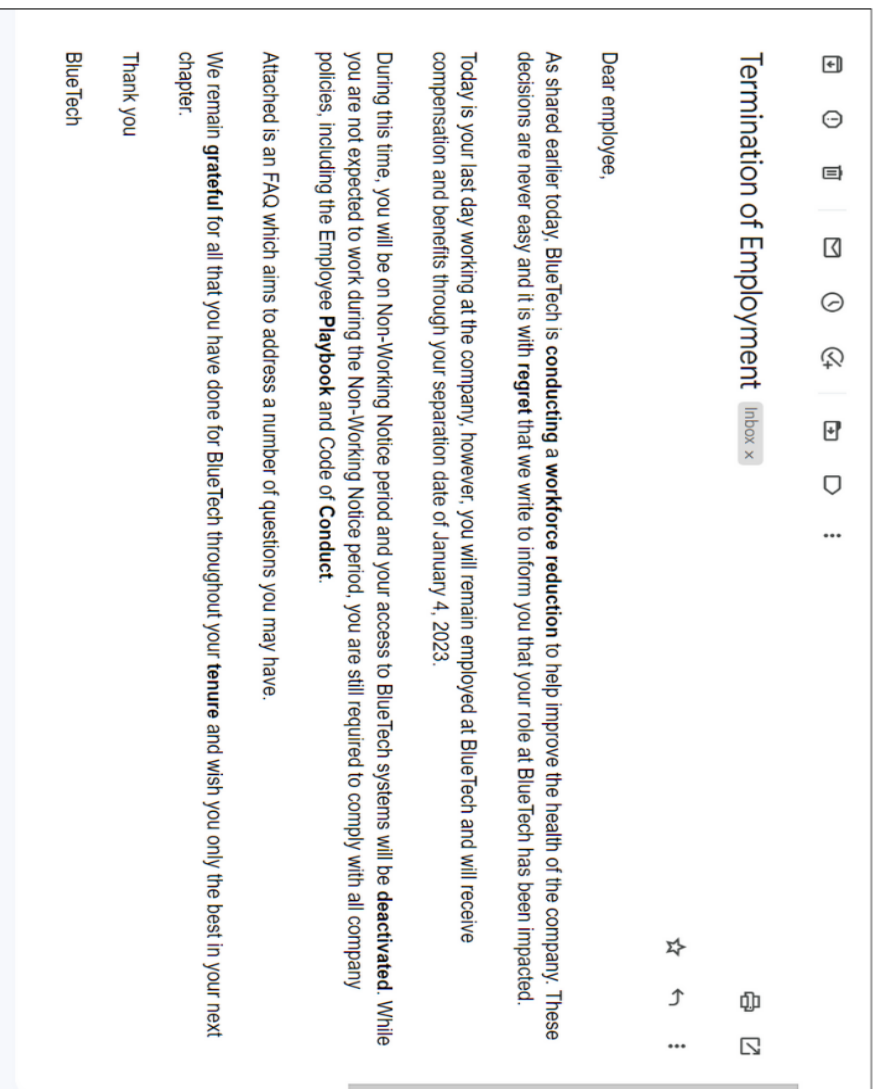
Get lost, creep.

Activity	Material and aids	Time	Interaction patterns	Objectives	Link(s) to CEFR
5. Reading: Formal emails In this activity, students read two formal emails and highlight all the expressions that indicate high degree of formality. They will passively learn the structure of the emails such as the greeting, opening line, body, closing line and sign-off, as well as some new formal expressions.	- worksheet sources: https://www.businessinsider.com/read-blunt-email-telling-twitter-staff-jobs-axed-layoffs-2022-11 https://lh5.googleusercontent.com/64ZcF70XNEjcfbaGV6iMpffQDxBIgShrex-syPp4JCrkLnEfqs0NTWmBst5YIQ-bekzUAyRaeN-TkgvV1jEWTV8iiF8-xipFrxXO-kW8IKEBDJI9x9PqB9nFXY7PYqyqHtYh6HDIy Both emails were modified, the names of the companies were changed to fictional ones and the text was modified to suit the level B2.	7 min	individual work, S-S	Students will be able to locate formal words and expressions in emails, and prove this by underlining them in the email. Feedback: - students work in pairs to check the answers together. Teacher monitors this work and makes sure they are on task and speaking L2. The teacher then asks if there were any questions or anything that wasn't clear.	p. 120 "register differences" "The term 'register' is used to refer to systematic differences between varieties of language used in different contexts." "• formal, e.g. May we now come to order, please. • neutral, e.g. Shall we begin? • informal, e.g. Right. What about making a start?" (CEFR 2001, 120) p. 122 "Can express him or herself confidently, clearly and politely in a formal or informal register, appropriate to the situation and person(s) concerned." (CEFR 2001, 122)

1. Read both emails. Underline all formal words and provide their informal counterparts.

2. Highlight all sentences or phrases that indicate high degree of formality.

Termination of Employment   Inbox ×

Dear employee,

As shared earlier today, BlueTech is **conducting** a **workforce reduction** to help improve the health of the company. These decisions are never easy and it is with **regret** that we write to inform you that your role at BlueTech has been impacted.

Today is your last day working at the company, however, you will remain employed at BlueTech and will receive compensation and benefits through your separation date of January 4, 2023.
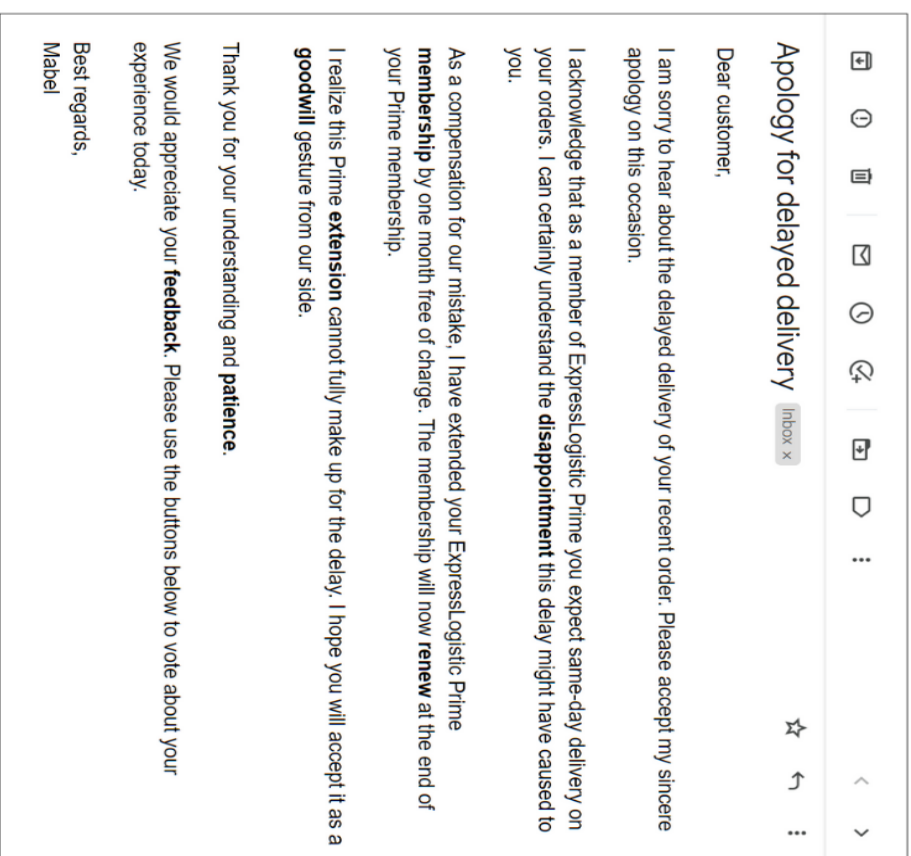
During this time, you will be on Non-Working Notice period and your access to BlueTech systems will be **deactivated**. While you are not expected to work during the Non-Working Notice period, you are still required to comply with all company policies, including the Employee **Playbook** and Code of **Conduct**.

Attached is an FAQ which aims to address a number of questions you may have.

We remain **grateful** for all that you have done for BlueTech throughout your **tenure** and wish you only the best in your next chapter.

Thank you

BlueTech

Apology for delayed delivery   Inbox ×

Dear customer,

I am sorry to hear about the delayed delivery of your recent order. Please accept my sincere apology on this occasion.

I acknowledge that as a member of ExpressLogistic Prime you expect same-day delivery on your orders. I can certainly understand the **disappointment** this delay might have caused to you.

As a compensation for our mistake, I have extended your ExpressLogistic Prime **membership** by one month free of charge. The membership will now **renew** at the end of your Prime membership.

I realize this Prime **extension** cannot fully make up for the delay. I hope you will accept it as a **goodwill** gesture from our side.

Thank you for your understanding and **patience**.

We would appreciate your **feedback**. Please use the buttons below to vote about your experience today.

Best regards,
Mabel

source:

https://www.businessinsider.com/read-blunt-email-telling-twitter-staff-jobs-axed-layoffs-2022-11
https://lh5.googleusercontent.com/64ZcF70XNEjcfbaGV6iMpffQDxBIgShrex-syPp4CrKLnEfqsONTWmBstSYIQ-bekzUAyRaeN-TkgvVjEWTV8iiF8-xipFrXO-kW8IKEBDJ9x9PqB9nFX7PYqyqHtYh6HDJy

Dictionary

to **conduct** - to organize and/or do a particular activity

workforce - all the people who work for a particular company, organization, etc.

reduction - an act of making something less or smaller; the state of being made less or smaller

to **regret** - to feel sorry about something you have done or about something that you have not been able to do

to **deactivate** - to make something such as a device stop working

playbook - a set of rules or way of doing something

conduct - to behave in a particular way

grateful - feeling or showing thanks because somebody has done something kind for you or has done as you asked

tenure - the period of time when somebody holds an important job

disappointment - the feeling of being sad because something has not happened or been as good, successful, etc. as you expected or hoped

to **renew** - to begin something again after it stopped or was interrupted

membership - the state of being a member of a group, a club, an organization, etc.

extension - the act of increasing the area of activity, group of people, etc. that is affected by something

goodwill - friendly or helpful feelings towards other people

patience - the ability to stay calm and accept a delay or something annoying without complaining

feedback - advice, criticism or information about how good or useful something or somebody's work is

Source: www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com

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Activity	Material and aids	Time	Interaction patterns	Objectives	Link(s) to CEFR
6. Writing: How would you professionally say? In this activity, the students get a list of 7 informal sentences and their task is to rewrite them to fit the formal register.	- worksheet	10 min	individual work, T-S	Students will be able to apply what they learned about formal register so far by changing informal sentences into formal ones. Feedback: - the teacher calls on individual students or volunteers to give their answers. If any grammatical or register mistakes appear, the other students are asked about what would be a more appropriate way of wording.	p. 120 "register differences" "The term 'register' is used to refer to systematic differences between varieties of language used in different contexts." "• formal, e.g. May we now come to order, please. • neutral, e.g. Shall we begin? • informal, e.g. Right. What about making a start?" (CEFR 2001, 120) p. 122 "Can express him or herself confidently, clearly and politely in a formal or informal register, appropriate to the situation and person(s) concerned." (CEFR 2001, 122)

Rewrite the following sentences in a professional manner:

1. That's really bad but I can't do anything about it.

2. Andrew, I am starting to get really angry about how you always show up late for work, don't make me fire you.

3. That's an awful idea, we have to do something else.

4. We're having a meeting at 9 AM tomorrow and you have to come.

5. I'm sorry I didn't come to the meeting, I got super drunk with my friends last night and was throwing up all morning.

6. Why are you complaining about our product being garbage, what did you expect for such a low price?

7. No, I'm not gonna be on my phone 24/7 while on my vacation, I am not your slave.

Activity	Material and aids	Time	Interaction patterns	Objectives
7. Formal email writing workshop In this activity, students get an infographic about the structure of formal emails and read it. This will help guide them in the next activities.	- worksheet sources: https://www.wallstreetenglish.com/blog/how-to-write-formal-emails-in-english https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/format-for-formal-email	3 min	Individual work	Students will be able to apply the knowledge from this infosheet in Activities 8-10, by: - correctly identifying the missing structural elements in Email 2 - rewriting the Email 2 to contain all the structural elements.
8. Correcting students' assignments Students receive two emails that are the result of students doing an assignment on writing formal emails. They are to correct the mistakes in register and content. Then they are asked to grade the assignments. They will then discuss the grades and mistakes in pairs and later with the whole class, giving reasons for the grades they chose.	- worksheet source: https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/best-cover-letter-examples https://blog.hubspot.com/service/thank-you-letter-customer The first email was modified by shortening and rewriting some sentences to contain the wrong register. The second email was used mostly for inspiration and almost entirely rewritten to represent a "bad" example of student writing.	10 min	Individual work, S-S, T-S	Students will be able to compare two emails and judge how well they meet the instructions, by highlighting mistakes and assigning grades A-F. Students will be able to justify whether the emails use formal register correctly or not, and show this by discussing their views and opinions with their classmates. Feedback: - the teacher first calls on volunteer students to say which grade they decided to give each assignment. In case there are differences, the students are invited to debate with each other and justify their decision.

Activity	Material and aids	Time	Interaction patterns	Objectives
9. Deciding on criteria for an assignment about writing formal emails. The students are asked to work in pairs to produce criteria they would use for grading such an assignment. Afterwards, students work in groups in which they compare their criteria and are asked to come up with a list of 5 most important. A class wide discussion is then launched, comparing the criteria and the teacher helps students democratically choose 5 most important. Some criteria suggested might include: - formality of email - structure of email - content - spelling - grammar	- whiteboard	15 min	S-S	Students will be able to apply their previous knowledge of writing formal emails while designing a set of criteria and writing them down. They will then be able to defend and justify these criteria in a classroom wide debate. Feedback: - during this activity, the teacher monitors progress of each group, making sure they stay on task and use L2. After each group has decided their criteria, the teacher monitors the discussion. Based on the choice of the students and the judgment of the teacher, five criteria will be selected and written on the whiteboard for everybody to see.

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Activity	Material and aids	Time	Interaction patterns	Objectives
10. Rewriting the incorrect email to comply with criteria from activity 9 and structure from activity 7. The students then rewrite the second email to comply with the criteria, using the email writing structure from the previous activity.	- worksheets - criteria https://blog.hubspot.com/service/thank-you-letter-customer The second email was used mostly for inspiration and almost entirely rewritten to represent a "bad" example of student writing.	20 min	individual work	Students will be able to implement the criteria they created as well as their overall knowledge of formal register by rewriting an email from informal register to formal register. feedback: - after the writing is finished, the teacher collects the writing from all the students and provides some written feedback. The teacher should highlight what the students did right as well as any potential mistakes.

Note: The column with "link(s) to CEFR" had to be removed in favor of better legibility of the plan, but the same sections still apply, p. 120-122, CEFR 2001.

A SIMPLE GUIDE TO
WRITING PROFESSIONAL EMAILS

SUBJECT

Keep it short and straight to the point.

Leave request
Service outage
Meeting request
Customer complaint
Outstanding performance

GREETING

Dear Mr./Mrs./Ms.
To whom it may concern

OPENING LINE

It is advised to start by giving the reason for your writing.

I am writing with regard to...
I am delighted to tell you...
I regret to inform you that...
I am writing to follow up on...

BODY

Here is where you write all the details and necessary information.

CLOSING LINE

Closing line is often used to add additional politeness to the message.

For further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.
I look forward to hearing from you soon.
Thank you in advance.
I apologize for any inconvenience.

SIGN OFF

Best regards,
Kind regards,
Sincerely,

SIGNATURE

If you work for a company, it will contains not only your name, but position and contact information.

KEEP THE TONE PROFESSIONAL

Try to use formal words, and be very polite and respectful. Do not use any colloquial or slang expressions. Being too direct or upfront is often considered impolite.

1. You are applying for an internship position in a large multinational corporation. Write a formal cover letter to accompany your resume and include the following information:
- Which position you are applying for
- Why you would be a good fit for the position
- Your skills and personal characteristics

2. You work for the international charity organization Red Cross. Write a formal email thanking donors for their contributions. You have to:
- Thank the donors
- Inform them of what the money will be used for
- Inform them of other projects and recent activities of your organization

Two students were given an assignment of writing a formal email. Underline the mistakes in both emails. Which email do you think is better? What did the students do right and what did they do wrong?

Hi Mr. Rollins,

This cover letter is in regards to my interest in applying for the Graphic Designer Intern job within DDS Corporation, Inc. in Los Angeles, CA, because I saw your ad on Indeed.com.

From day one, I believe that I can bring a lot to the table, as I'm pretty good at drawing. Innovation is my middle name and I like to make creative stuff like logos. Furthermore, I am great with Adobe Creative Suite, HTML, and CSS. That's why I will be a great asset for your team. I am also really hardworking, motivated, and can handle a lot of stress. I don't have much experience, but I designed a tattoo for my friend and he really loved it.

Enclosed is my resume for your review. I welcome the opportunity to discuss with you personally how my skills and strengths can best serve your company. Thanks for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Sarah Goodman

Dear friend,

Thank you so much for donating your cash to us. We really appreciate it. We are gonna use it to help all sorts of people, such as the homeless and junkies who live on the street. Some of them are really sick and can use the hospital care, medication and food. Because it is such a cold winter, we also give them tents and warm sleeping bags, make soup in the soup kitchen, and provide them with warm clothing, as well as an opportunity to take a hot shower every now and then. Every donation helps a ton. We are very grateful on behalf of the Red Cross. The homeless can now have some food and a place to say. All thanks to the generous donors such as yourself.

Thank you so much.
Red Cross

Activity	Material and aids	Time	Interaction patterns	Objectives	Link(s) to CEFR
11. Writing: Formal emails. This is the final activity of this set. The students will be asked to used everything they learned up until now to create their own formal email.	workshe et	45 min	individual work	Students will be able to write a professional apology email in a formal register in the length of 140-190 words, meeting the criteria which were previously agreed upon. Feedback: - after the writing is completed, the teacher collects the assignments and provides written feedback to the students based on previously agreed upon criteria. - based on the teachers' decision, this work may be graded based on the criteria.	p. 120 "register differences" "The term 'register' is used to refer to systematic differences between varieties of language used in different contexts." "• formal, e.g. May we now come to order, please. • neutral, e.g. Shall we begin? • informal, e.g. Right. What about making a start?" (CEFR 2001, 120)
12. Formal emails: Feedback session. In the next lesson, the students are pair off and given each others' email assignment. The task of the students is to correct the work of their partner and provide constructive feedback. The teacher monitors this activity to make sure the students stay on task and use L2.	students ' emails	15 min	Individual work, S-S	Students will be able to evaluate the work of their classmates based on the criteria previously agreed upon and prove this by giving feedback to their classmates and discussing their assignment with them. Feedback: - students talk to each other about their assignments and provide feedback. - afterwards, the teacher hands out the corrected assignments with their own feedback and is ready to take any questions and discuss it with the students.	p. 122 "Can express him or herself confidently, clearly and politely in a formal or informal register, appropriate to the situation and person(s) concerned." (CEFR 2001, 122)

Write a professional email in formal register in the length of 140-190 words. Choose **one** of these prompts for your email:

1. You need to write an email apologizing to your boss for missing an important deadline. In your email you should include:

- an apology
- reasons for the delay
- solution and suggestion of the new deadline

2. You work in customer service and you got a customer complaint. Write an email responding to it including:

- an apology
- reasons for the problem
- steps that you will take to solve the problem

Activity	Material and aids	Time	Interaction patterns	Objectives	Link(s) to CEFR
1. Kahoot How well do you know idioms, slang and proverbs from the USA, the UK, Australia, Scotland and Ireland? The teacher announces the topic of this set of activities, which is cultural differences. He or she then instructs the students to take their phones and join kahoot in order to take a short quiz. If necessary, the quiz can also either be given as a home assignment, or even printed on a paper in case of technical difficulties. After the quiz is taken, the teacher will then ask students what was the expression that was the most interesting to them, which serves to confirm that the objective was met and that the students can recall the expressions.	- phones - PC - data projector - quiz digital or printed Sources: www.collinsdictionary.com https://kahoot.it/challenge/084394 562?challenge-id=985fe2fd-6e0e-4 9b0-b68e-a66e82370ac0_168601 7327585 www.idioms.thefreedictionary.com https://www.cancer.org.au/cancer-information/causes-and-preventio n/sun-safety/campaigns-and-even ts/slip-slop-slap-seek-slide https://www.candis.com.au/why-d o-we-say-dont-get-your-knickers-i n-a-knot www.urbandictionary.com www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.c om en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bob%27s_y our_uncle https://medium.com/@jennymacd onald/many-a-mickle-makes-a-m uckle-george-washington-was-not -wrong-84322a9e6d38	15 min	individual work, T-S	Students will be able to understand the meanings and interpretations of some famous idioms, slang words and proverbs from different countries. They will prove this understanding by selecting the correct answers in the quiz as well as participating in the discussion after the quiz about which expressions they found the most interesting. Feedback: - the students instantaneously get points for correct answers and a slide with an explanation is shown - after the quiz is finished, the teacher asks students to talk about expressions they found interesting and why	p. 120 "expressions of folk wisdom, including idioms and proverbs" (CEFR 2001, 120) p. 121 "dialect, linguistic markers of national origin" (CEFR 2001, 121)

IDIOMS & PROVERBS QUIZ

Q1:

What does it mean to be "a few sandwiches short of a picnic"? (British English)

A: to have a couple of flaws that keep you from being perfect catch
B: to have too little money to do something
C: to be stupid, or behave in strange ways
D: to have too many kids

Explanation:
Said to indicate in a humorous way that you think someone is very stupid or is behaving very strangely. They are missing some important mental faculties or reasoning skills.
"His daughter confirmed that her father was definitely one sandwich short of a picnic."

https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/someone-is-one-sandwich-short-of-a-picnic

Q2:
What is the American version of the "few sandwiches short of a picnic"? (American English)

A: to be a few fries short of a Happy Meal
B: to be a few hamburgers short of a Burger King
C: to be a few books short of a library
D: to be a few elephants short of a zoo

A phrase meaning someone is not very intelligent or of questionable mental capacity. It can appear in many different forms and variations (for example: a few bricks shy of a load, a few cards shy of a full deck, etc.)
https://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/a+few+fries+short+of+a+Happy+Meal

Q3:
What does "slip, slop, slap" mean? (Australian English)

A: Warning to be careful at the bar for the ladies. If someone "slips" something in your drink, you have to "slop" the drink in their face and "slap" them.
B: Steps taken when one is free diving. "Slip" into the neoprene suit, "slop" into the water, and "slap" your fins to move underwater.
C: Reminder to stay safe in the hot sun. "Slip" on a shirt, "slop" on sunscreen and "slap" on a hat.
D: Advice for steps one has to take when they see a shark in the water. "Slip" away from the shark, don't "slop" in the water to avoid attracting the shark's attention, and if it gets too close, "slap" its nose.

IDIOMS & PROVERBS QUIZ

Originating as a skin cancer awareness campaign in the 1980s, the slogan gained huge success. Always reminding residents of the sunny country to "slip" on a shirt, "slop" on sunscreen and "slap" on a hat before going outside. After the introduction of this campaign, the rates of skin cancer dropped significantly in the country.

https://www.cancer.org.au/cancer-information/causes-and-prevention/sun-safety/campaigns-and-events/slip-slop-slap-seek-slide

Q4:
What does it mean to "get your knickers in a knot"? (British English)

A: to panic
B: to get angry
C: to be confused
D: to have an affair

We've all been told at one point or another, "Oh don't get your knickers in a knot!" We say it when someone's getting upset or annoyed about something we don't think is worth being so agitated about. The saying is of British origin, but Americans started adopting it replacing the word "knickers" with "panties" - Don't get your panties in a bunch!

https://www.candis.com.au/why-do-we-say-dont-get-your-knickers-in-a-knot/#:~:text=We've%20all%20been%20told,worth%20being%20so%20agitated%20about.

Q5:
"All hat, no cattle" means: (American English)

A: a woman who uses a padded bra
B: a work that is easy to do but very prestigious and well-paid
C: you are ready for work but don't have a job
D: you are full of big talk but taking no action

Originally used in reference to people imitating the fashion or style of cowboys. These people wore the hats, but had no experience on the ranch, thus "all hat, no cattle". Its meaning then spread to somebody who is all talk and no action or substance.

https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=all%20hat%2C%20no%20cattle

IDIOMS & PROVERBS QUIZ

Q6:
Fill in the rest of the saying. He is as nervous as a cat in a room full of… (American Southern)

A: angry dogs
B: vacuum cleaners
C: catnip
D: rocking chairs

It means that the person is extremely nervous. The cat's long tail would be in danger of getting caught under a swaying rocking chair.

https://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/nervous+as+a+long+tailed+cat+in+a+room+full+of+rocking+chairs

Q7:
What does a "gobshite" mean? (Irish English)

A: stupid, incompetent person
B: nonsense, lies
C: slop, bad food
D: a fat person

An offensive word for a person who you think is stupid or who says things that you think are silly or not true.
https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/gobshite

Q8:
If you have "kangaroos loose in the top paddock", it means: (Australian English)

A: your house is messy
B: you are crazy
C: your kids are running wild
D: you are full of energy

To be crazy; to act, think, or behave in an eccentric, foolish, or nonsensical manner. Primarily heard in Australia. "Tommy must have a few kangaroos loose in the top paddock if he thinks he can convince our mother to let him get a tattoo for his birthday."
https://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/a+few+kangaroos+loose+in+the+top+paddock

IDIOMS & PROVERBS QUIZ

Q9:

When is the phrase "Bob's your uncle" used? (British English)

A: phrase implying that the person is very rich
B: phrase used to signal an unexpected twist, or surprise
C: phrase similar to "voila", "hey presto" or "there you have it"
D: phrase indicating that somebody is lying, or "pulling your leg"

"Bob's your uncle" is a phrase commonly used in the United Kingdom and Commonwealth countries that means "and there it is", or "and there you have it", or "it's done". Typically, someone says it to conclude a set of simple instructions or when a result is reached.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bob%27s_your_uncle#:~:text=%22Bob's%20your%20uncle%22%20is%20a,when%20a%20result%20is%20reached.

Q10:

The proverb "hard head makes a soft behind" means: (American English)

A: if you are stubborn you will likely get into a lot of trouble
B: people are sometimes putting on a strong front to avoid showing their weaknesses
C: if you work hard at your job, you can relax at home
D: if you are rough with your employees, somebody will stab you in the back

Somebody who is very stubborn and makes trouble will end up getting spanked. Originated from mothers spanking their children when they are being difficult. Its meaning then expanded to "any person who doesn't listen to reason or advice of others will end up getting hurt many times".

https://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/a+hard+head+makes+a+soft+behind
https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=A%20hard%20head%20makes%20a%20soft%20ass

Q11:

The proverb "many a mickle makes a muckle" means: (Scottish English)

A: a lot of people make money in illegal ways
B: a lot of men are cheating on their partners
C: a lot of people say all sorts of things (don't believe everything you hear)
D: a lot of small things build up into something big

IDIOMS & PROVERBS QUIZ

It means that collecting lots of little things is worthwhile, because they can add up to something big. In Scottish, the word "muckle" means large, much.

https://medium.com/@jennymacdonald/many-a-mickle-makes-a-muckle-george-washington-was-not-wrong-84322a9e6d38#:~:text=It%20means%20that%20collecting%20lots,add%20up%20to%20something%20big.

https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/muckle

Q13:
If someone "throws a wobbly" they: (British English)

A: they fall on the ground in a funny way
B: they suddenly switch sides
C: they are angry and make a scene
D: they throw up

If someone throws a wobbly or throws a wobbler, they lose their temper and get very angry, usually about something unimportant.

https://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/throw+a+wobbly#:~:text=If%20someone%20throws%20a%20wobbly,angry%2C%20usually%20about%20something%20unimportant.
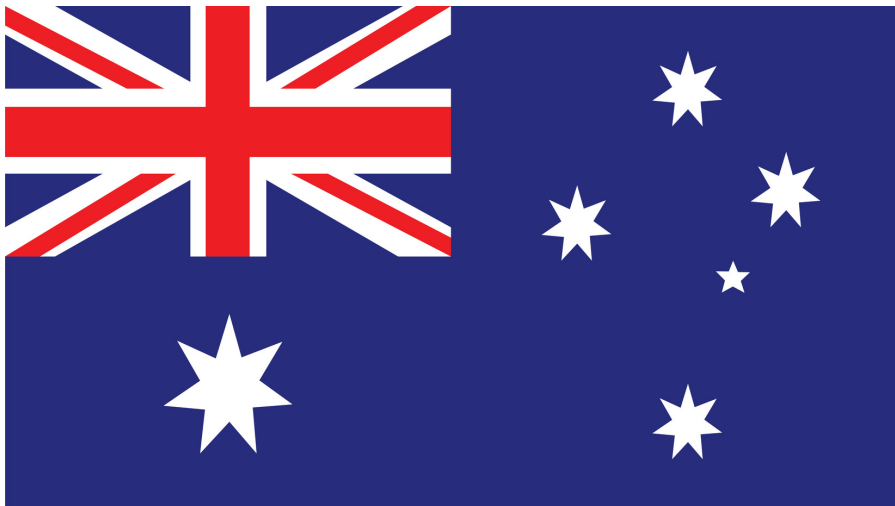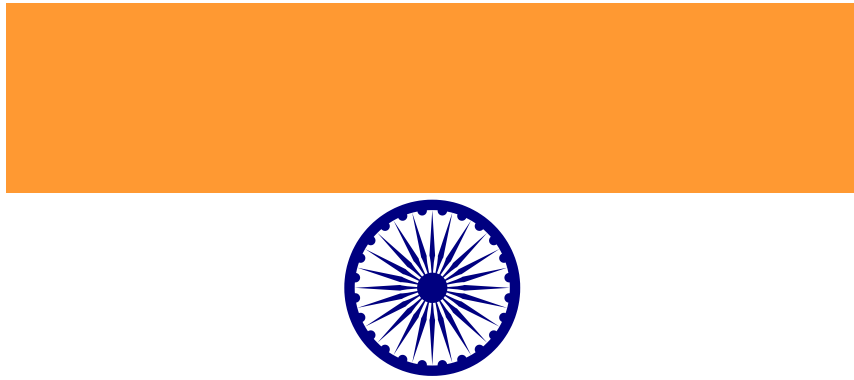
Activity	Material and aids	Time	Interaction patterns	Objectives	Link(s) to CEFR
2. British or American English? In this activity, the students work in pairs. They are given slips of paper with various British and American expressions (such as flat x apartment) and they are to decide which words have the same meaning, and which variants are British and which are American.	- slips of papers with words source: https://www.dictionary.com/e/british-english-vs-american-english/ https://www.thoughtco.com/american-english-to-british-english-4010264 https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/telly	7 min	S-S	Students will be able to identify which expressions are part of British and which are part of American English by grouping them into pairs based on their meaning. Feedback: - After all or most groups are finished, the teacher asks each group to read one pair of words. Based on this, all students are able to correct their exercise.	p. 121 "dialect, linguistic markers of national origin" "Such markers include: • lexicon, e.g. Scottish wee for 'small'" (CEFR 2001, 121)

American 🇺🇸	British 🇬🇧
french fries	chips
apartment	flat
garbage	rubbish
cookie	biscuit
parking lot	car park
pants	trousers
dude	bloke
fall	autumn
attorney	barrister
trunk	boot
drug store	chemist
purse	handbag
elevator	lift
line	queue
vacation	holiday
sweater	jumper
TV	telly

Activity	Material and aids	Time	Interaction patterns	Objectives	Link(s) to CEFR
3. Which accent is that? In this activity, students are divided into groups of three or four. They are sat around one desk and given one set of flags - Indian, Scottish, British, American and Australian. The teacher then plays ten approximately thirty second samples of speakers of different origin talking. After each sample is played, the teacher counts to three and each group then simultaneously reveals the flag they think represents the speaker. This activity can take the form of a competition, where each group decides a name for their team, and the teacher marks points for each correctly guessed accent on the whiteboard.	- PC - miniature flags - YouTube https://youtu.be/PpGINfYA7h4 0:25 - 0:51 (British) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0F Pvip4bzB4 0:00 - 0:30 (Scottish) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7G X-XYXQogU 0:10 - 0:40 (Indian) https://youtu.be/7dEKQL0I4LU 0:36 - 1:15 (Scottish) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jPh JbKBuNnA 0:05 - 0:35 (British) https://youtu.be/HJ4bkTkvld0 0:23 - 0:45 (Australian) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kb 1FLkbPao 0:20-0:57 (Indian) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2M cDQu5UQpk (American) 1:35-2:08 https://youtu.be/j5VTu9WmrkQ 0:12-0:42 (American) https://youtu.be/krioed6nN5o 0:00 - 0:40 (Australian)	7 min	S-S, T-S	Students will be able to identify the national origin of the speakers based on their pronunciation, and prove this by selecting the correct flag upon hearing a 30 second sample of the given accent. Feedback: - after the recording is played and all groups reveal their flag, the teacher says the correct answers. Each nationality is included twice, so the students have a chance to get better and learn from their mistakes.	p. 121 "dialect, linguistic markers of national origin" "Such markers include: - phonology, e.g. New York boid for 'bird'" (CEFR 2001, 121)

Activity	Material and aids	Time	Interaction patterns	Objectives	Link(s) to CEFR
Post-listening Post-listening students have a conversation in pairs. The questions are: - Which accent did you have the hardest time understanding? - Which accent did you like the best? Do you think people are sometimes judged based on their accent? After the students have had some time to discuss, the teacher asks about their opinions. At first, the teacher asks about each accent:"Who liked the best… the X accent?" and the students raise their hand based on their opinion. Next, the teacher asks volunteers to share which accent they found the hardest, and students can agree or disagree with each other and explain their position. Finally, opinions regarding possible prejudice against "foreign" accents are discussed, and to stir the discussion, the teacher can also ask the students whether they think the Czech accent might be perceived negatively or positively by outsiders.		10 min	S-S, T-S	Students will be able to give their opinion on different accents, which they like the best, which is the hardest to understand, and whether there might be some prejudice against a speaker with a "foreign" accent. Feedback: - because this is an activity aimed at fluency, the teacher should not correct the students mid-speech. The teacher instead responds to what the students are saying, moderates the debate, and at the end of the activity can sum up what was talked about.	p. 121 "dialect, linguistic markers of national origin" "Such markers include: - phonology, e.g. New York boid for 'bird'" (CEFR 2001, 121)

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Activity	Material and aids	Time	Interaction patterns	Objectives	Link(s) to CEFR
4. Reading: How Brits and Americans See Each Other **Pre-reading** Students are divided into small groups and shown the title of both articles and make predictions on the content. Next, they are given some adjectives from the article, such as arrogant, ambitious, competitive, pushy, stuffy, snotty, loud and are asked to connect them to Brits or Americans. Teachers asks each group about their prediction.	- printed article Source: https://culturalmixol ogy.com/uk-vs-us-u nderstanding-com munication-differen ces-at-work/ The article was shortened and modified to fit the students' needs. Explanations of difficult words were added using: https://www.oxfordl earnersdictionaries .com/	7 min	S-S	Students will activate their schemata which will help them in the reading phase. Feedback: - Students will find out correct answers on their own by reading the article.	p. 102 "Sociocultural knowledge Strictly speaking, knowledge of the society and culture of the community or communities in which a language is spoken is one aspect of knowledge of the world" (CEFR 2001, 102) p 118 "As was remarked with regard to sociocultural competence, since language is a sociocultural phenomenon, much of what is contained in the Framework, particularly in respect of the sociocultural, is of relevance to sociolinguistic competence." (CEFR 2001, 118) p 119 "Politeness conventions provide one of the most important reasons for departing from the straightforward application of the 'co-operative principle' (see section 5.2.3.1). They vary from one culture to another and are a frequent source of inter-ethnic misunderstanding, especially when polite expressions are literally interpreted." (CEFR 2001, 119)

Activity / Description	Source	Time	Interaction	Objectives / Feedback	CEFR reference
Reading 1 After this pre-reading activity is done, the students read the first part of the article to see if their predictions were right.	Source: https://culturalmixology.com/uk-vs-us-understanding-communication-differences-at-work/	7 min	Individual work	Students will be able to read an article for specific information, to find specific adjectives and see who they refer to.	p. 102 "Sociocultural knowledge Strictly speaking, knowledge of the society and culture of the community or communities in which a language is spoken is one aspect of knowledge of the world" (CEFR 2001, 102)
Reading 2 In the next step, the students scan the second article for numbers and find out what they refer to.	The article was shortened and modified to fit the students' needs. Explanations of difficult words were added using: https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/	5 min	Individual work	Students will be able to scan an article for numbers and find out what the numbers refer to. Feedback: Because reading is usually done on an individual pace, the teacher can circle around the class giving feedback to the students as they are ready.	p. 118 "As was remarked with regard to sociocultural competence, since language is a sociocultural phenomenon, much of what is contained in the Framework, particularly in respect of the sociocultural, is of relevance to sociolinguistic competence." (CEFR 2001, 118)
Reading 3 Finally, students read both parts of the article for detailed understanding and answer the comprehension questions. After the questions are answered, the students are asked to work in pairs to discuss the answers with		10 min	Individual work	Students will be able to read the article for detailed comprehension and prove this by answering the comprehension questions. Feedback: Students work in pairs to check each other's	p. 119 "Politeness conventions provide one of the most important reasons for departing from the straightforward application of the 'co-operative principle' (see section 5.2.3.1). They vary from one culture to another and are a frequent source of inter-ethnic misunderstanding, especially when polite expressions are literally interpreted." (CEFR 2001, 119)

- printed article

Stage	Time	Interaction	Procedure	Aim/Notes
their partner. After that, the teacher calls on the groups to give their answers.			answers. If they have something different, they are free to discuss and attempt to find the correct answer together. After this task is finished, the teacher calls on each group to give their answer and writes the right answers on the board so everybody can check.	
Post-reading In pairs, students discuss the content of what they have read, comparing it with their own opinions and experiences. They are also asked to speculate about how a Czech person would be viewed by a Brit or an American.	10 min	S-S, T-S	Students will be able to respond to information provided in the text about culture and politeness by talking about their own opinions and experiences. Feedback: The teacher can ask some volunteers to share their opinions, and responds to the content of what was said, rather than potential grammatical mistakes.	

How Brits and Americans See Each Other

To start, we kept things simple. We wanted to know how both US and UK workers would describe themselves at work, compared to how they'd describe each other. This question turned up some interesting results, with Americans more likely to use words like ambitious, competitive, or driven to describe themselves, while Brits chose words such as loud, arrogant, brash, and pushy. It's clear that both sides see Americans as being driven at work, however, this may be seen more negatively from UK colleagues, with one telling us they see Americans as "very overpowering and restless, with lots of expectations and not much patience". Across the pond, Brits described themselves as easy going, friendly, and even lazy, while Americans thought they were hard-working and polite but stuffy, with one telling us "they work hard but can be a bit snotty at times. A lot of them tend to talk down to other people to make themselves feel superior".

US vs UK: How Do We Communicate Differently?

Our survey found that, across the board, Brits are more likely than Americans to take things negatively or see a subtext in casual communication. Americans, on the other hand, are most likely to take things literally and see the positives.

Over half of Americans (55%) would use the phrase "that's not bad" as a positive. Brits, however, were more likely to see a negative subtext in this statement, with only 39% agreeing it was a positive statement and one-in-five (20%) using this as a negative communication. Again, an American using this statement may be being very literal – if something is 'not bad', it is 'good'. A Brit on the other hand may be politely using this phrase as a negative to mean something is not terrible, but it's not particularly good either.

Three-in-four (76%) Americans would hear "that's an interesting idea" at work and assume they were being told the idea is impressive. However, if a colleague from the UK is saying this, be aware that 32% are suggesting your idea is 'ridiculous'.

source: www.culturalmixology.com/uk-vs-us-understanding-communication-differences-at-work/

Comprehension questions:

Both Brits and Americans see each other as arrogant. T/F
Brits think they are friendly, while Americans see them as formal and cold. T/F
Brits and Americans agree that Americans are driven and hardworking. T/F
Brits are more direct in communicating than Americans. T/F
If they heard "that's an interesting idea", almost a third of Brits would think that the speaker is being sarcastic. T/F

Dictionary

competitive - **(of a person) trying very hard to be better than others**

brash - **confident in an aggressive way**

pushy - **trying hard to get what you want, especially in a way that seems rude**

overpowering - **very strong or powerful**

restless - **unable to stay still or be happy where you are, because you are bored or need a change**

patience - **the ability to stay calm and accept a delay or something annoying without complaining**

stuffy - **(of a person) very serious, formal, boring or old-fashioned**

snotty - **treating people as if they are not as good or as important as you**

superior - **higher in rank, importance or position**

subtext - **a hidden meaning or theme in a piece of writing or conversation**

literal - **being the most basic meaning of a word or phrase, no hidden or metaphorical meanings**

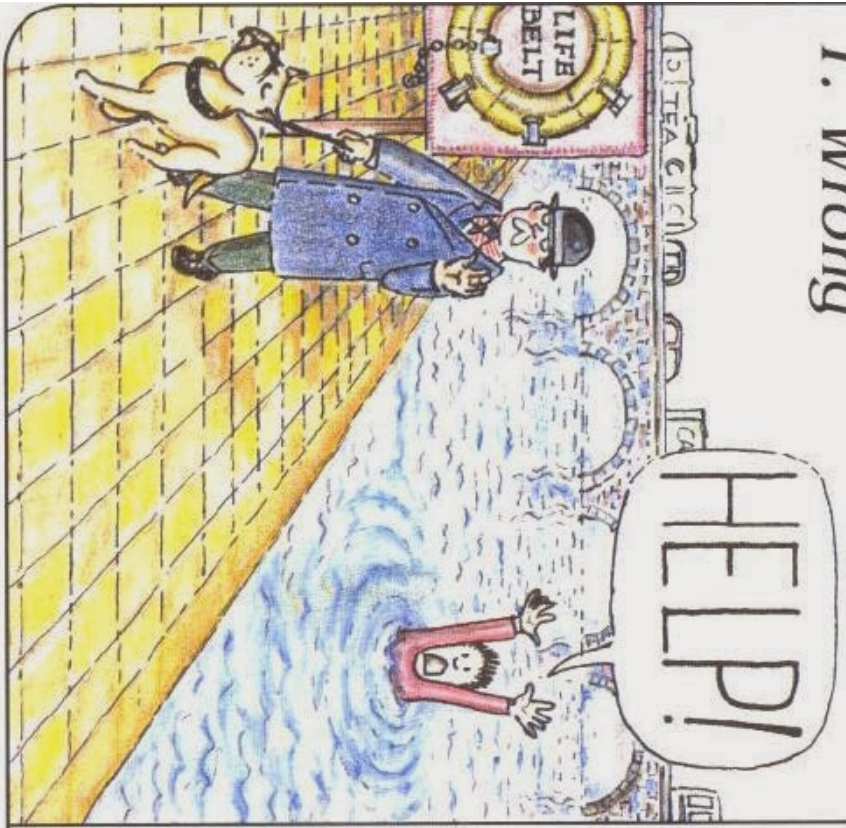**impressive** - **(of things or people) making you admire them, because they are very large, good, skillful, etc.**

Activity	Material and aids	Time	Interaction patterns	Objectives	Link(s) to CEFR
5. Listening: Politeness in the UK and the US **Pre-listening** Students are given a cartoon about British politeness and asked to discuss in pairs what they think the video is going to be about. **Listening** In this activity, the students listen to two speakers discuss the different norms of politeness in the UK and the US. While listening, they are asked to answer a set of comprehension questions. The teacher plays the video once, due to the presence of subtitles, which makes the video very easy to understand. But if the students show signs of struggling, it can be played two times. After students finish listening, they discuss their answers in pairs.	- PC - YouTube - worksheet https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YXSnSD677bE	15 min	individual work, S-S T-S	Students will be able to correctly answer questions aimed at listening for detailed understanding. Feedback: After the listening is completed, students discuss their answers with each other. The teacher then calls on individual students to give answers.	p 119 "Politeness conventions provide one of the most important reasons for departing from the straightforward application of the 'co-operative principle' (see section 5.2.3.1). They vary from one culture to another and are a frequent source of inter-ethnic misunderstanding, especially when polite expressions are literally interpreted." (CEFR 2001, 119)

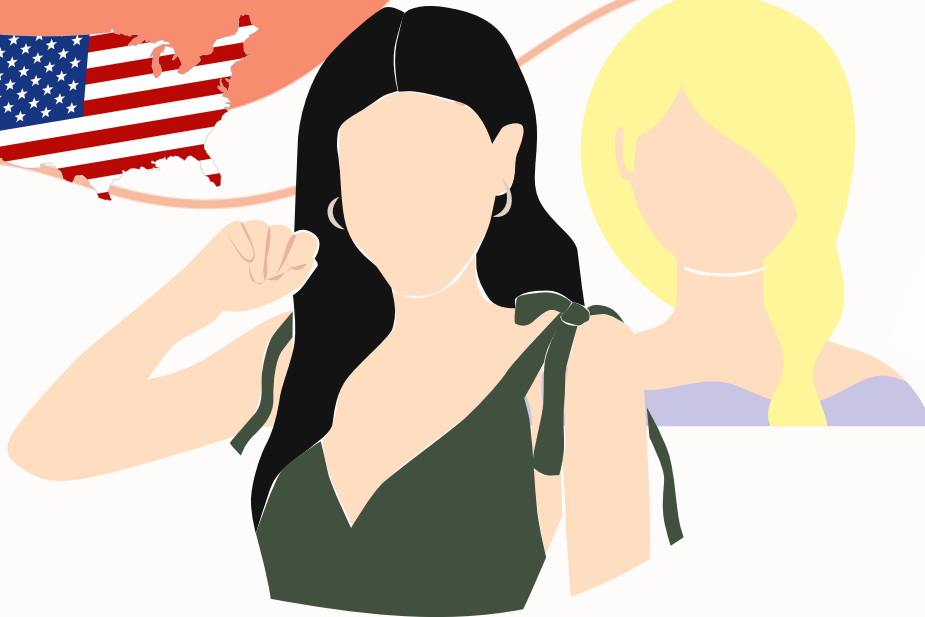| Post-listening		
Students are asked to discuss their thoughts on the video, whether they think it is true, whether they have some personal experience with the British or Americans, and how the cultural norms which were discussed in the video may differ from norms in the Czech Republic. Do you think the British are more polite than Americans? How does this compare to the Czech norms of politeness? In which country would you rather live?	8 min	S-S	Students will be able to discuss differences between British, American and Czech politeness. Feedback: The teacher can ask some groups to share their opinions, which can evolve to class-wide discussion. At the end of the activity, the teacher should sum up what happened. Being an activity aimed at fluency, the teacher should not correct students' grammar.	

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World Friends - How to be polite?

Christina - USA

Lauren - UK

1. What does Lauren (UK) say about saying sorry?

a) It annoys her when people apologize too much.
b) British people say sorry even for small things.
c) Americans are rude and don't say sorry enough.

2. What does Lauren (UK) say about saying bless you?

a) It's only done when someone sneezes.
b) Only religious people say that.
c) She says it all the time without thinking.

3. According to Lauren (UK) responding to "Thank you" with "Yup" is:

a) Extremely rude.
b) Only okay if it's with friends.
c) It's being used more and more recently.

4. According to Lauren (UK), the British:

a) Often don't say what they really think.
b) Are easy to get along with.
c) When they say "I'll get back to you", they just need more time to decide.

5. According to Christina (US), being brutally honest:

a) Is very rude.
b) Is more common in the US.
c) Is a good thing.

6. What does Christina (US) say about the American stereotype?

a) It's very true.
b) She would be more at home in Britain.
c) The stereotypical American is very loud and direct.

source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YXSnSD677bE

Activity	Material and aids	Time	Interaction patterns	Objectives	Link(s) to CEFR
6. Listening & Speaking: Are Czechs rude and Americans fake? **Pre-listening** Before doing this activity, the students are asked to close their eyes, and picture an average American. What do they look like? How do they behave? Some volunteers are then asked to describe their different ideas. **Listening** In this activity, students listen to a youtube video in which an American expat discusses the cultural differences she noticed between Czechs and Americans. The primary focus of the video is different cultural norms of politeness. While listening, the students are asked to take notes in each of the following areas: - Smiles, Czech sense of humor, "How are you?", Small talk, Correcting pronunciation, Customer service, Helpfulness, Intonation	- PC - worksheet - YouTube https://youtu.be/7WePp-tQr0I 0:00-7:00, 11:00-12:45	15 min	individual work, T-S	Students will be able to compare different norms of politeness in the Czech Republic and in the USA Feedback: - Following the listening, the students will debate their notes and opinions with each other, which will help them fill in any blanks in their understanding of the information provided in the video.	p 119 "Politeness conventions provide one of the most important reasons for departing from the straightforward application of the 'co-operative principle' (see section 5.2.3.1). They vary from one culture to another and are a frequent source of inter-ethnic misunderstanding, especially when polite expressions are literally interpreted." (CEFR 2001, 119)

Post-listening 1: Speaking			
After the listening is finished, the students are asked to discuss their notes in pairs and then in groups of four or five. Discussion questions: - Do you agree with Jen? Do you think she got something wrong? - Who do you think is more polite, Czechs or Americans? - What is considered impolite in the Czech Republic? The whole class then debates the subject matter and volunteers can express their ideas and opinions.	8 min	S-S	Students will be able to discuss and compare different norms of politeness in the Czech Republic and the USA by discussing their opinions with their classmates and supporting them with reasons and arguments. Feedback: During this activity, the teacher should refrain from correcting the grammar of students. The teacher should react to the content of what the students are saying and moderate their discussion.	p 119 "Politeness conventions provide one of the most important reasons for departing from the straightforward application of the 'co-operative principle' (see section 5.2.3.1). They vary from one culture to another and are a frequent source of inter-ethnic misunderstandin g, especially when polite expressions are literally interpreted." (CEFR 2001, 119)

Post-listening 2: Writing			
The students are now asked to react to the content they saw by writing either a comment underneath Jen's video or an email to her, expressing all their thoughts are opinions.	15 min	Individual work	Students will be able to react to information about different cultural norms in the Czech Republic and the USA by writing their own opinion in the form of a comment or an email. Feedback: The teacher provides some written feedback to every student. Some of the criteria can be: a) genre appropriateness (does the writing conform to being a comment or an email?) b) social appropriateness (does it take into account the addressee, or the social context of the interaction?) c) expressing your own opinion clearly and supporting it with arguments d) reacting to the content of the video e) grammatical mistakes, spelling etc	p 119 "Politeness conventions provide one of the most important reasons for departing from the straightforward application of the 'co-operative principle' (see section 5.2.3.1). They vary from one culture to another and are a frequent source of inter-ethnic misunderstanding, especially when polite expressions are literally interpreted." (CEFR 2001, 119)

RUDE?

FAKE?

CZECH PEOPLE ARE RUDE? AMERICANS ARE FAKE?

Listen to the video. What does Jennifer say about the following?
Make notes for each area and be ready to discuss them afterwards.

Jennifer Preston is a Youtuber, originally from California, but she has been living in the Czech Republic for about 10 years. In her videos, she comments on different nature of Czechs and Americans and shares interesting insights into Czech culture.

SMILES

HELPFULNESS

CZECH SENSE OF HUMOR

SMALL TALK

"HOW ARE YOU?"

CORRECTING PRONUNCIATION

CUSTOMER SERVICE

INTONATION

Activity	Material and aids	Time	Interaction patterns	Objectives	Link(s) to CEFR
7. Speaking: Roleplay In this activity, the students work in groups of 2-4 of their choosing, to develop intercultural dialogues. The students are given some time to prepare, and afterwards are asked to act out the scene in front of the class. In case they are too shy, they may remain sitting in their places. The teacher should monitor the activity while the students are working on their dialogues, and make sure they stay on task and use L2.		25 min	S-S	Students will be able to create their own dialogues, highlighting cultural differences between different countries. Feedback: - the teacher should not correct grammatical mistakes of the students while they are performing the scene. - the teacher should ask students to give peer feedback, highlighting what they liked about each performance, and what they thought about it. The tone should be kept positive. - if the classroom environment is very positive, students can be asked to rate each performance on a scale of 1 to 10. This could make the students more engaged and incentivize them to pay more attention to performances of others. However, it is important to keep the tone positive. The teacher should know the group very well before trying this and use his or her judgment on whether this will have a positive outcome or not. If the students are for example very shy, anxious, or have many conflicts with each other, this should not be attempted.	p. 102 "Sociocultural knowledge Strictly speaking, knowledge of the society and culture of the community or communities in which a language is spoken is one aspect of knowledge of the world" (CEFR 2001, 102) p 118 "As was remarked with regard to sociocultural competence, since language is a sociocultural phenomenon, much of what is contained in the Framework, particularly in respect of the sociocultural, is of relevance to sociolinguistic competence." (CEFR 2001, 118)
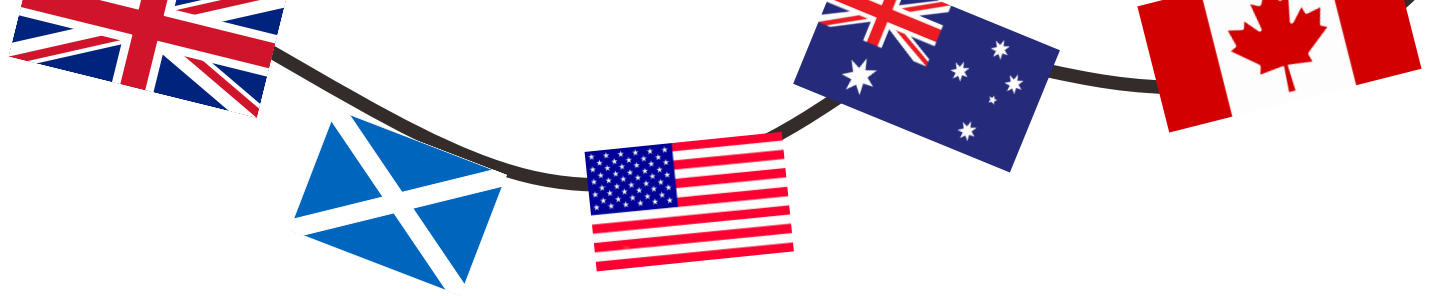
ROLEPLAY SCENARIOS

1. A BRIT LECTURES AN AMERICAN ABOUT HOW 0.5 LITERS OF SUGAR AND CANDY IS NOT A REAL TEA.

2. CZECH AND AMERICAN DEBATE WHO HAS BETTER BEER.

3. AMERICAN AND BRIT ARGUE ABOUT WHO HAS BETTER MOVIES/SHOWS/BOOKS/MUSIC.

4. A SCOTTISH MAN DISCUSSES WITH AN AMERICAN THE ADVANTAGES OF WEARING A KILT.

5. AMERICAN AND BRIT DISCUSS THEIR EATING HABITS AND WHO HAS BETTER CUISINE.

6. YOUR OWN IDEAS 😊