**Abstract**

The aim of the dissertation is to define the requisite social skills of the English language teacher as a part of his/her professional competence, in the context of communicative language teaching in classroom interactions at secondary schools.

The theoretical part is divided into four chapters. The first chapter addresses the processes involved in foreign language learning and acquisition. It first defines the linguo-didactic framework of the dissertation in terms of the functional communicative approach to language and communicative language teaching. The second chapter deals with the processes of interaction and communication at school with an emphasis on foreign language teaching. Attention is paid to functions and content of educational interactions as practised by the main stakeholders – the teachers and their adolescent pupils. The specifics of foreign language educational interaction and its social features are illustrated. The third chapter seeks to define social skills and their relationship to other skills in the professional competence of the English teacher. In the final chapter the theoretical discussion is summarized and social-skill aspects of foreign language educational interactions are defined. Specifically, these aspects are defined in terms of affect, classroom climate, initiation and distribution of communication, method of questioning, feedback and error treatment.

The empirical part is divided into three chapters. The first chapter investigates, using a questionnaire, how pupils perceive the educational style of their English teacher in the dimensions of educational relationship and educational management, both of which reflect the range of the teacher’s social skills as defined in the theoretical part. A part of the research includes a students’ self-reflection assessing their contribution toward classroom interactions and their perceptions of an ideal English teacher. The second chapter explores the teacher’s behaviour in particular classroom interactions by means of an analysis of video-taped instructional sequences. The aim is to determine to what extent the teacher’s performance – whether of the domineering or the cooperative kind – influences the frequency and quality of interactions. Also, the students’ reactions – whether positive, neutral or negative – are analysed. In the third chapter, selected social-skill aspects within communicative language teaching are studied. Specifically, this section deals with pupils’ and teachers’ initiations of communication, questions, teachers’ verbalization of feedback, error treatment and the distribution of communication opportunities.

In the final two chapters, the findings of the empirical sections are discussed, their inter-relationships are considered as well as their practical application in teaching practice.

**Key words:** teacher’s educational style, educational relationship and educational management, classroom interaction and communication, communicative language teaching, social skills, social-skill aspects of foreign language teaching.