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Pavla Pohořálková

Výuka gramatice ve specifických formách výuky
(Firemní kurzy – Výuka dospělých)

Teaching Grammar in Specific Forms of Education
(In-company Courses – Adult Learners)

Vedoucí diplomové práce

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Poděkování

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Prohlášení

Prohlašuji, že jsem diplomovou práci vypracovala samostatně a že jsem uvedla všechny použité prameny a literaturu.

Souhlasím se zapůjčením diplomové práce ke studijním účelům.

V Praze dne 22. srpna 2013

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Pavla Pohořálková

CONTENTS

List of Abbreviations

PPP – Presentation Practice Production
TPR – Total Physical Response
ESA – Engage Study Activate
ESP – English for Specific Purposes
IESOL - International English for Speakers of Other Languages by City & Guilds
ISESOL – International Spoken English for Speakers of Other Languages by City & Guilds
FCE – First Certificate in English by Cambridge English Language Assessment
CAE – Certificate in Advanced English by Cambridge English Language Assessment
BEC – Business English Certificate by Cambridge English Language Assessment
EBC – English for Business Communication by City & Guilds
SETB – Spoken English Test for Business by City & Guilds
ILEC – International Legal English Certificate by Cambridge English Language Assessment
ICFE – International Certificate in Financial English by Cambridge English Language Assessment
ACERT – Asociace certifikovaných jazykových škol - Association of Certified Language Schools, www.acert.cz
AJSA – Asociace jazykových škol a agentur ČR - Association of Language Schools and Agencies in the Czech Republic, www.ajsa.cz
EAQUALS – Evaluation & Accreditation of Quality in Language Services, www.eaquals.org
CEFR – Common European Framework of Reference
OUP – Oxford University Press

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1. INTRODUCTION

The present thesis focuses on teaching grammar in the context of in-company language training in the Czech Republic. Teaching grammar is perhaps one of the least favourite areas of language studies and definitely one of the most sensitive areas which provoke heated discussions among learners, especially adult learners who already have experience with studying a language from a state school. There are arguments against and there are arguments for teaching grammar. However, what should always be kept in mind when presenting such arguments is the context in which the learner needs to use the language and the reason why they are studying it.

The aim of the present thesis is thus not only to map the characteristics of language teaching in in-company courses and in-company learners' view of the importance of studying grammar, but it also endeavours to describe such a way to approach teaching grammar that would bring grammar closer to the in-company learners' context and needs.

There is a vast array of materials dealing with teaching English or teaching grammar. Some of them are more academic, some of them are more practical and adapted for the teachers' use. However, there is a lack of materials dealing with the unique situation of in-company courses in which the language schools, and their teachers, find themselves in the position of someone being paid for providing a service to a demanding client. Therefore, if the teachers know their students need to work on grammar more, they frequently have to look for a way to 'sell' the often unpopular grammar to the learners as a 'product' they need for their further development and success. This thesis observes teaching methods and coursebooks with the context of in-company courses in mind and suggests the most suitable solutions.

The thesis is divided to two main parts which complement each other. The first part constitutes of the theoretical background to foreign language teaching and the theoretical background to in-company courses and in-company learners. The second part presents a pedagogical research which is based on a quantitative-qualitative needs analysis survey among in-company learners. The information discovered in this survey is then used to relate the in-company courses to the most frequent teaching methods and to discuss the suitability of these methods for this specific type of learners. The next step is analysing the approach to teaching grammar adopted in two modern coursebooks devoted to in-company learners. The conclusion summarizes the implications of the research and makes recommendations.

2. Theoretical Background: Foreign Language Acquisition, Teaching Methods, Grammar

2.1. Linguistic Principles of Second / Foreign Language Acquisition

2.1.1 What is Second Language Acquisition

Before we can discuss the acquisition of a second or foreign language, we need to define the concept of a second or foreign language itself. There are more points of view on what constitutes a second language. The present thesis will be using the term ‘second language’ in line with the approach adopted in Ellis (1997) according to which the term ‘”second” can refer to any language that is learnt subsequent to the mother tongue. Thus, it can refer to the learning of a third or fourth language. Also, “second” is not intended to contrast with “foreign”’ (Ellis, 1997: 8).

To be able to understand how learners achieve competence in a language and what facilitates this process, it is necessary to introduce the Second Language Acquisition theory. We can consider Second Language Acquisition theory as a part of theoretical linguistics which consists of five hypotheses describing how learners gain the knowledge of a language. These hypotheses are The Acquisition – Learning Distinction, The Natural Order Hypothesis, The Monitor Hypothesis, The Input Hypothesis, and The Affective Filter Hypothesis (Krashen, 1981).

The Second Language Acquisition theory works with the concept of a Language Acquisition Device which is an innate mental capacity independent of a specific language which enables a person to learn and use a language, or in other words ‘the natural learning abilities of the human mind’ (Cook, 1993: 54). The existence of a Language Acquisition Device together with Chomsky’s concept of Universal Grammar helps to explain the logical problem of ‘poverty of stimulus’ during language acquisition. As White puts it, ‘learners come to know properties that go far beyond the input’ which suggests that there are features of language that do not have to be learned at all and which we are already born with (White, 1998: 2). The logical problem of 'poverty of stimulus' appears during both the acquisition of the first and the second language, namely there is a mismatch between the input of primary linguistic data and the outcome in the form of grammar (White, 1998).

Universal Grammar can be seen as a primary academic theory of learning our mother tongue but with second language acquisition, there are more theories. Especially theories which support the idea that there is a critical age/critical period in language acquisition claim that after this period Universal Grammar is no longer 'available' to the learner of a second language in its full form (cf. Cook, 1993: 54). In case of second language acquisition it can be argued that the grammar of the mother tongue facilitates some of the processes, however, according to White, it is possible to demonstrate the operation of universal grammar even on examples when the properties of the second language 'could not have been learned from input alone or from input plus non domain-specific learning principles or from the L1 grammar alone' (White, 1998: 2). Nevertheless, we should bear in mind that 'universal grammar provides constraints on possible grammars in the course of acquisition, it is not, of itself, a theory of acquisition' but constitutes only a part of Language Acquisition Device (White, 1998: 2).

2.1.2. THE ACQUISITION–LEARNING DISTINCTION HYPOTHESIS

The acquisition–learning distinction hypothesis claims that 'adults have two distinct and independent ways of developing competence in a second language', namely language acquisition and language learning (Krashen, 1981:10). The first type, language acquisition, can be compared to, if not equalled to, the way children develop competence in their first language because it is a subconscious process when we are only aware of using the language for communication but not of acquiring it. Consequently, as the acquisition is subconscious, so is our knowledge of the rules or the grammar of the language. When we acquire language, we can distinguish a correct structure from an incorrect one but we are not able to say why it is incorrect and which rule was violated. On the other hand, language learning is a conscious process when we are fully aware of the existence of the system of grammatical rules of the respective language. When we learn a language, we do not rely on intuition but can identify which rules needs to be followed and why. Contrary to the assumptions that ‘children acquire while adults can only learn’, the acquisition-learning hypothesis states ‘that adults also acquire, that the ability to “pick up” languages does not disappear at puberty’ because ‘adults can access the same natural “language acquisition device” that children use’ (Krashen, 1981: 10).

The distinction between learning and acquiring a language is also useful for the approach to error correction. While during conscious language learning it is ‘thought to be useful’ and should help us orient ourselves within the grammatical rules, during subconscious language acquisition error correction has very little or no effect at all (Krashen, 1981: 11). Krashen’s observation is in line with Chomsky’s claim that ‘the most crucial fact about language learning is that it proceeds on the basis of fairly simple data with no need for training or instruction or even correction of error on the part of the speech community’ (Chomsky, 1988: 70). Despite the fact that Chomsky used the term ‘learning’, the way he works with this concept is more similar to what Krashen calls ‘acquisition’.

Krashen’s view of adults being able to access the same device as children has, however, been severely criticised by many adherents of the critical age hypothesis according to whom the innate abilities to acquire a language start fading at the age of six. In addition to that, Krashen does not even specify what age he is exactly referring to when he refers to the language acquisition device ‘children’ use and such information would very much be needed as ontogenetically there are enormous differences between children of different ages.

The view of learning and acquisition can be related to the context of foreign language instruction also in the words of Mothejzíková,

> It seems a valid distinction between language competence that “comes natural” through social interaction and language competence that is systematically induced through formal instruction in the artificial classroom environment. Thus seen, L1 learning seems to be mostly the continuation of early acquisition plus some learning […], while L2 learning is largely learning accompanied – or rather usually followed, after the programme – by some language acquisition. (Mothejzíková: 1988, 24)

2.1.3. *THE NATURAL ORDER HYPOTHESIS*

The Natural Order hypothesis came with the idea that 'acquisition of grammatical structures proceeds in a predictable order. Acquirers of a given language tend to acquire certain grammatical structures early, and others later' (Krashen, 1981: 12). The studies into natural order first started in 1973 with children and their first language but as early as 1974 it was reported that even children acquiring second language display a natural order in acquiring grammatical structures and in the same year 'a natural order for adult subjects, an order quite similar to that seen in child second language acquisition' was reported by Bailey, Madden and Krashen (Krashen, 1981: 12). However, the fact that even second language learners show a natural order does not mean the natural order for the first language is identical with the natural order of the second language. According to Krashen, the Natural Order hypothesis proves the operation of an innate language acquisition device because acquirers tend to make very similar errors, so called developmental errors, during certain stages of acquisition (Krashen, 1981: 14-15).

This hypothesis can make us think that the syllabi of language courses and the order of the contents of language coursebooks should conform to the natural order of acquisition. However, Krashen is against this idea and he further promotes '[rejecting] grammatical sequencing in all cases where our goal is language acquisition' (Krashen, 1981: 14).

2.1.4. *THE MONITOR HYPOTHESIS*

We have stated above that the acquisition-learning distinction hypothesis presents two distinctive ways to gain linguistic competence. The monitor hypothesis builds on this idea and explains how these two ways are used in second language performance. According to the monitor hypothesis, 'acquisition "initiates" our utterances in a second language and is responsible for our fluency' whereas '[learning] has only one function, and that is as a Monitor, or editor' of our utterances (Krashen, 1981: 15). This hypothesis implies that learning and the knowledge of formal rules has only a fairly limited influence on our second language performance. It further claims that 'second language performers can use conscious rules only when three conditions are met' (Krashen, 1981: 16). These conditions are time, focus on form, and knowledge of the rule. These rules are necessary, but not sufficient, which means that even if all of them are met, the performer may not be able to use his or her conscious knowledge of the grammatical rules. The use of a monitor during performance allows the performer to include items which are not yet acquired but only learned, however, Krashen asserts that ‘anything less than a real grammar test will not bring out the conscious grammar in any force’ (Krashen, 1981: 18). The personality of the performer is crucial for the most efficient use of a monitor. According to how performers apply monitor, they can be divided into monitor over-users, monitor under-users and optimal monitor users. Optimal monitor users use monitor only when it does not impede communication and monitor under-users rely completely on the acquired knowledge. Monitor over-users apply the monitor too much due to their personality which does not allow them to trust their competence even if they have enough acquired knowledge or due to their previous studies, especially if they were taught only grammar, had no chance to acquire the second language and had only the opportunity to learn it (Krashen, 1981: 19).

2.1.5. The Input Hypothesis

Based on the findings of the previous hypotheses, the Input hypothesis tries to answer the question – ‘How do we encourage acquisition as opposed to learning?’. ‘We acquire […] only when we understand language that contains structure that is “a little beyond” where we are now’ that is ‘we move from stage *i*, where *i* represents current competence, to *i* + 1, the next level [by meeting] a necessary (but not sufficient) condition […] that the acquirer understand input that contains *i* + 1, where “understand” means that the acquirer is focused on the meaning and not the form of the message. […] This is done with the help of context or extra-linguistic information. […] When communication is successful, when the input is understood and there is enough of it, *i* + 1 will be provided automatically’ (Krashen, 1981: 21). To make the communication successful, it is necessary to modify the teacher input and ‘rough-tune’ it to the level of the students. When this criterion is met, ‘the classroom may be an excellent place for second language acquisition, at least up to the “intermediate” level’ (Krashen, 1981: 30).

Traditionally, most of second language teaching is conducted in contrast to the Input hypothesis and the approach is based on the idea that we first need to learn the structures thoroughly and only then can we use them in communication which is how fluency develops (Hatch, 1978: 401 – 435). However, adopting a “structure of the day” approach when both the teacher and the student know that the main aim of the lesson is to practice a chosen grammar point and to proceed to another point once the aim has been reached, ‘may even be harmful’ (Krashen, 1981: 22). To support this view Krashen lists a summary of reasons against the grammatical syllabus and the ‘structure of the day’ approach:

> (1) All students may not be at the same stage. The "structure of the day" may not be *i+1* for many of the students. With natural communicative input, on the other hand, some *i + 1* or other will be provided for everyone.
>
> (2) With a grammatical syllabus, each structure is presented only once. If a student misses it, is absent, is not paying attention, or if there simply has not been enough practice (input), the student may have to wait until next year, when all structures are reviewed! On the other hand, roughly-tuned comprehensible input allows for natural review.
>
> (3) A grammatical syllabus assumes we know the order of acquisition. No such assumption is necessary when we rely on comprehensible input, on roughly tuned natural communication.
>
> (4) Finally, a grammatical syllabus, and the resulting grammatical focus, places serious constraints on what can be discussed. Too often, it is difficult, if not impossible, to discuss or read anything of real interest if our underlying motive is to practice a particular structure. In other words, a grammatical focus will usually prevent real communication using the second language (Krashen, 1981: 25-26).

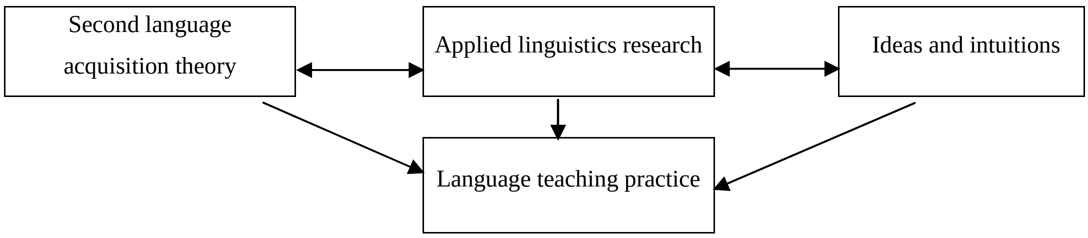
2.1.6. THE AFFECTIVE FILTER HYPOTHESIS

The Affective Filter hypothesis explains how affective variables of the learner, which can be categorized as motivation, self-confidence, self-esteem and anxiety, influence the process of language acquisition. The affective filter ‘prevents input from being used for language acquisition and thus acquirers with optimal attitudes […] are hypothesized to have "low" affective filters’. Classrooms that encourage low filters are those that promote low anxiety among students. [...] The Affective Filter hypothesis implies that our pedagogical goals should not only include supplying comprehensible input, but also creating a situation that encourages a low filter’ (Krashen, 1981: 32). The affective characteristics of an adult language learner will be further discussed in chapter 3.2.2. as it is immensely important in the context of language training.

2.1.7. *THEORY AND TEACHING PRACTICE*

'As well as being rational, informed, planned and considered, teaching and research are also intuitive, original, improvised and instinctive' (Richards, 2003: 297). There must be a mutual symbiosis of the theory, practice and intuition. In the past, the teaching 'materials, and many books on methodology, [were] based primarily on what [seemed] to work in the classroom, and only rarely on a theory' which led to the design of a diagram showing how the ideal relationship between theory, applied linguistics research, ideas and intuitions and language teaching practice should look like (Krashen, 1981: 4-6). The diagram in Figure 1 stresses the importance of mutual interconnectedness between the bases on which language teaching practice should be built.

Figure 1 Ideal relationship between theory, applied linguistics research, ideas and intuitions and language teaching practice (Krashen, 1981: 4)



The inevitable interconnectedness of theory, research, practice, and intuition, is proven by many teachers and it is also mirrored in Mothejzíková's answer to the question whether language teaching is an art or a science,

> The answer to the question […] seems, then, to be that language teaching must be both an art and a science. To the extent that it remains an art, it permits the individual teacher to exercise such personal gifts as s/he may be endowed with. To the extent that it can be related to a science or sciences and thus itself become an applied science, it can be developed in a coherent way, be given continuity, and be taught' (Mothejzíková, 1988: 13).

2.2. A Selection of Teaching Methods and Their Relation to Grammar

In this section we are going to look at some from the vast portfolio of methods of teaching a foreign language and their relation to teaching grammar. There are many more methods than will be discussed in this chapter (cf. for example Poláková, 1991) but the present thesis aims at describing only the most frequently used methods that are relevant to the context of in-company courses and only to such extent as to introduce their main treatment of teaching grammar.

2.2.1. Approach, Method, Technique

Before we discuss the individual methods, it is necessary to differentiate and define the differences between what a method, an approach, and a technique is. The definitions this paper adopts and uses are based on those suggested by Mothejzíková who sees their arrangement as hierarchical because 'techniques carry out a method which is consistent with an approach' (Mothejzíková, 1988: 221).

An approach is the top of the hierarchy and it is defined 'as a set of correlative assumptions dealing with the nature of language and the nature of language teaching and learning. […] It states a point of view, a philosophy' (Mothejzíková, 1988: 222).

A method is lower on the hierarchy as it 'is an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material, no part of which contradicts, and all of which is based upon, the selected approach. An approach is axiomatic, a method is procedural' (Mothejzíková, 1988: 223). This means that within one approach there can be more methods which can mirror the situation or the needs of the students. As there are more methods within an approach, there can be more techniques within a method.

A technique is the implementation of the method; it is 'what actually takes place in the classroom. It is a particular trick, stratagem, or contrivance used to accomplish an immediate objective. […] Techniques depend on the teacher, his [or her] individual artistry, and on the composition of the class' (Mothejzíková, 1988: 224).

2.2.2. GRAMMAR-TRANSLATION METHOD

The Grammar-translation method is a traditional method which 'dominated European and foreign language teaching from the 1840s to the 1940s, and in modified form it continues to be widely used in some parts of the world today' (Richards, Rogers: 2001: 6). This method focuses on explaining grammar rules to students by exposing them to sample sentences and on memorizing bilingual lists of vocabulary. This stage is followed by a heavily controlled practice stage in the form of translation exercises and all the tuition and explanation is conducted in the native language of the student, not in the target language (Harmer, 2007b: 48, Krashen, 1982: 127-128). Clearly, grammar rules play the main role in this method. The grammar-translation method 'teaches people *about* language but doesn't really help them to communicate effectively with it' (Harmer, 2007b: 49) and 'the focus is entirely on form, and not meaning' (Krashen, 1982: 128) so learning always precedes acquisition, if there can be any. In addition to that, this method 'violates nearly every component of the Input Hypothesis, and it is therefore predicted that this method will have the effect of putting the student "on the defensive". Students are expected to be able to produce immediately, and are expected to be fully accurate. Anxiety level […] is also raised for some students […]' (Krashen, 1982: 129).

2.2.3. AUDIO-LINGUAL METHOD AND PPP

The audio-lingual method is based on behaviourist approach to learning (Harmer, 2007b: 49). At the beginning of the lesson, students typically focus on a dialogue which contains the target language of the lesson. This method is heavily teacher-centred but there can be some amount of student-student interaction. It involves a lot of drills because the behaviourist approach is based on the idea that 'learning is the result of habit formation, where performing the correct response to a stimulus means that a reward is given; constant repetition of this reward makes the response automatic. This procedure is referred to as conditioning.' (Harmer, 2007b: 49). The audio-lingual method is connected with the 'mim-mem' technique because students are asked to 'mimic' and thus eventually 'memorize' the dialogue and 'the goal is the memorization of the dialogue, not the comprehension of a message. […] Indeed, according to some practitioners, the idea behind pattern practice is to avoid meaning altogether' (Krashen, 1982: 130-131).

Regarding grammar structures, 'audio-lingual teaching often results in inductive learning, the student attempting to work out a conscious rule on the basis of the dialogue and pattern practice, with the explanation section serving to confirm or disconfirm his guess. There is thus no explicit attempt to restrict learning to rules that are learnable, portable and not yet acquired'(Krashen, 1982: 132). However, the 'explanation section is considered optional' within this method (Krashen, 1982: 130).

A later development of the structuralist audio-lingual method resulted in its modern equivalent – the PPP which stands for Presentation, Practice, Production sequencing of the lesson (Harmer, 2007b: 50). During lessons following the PPP structure, students are first presented with the target language of the lesson and the teacher explains its meaning and form, next students get an opportunity to practice this structure in a controlled activity, and the last stage is a freer production related to the students themselves or other situations in the real world. 'The PPP procedure is still widely used in language classrooms around the world, [... and most] modern coursebooks include examples of PPP grammar and vocabulary teaching which have retained elements of structural-situation methodology and Audio-lingualism. But [...] PPP [... can be] very learning-based [...] and takes little account of students' acquisition abilities' (Harmer, 2007b: 50).

2.2.4. Direct Method

The term 'Direct method' is used for various methods but how we see it in this paper is in line with Karshen's focus on 'de Sauze's method and its present day versions' and principles which say that 'all discussion, all classroom language, is the target language' (Krashen, 1982: 135). This means that the students are directly immersed into the language they are studying. This method is very teacher-centred and the teacher is the 'model' as s/he provides model language containing the target structure or vocabulary in a dialogue which tries to engage the students and inference the meaning of the new subject matter. After several exchanges or dialogues, the students induce the rule with the help of the teacher who explains the rules in the target language (Krashen, 1982: 135). Despite using a lot of dialogues, 'the goal of the lesson [...] is grammar teaching [and consequently] discussion is always meaningful, but is rarely genuinely communicative' (Krashen, 1982: 136). Apart from not bringing real communication into class, '[t]he insistence on grammatical accuracy at very early stages, the use of error correction, and the grammatical focus of the course may cause anxiety and a high filter for all but the most dedicated Monitor user' (Krashen, 1982: 136). The outcome of this method is that students 'are soon able to initiate discussion with the teacher and ask questions about grammar. Some of this conversational, or better, "classroom competence" will be useful on the outside, but some will not. There is no explicit goal of providing tools for conversation with a more competent native speaker' (Krashen, 1982: 136).

2.2.5. Total Physical Response

Total Physical Response, or TPR, is based on students following progressively more complex commands given by the teacher and performing the actions s/he asks them to do. 'Students speak only when they are "ready", which usually occurs at around 10 hours of instruction, and consists of student commands. In the typical TPR class [...], the first few months [...] would consist of 70% listening comprehension (obeying commands), 20% speaking, and 10% reading and writing' (Krashen, 1982: 140).

As regards grammar, 'each lesson does have a grammatical focus in TPR. In other words, commands contextualize various points of grammar. [...] The assumption of TPR is that grammar will be learned inductively [...]' (Krashen, 1982: 141-142). An advantage of TPR is that it lowers students' anxiety because 'students are not asked to produce in the second language until they themselves decide they are ready' but on the other hand '[i]t may fail to completely satisfy the interesting/relevant requirement [...] because of constraints imposed by the continuous use of imperatives and the grammatical focus of lessons' (Krashen, 1982: 142).

2.2.6. Communicative Language Teaching and Task-Based Learning

Communicative Language Teaching was on the one hand a 1970's reaction to most of the methods preceding it, especially the Grammar-translation method and Audio-lingual method including its extension into PPP, and on the other hand a reaction to the new situation on the labour market in the British Empire which was being flooded by workers from the colonies who needed to communicate to be able to survive in the new country and find a job and who came from a heterogeneous language area.

The main principles of the communicative method are that ‘language is not just patterns of grammar with vocabulary items slotted in, but also involves language functions [...] which students should learn how to perform using a variety of language exponents [...] and if students get enough exposure to language, and opportunities for language use – and if they are motivated – then language learning will take care of itself’ (Harmer, 2007b: 50). There is a ‘strong’ and a ‘weak’ form of the Communicative Language Teaching. ‘The weak version […] stresses the importance of providing learners with the opportunities to use their English for communicative purposes and, characteristically, attempts to integrate such activities into a wider program of language teaching. […] The ‘strong’ version of communicative teaching, on the other hand, advances the claim that language is acquired through communication, so that it is not merely a question of activating an existing but inert knowledge of the language, but of stimulating the development of the language system itself’ (Howatt, 1984: 279).

A further development of the Communicative Language Teaching is Task-Based learning in which ‘the emphasis is on the task rather than the language’ and students try to ‘perform real-life tasks’ (Harmer, 2007b: 51). This means that ‘instead of language study leading to a task, the task itself is the main focus and jumping-off point for (possible) subsequent study later’ (Harmer, 2007b: 51). As a result, a syllabus of a course based on Task-Based Learning is not focused on the grammar points to cover, but rather on a list of tasks or activities the student will learn to perform. Lessons usually start by introducing the topic and the task. This introductory stage ‘is followed by a task cycle where the students plan the task, gathering language and information to do it, and then produce the piece of writing or oral performance that the task demands’ (Harmer, 2007b: 51). Only after the task is completed, is the language used to perform the task analysed, corrected and improved so it ‘is a significant departure from the original PPP sequence, since it takes the third element (production) as the starting point, not the end-point of the procedure’ (Harmer, 2007b: 51).

2.2.7. Natural Approach

A method which is actually labelled ‘approach’ by its name is the Natural approach. During classes conducted in line with this method, most of the time is allocated to providing input and ‘[the] teacher speaks only the target language in the classroom. Students may use either the first or second language. If they choose to respond in the second language, their errors are not corrected unless communication is seriously impaired' (Krashen: 1982, 138). What is especially important with this method is student's home preparation. The homework assigned is frequently grammar-based and it is at this time that students should focus on correction or self-correction because during homework they should not focus on meaning, as they do in the classroom, but on the form, rules and learning (Krashen: 1982, 139).

2.2.8. Eclectic Method and ESA – Engage Study Activate

Nowadays, most language teaching, including the one conducted by major Czech language schools, is eclectic. Eclecticism selects the most suitable techniques of the previously used methods and tries to blend elements which meet the needs of the students. It therefore refutes the idea of seeing the current period in language teaching as post-methodical or a-methodical and presents synthesis of previous developments and discoveries. As Harmer puts it

> Such eclecticism [...] is a proper response to the competing claims of the various trends [...]. However, the danger of eclecticism is the possible conclusion that since we can use bits and pieces from different theories and methods, "anything goes". Our lessons can then become a disorganised ragbag of different activities with no obvious coherence or philosophy to underpin them. This can be just as damaging as the methodological rigidity that eclecticism aims to replace. However, eclecticism that makes use of an underlying philosophy and structure, in other words, a principled eclecticism avoids these risks. Believing that students need exposure, motivation and opportunities for language use, and acknowledging that different students may respond more or less well to different stimuli, it suggests that most teaching sequences need to have certain characteristics or elements, whether they take place over a few minutes, half an hour, a lesson or a sequence of lessons. These elements are Engage, Study and Activate. (Harmer, 2007b: 51-52)

The first element, Engage, is connected to engaging, motivating and catching students' attention and interest. Harmer considers this element important because 'things are learnt much better if both our minds and our hearts are brought into service' (Harmer, 2007b: 52). It is the role of the teacher to engage the students by relating the material to what they know about their private and working lives.

The second element, Study, focuses ‘on the *construction* of something, whether it is the language itself, the ways in which it is used or how it sounds and looks’ and it practically corresponds to the first two parts of PPP, that is, to presentation and practice, but the difference is that ESA is much more student-centred and is full of ‘discovery activities [which] ask the students to do all the intellectual work, rather than leaving it to the teacher’ (Harmer, 2007b: 52). This gives students independence as the teacher in this method is not the sole knowledge provider, but rather a guide, facilitator, or even a coach. On the one hand it can give students a sense of achievement once they have discovered how ‘the construction of something’ works, but on the other hand, they are still able to get help from the teacher.

The third element, Activate, ‘describes exercises and activities which are designed to get students using language as freely and communicatively as they can. [...] The objective in an activate activity is for [students] to use all and any language which may be appropriate for a given situation or topic’ (Harmer, 2007b: 53). This element involves also a lot of personalisation and it focuses on role-plays, debates, discussions, email writing , and many other activities which teachers can interpret to the students as ‘a kind of rehearsal for the real world’ (Harmer, 2007b: 53). The Activate element can correspond to the Production stage of PPP, but ‘[activation] is not just about producing language in speech and writing, [...]. When students read or listen for pleasure (or when they are listening or reading to understand the message rather than thinking about the form of the language they are seeing or hearing), they are involved in language activation. They are using all and any language at their disposal to comprehend the reading or listening text’ (Harmer, 2007b: 53).

The three elements of ESA do not have to occur only in the Engage, Study, Activate order. An example of alternative ordering is Engage, Activate, Study, Activate in which students ‘are not taught language until and unless they have shown (in the activate phase) that they have a need for it. In some ways, this makes much better sense because the connection between what students need to learn and what they are taught is more transparent.’ (Harmer, 2007b: 56). Such ordering also helps the teacher show the students in practice what they need the new language for and this is a very important factor in motivating them. On the other hand, the teacher has to choose the first Activate activity wisely because if its level was too high or if it was too demanding, the effect could be the exact opposite and it could demotivate students.

2.3. How to Teach Grammar

Each and every attempt to teach new subject matter should follow the main principles of learning which can be traced back to the work of John Amos Comenius. Mothejzíková summarizes them under the labels of selection, gradation, association, and progressive integration and use (Mothejzíková, 1988: 30). The principle of selection asserts that ‘it is essential to carefully select what is most important and, at least temporarily, ignore the rest’; the principle of gradation ‘allows us to decide in which order things should be taught’ and to what we will expose the learner during that particular lesson; the principle of association gives the learners an opportunity ‘to associate the new to the old, the unknown to the known’; and the principle of progressive integration and use ‘states that as each new element and rule is learned, it should be integrated with everything learned up to that point and put to use within the emerging system’ (Mothejzíková, 1988: 31).

In the last chapter 2.2., we looked at a selection of teaching methods. Within each approach, within each method, there are specific techniques and activities that the teachers and coursebook authors can choose from to treat the presentation and practice of grammar. The techniques of teaching grammar within the methods could be subsumed to two main groups – those who believe that ‘through the observation and imitation of language in realistic situations students will master the rules inductively without needing to be conscious of them in the form of overtly expressed grammatical generalizations’ and those that involve ‘a systematic attempt to provide students with a conscious knowledge of the [grammar] rules’ (Mothejzíková, 1988: 94). The first group is ‘less suitable for adult learners who tend to prefer a more “rational” approach to language learning and feel happier if they are given some kind of the point being learned’; from the teacher’s point of view ‘in the absence of any clearly-defined terminological framework there is no way of checking whether the students have internalized the correct rule, a partial rule, or no rule at all’ (Mothejzíková, 1988: 96). We also have to take into account the level of the students involved, ‘[a]dvanced students need a more sophisticated treatment of grammatical rules which goes beyond the manipulation of surface-structure patterns and which provides some degree of insight into deep structure relationships’ (Mothejzíková, 1988: 98).

It may give an impression that the 'methods are mutually exclusive' but each teacher should bear in mind that 'none of the methods is complete in itself, and that most teaching situations call for a combination of [...] approaches' (Mothejzíková, 1988, 94, 100). The view suggested by Mothejzíková which is also adopted in this thesis is that 'successful language teaching depends on a mixture of habit-formation and analytic-deductive procedures, realized in various combinations according to the nature of the learning task and the type of students involved' (Mothejzíková, 1988: 94).

2.3.1. Types of Activities to Present and Practise Grammar

We have established that what we are looking for in an efficient grammar lesson is a combination of habit-formation and analytic-deductive activities. Depending on the selected teaching method, the steps and their ordering may vary but to describe the steps in general terms, we can use Harmer's 'four things that students need to do with "new" language: be exposed to it, understand its meaning, understand its form (how it is constructed) and practise it' (Harmer, 1998: 52). Not all of the mentioned steps or 'things' must be taken from the coursebook; many of them can be supplemented by the teacher who can adapt them according to the students' needs. Nevertheless, the coursebook should guide the learners through all the steps needed for mastering the respective grammatical structure.

In the context of in-company courses and adult learners it may be quite liberating for both the teacher and the students if they admit that adult learners 'do not necessarily need their learning to be camouflaged [...]. If they can see the point of learning – and if we are able to explain the reason why we are asking them to do things to their satisfaction – we do not have to play games or sing songs to get their cooperation' (Harmer: 1998:11).

2.3.1.1. Presenting Grammar

Once we choose the method which presents grammar, we can distinguish the ways it is presented. Generally, we can choose between two main types of presenting grammar, i.e. the covert and overt grammar teaching. Covert grammar teaching is such that the students may be working with material 'where new grammar is practised or introduced, but their attention will be drawn to the activity or to the text and *not* to the grammar' and the role of the teacher is to 'help the students to acquire and/or practise the language, but they do not draw conscious attention to any of the grammatical facts of the language (Harmer, 1987: 3). The second type, overt grammar teaching, 'means that the teacher actually provides the students with grammatical rules and explanations – the information is openly presented' (Harmer, 1987: 4).

Further, we can choose from inductive and deductive teaching. 'A deductive approach starts with the presentation of a rule and is followed by examples in which the rule is applied; an inductive approach starts with some examples from which a rule is inferred' (Thornbury, 1999: 29). There are advantages and disadvantages to both these approaches.

If we look at the deductive approach, on the one hand it encourages teacher-centred, frontal style of teaching, and increases teacher talking time, it 'encourages the belief that learning a language is simply a case of knowing the rules', and in addition to that 'explanation is seldom as memorable as other forms of presentation, such as demonstration' (Thornbury, 1999: 30). To minimize the teacher-centeredness, 'the formal explanation should be as simple and graphic as possible, and when possible, include a contrast to a similar previously learned pattern' (Mothejzíková, 1988: 103). On the other hand, deduction can be time-saving which 'will allow more time for practice and application' and it is in line with the expectations of many students, 'particularly [...] those who have an analytical learning style' (Thornbury, 1999: 30).

The inductive approach makes the lessons more student-centred, activates students more and 'rules learners discover for themselves are more likely to fit their existing mental structures [... which] will make the rules more meaningful, memorable, and serviceable. The mental effort involved ensures [...] greater memorability' (Thornbury, 1999: 54). However, '[the] time and energy spent in working out rules may mislead students into believing that rules are the objective of language learning, rather than a means', the amount of time can also be used at the expense of the time for practice, and last but not least, students may not discover the rule correctly or may formulate it too vaguely (Thornbury, 1999: 54).

It would be very helpful to teachers if it was possible to say which one of these approaches is more efficient, whether it is the deductive or the inductive approach. However, the result of the comparisons is 'inconclusive [which] is no doubt due to the number of variables involved' (Thornbury, 1999: 38). The student's learning style preferences, level, skills, intelligence, or even mood; structure to be taught; teacher's experience and expertise; resources; time; and other circumstances describing the teaching situation will always vary. This is the reason why even when using the same coursebook, two lessons covering the same structure may differ substantially and the teacher may need to adjust his or her approach according to the variables.

According to Harmer, there are six main characteristics of a good presentation; it should be clear, efficient, lively, interesting, appropriate, and productive (Harmer, 1987: 18). 'Clear' means that the teacher should select such presentation techniques and language that allows the students to understand the new pattern's meaning without difficulty. 'Efficient' because '[the] aim is to get to the personalisation stage as soon as students can manipulate the language' (Harmer, 1987: 18). 'Lively and interesting' as such presentation increases motivation of the students and memorability of the new subject matter but it must still be 'appropriate' because 'it should be appropriate for the language that is being presented, [...] it should be a good vehicle for the presentation of meaning and use' (Harmer, 1987: 18). Last but not least, it should be 'productive' and it 'should allow students to make many sentences and/or questions with the new language' (Harmer, 1987: 18). Examples of techniques to present grammar which can be adapted to match the abovementioned criteria can be using charts, dialogues, timelines, a text for contrasts, a text for grammar explanation, listening texts, using visuals and other realia, demonstration, or explanation (Harmer, 1987: 18-27). The teacher should 'check that the learners understand the meaning of the language they are studying' for example by asking concept checking questions (Lindsay, Knight, 2006: 41). The presentation techniques should be selected with the type of grammar in mind because 'spoken and written grammar can be very different. Forms which are acceptable in one type of grammar are not necessarily acceptable in the other' (Frendo, 2005: 9).

2.3.1.2. Practising Grammar

As was mentioned above, students should get enough practice on the form, meaning and use of the newly discovered pattern. The first division that can be made is to written and oral practice. Oral practice includes for example drills, interaction activities, games or information gaps; examples of written practice are written drills, gap-fills, multiple choice, matching activities, error correction, or reordering jumbled words to make sentences (Harmer, 1987: 41-55; Frendo, 2005: 130-131).

Whether the teacher chooses oral practise, written practise or a combination of these, it is important to bear in mind that controlled practice should come after presentation and should precede freer practice which must precede free communicative activities because '[in] the classroom environment, far better result can be obtained by urging our students to learn structures and elements and then use them in graded communication' than if these stages are reversed (Mothejzíková, 1988: 32). All the stages of practice should aim at simulating the real situations learners can meet in their working context or everyday life because 'in the business world the language is a means to an end, not an end in itself […]. The theory is that language is learned via the interaction; the learners learn by doing the task' (Frendo, 2005: 13).

The aim of the practice activities is to achieve 'precision at applying the system, and automisation of the system [... that is,] accuracy and fluency' (Thornbury, 1999: 91). In addition to that, according to Thornbury, practice activities should allow for the students 'to reorganise (or restructure) what they know in order to make it more complex' which is traditionally considered to be rather a part of the presentation of new structures (Thornbury, 1999: 92).

Accuracy is connected with focusing on the correct form of the pattern and 'for learner to be able to devote attention to form, it helps if they are not worrying too much about the meaning [...so...] activities focused on accuracy might work best if learners are already familiar with the meaning they are expressing' (Thornbury, 1999: 92). Accuracy cannot be achieved without attention from the students and enough time, '[therefore] rushing students through accuracy practice activities may be counterproductive. Classroom activities traditionally associated with accuracy, such as drilling, may not in fact help accuracy that much' (Thornbury, 1999: 92). In addition to that, 'nowadays the usefulness of drills is regarded as limited in that they do not give the learners an opportunity to interact naturally with other speakers' (Lindsay, Knight, 2006: 18). To practise accuracy, apart from attention to form, enough time and knowledge of the meaning, the student also need to get clear feedback in the form of correction, learners 'need to see that without [accuracy], they risk being unintelligible' (Thornbury, 1999: 92).

Fluency 'is the ability to process language speedily and easily [and it...] develops as the learner learns to automise the knowledge' (Thornbury, 1999: 93). When the aim of the practise activity is improving fluency the activities should pay attention to meaning more than to the form and 'the activity should attempt to stimulate the psychological conditions of real-life language use', therefore, 'the activity should have a communicative purpose' (Thornbury, 1999: 93). This gives students an opportunity to start using the language in real life situations during which they have to focus on the message they want to give and not the form and succeeding in such activities can be very motivating for them because it shows them what the new language is useful for. Examples of activities to practise fluency include information gaps or role plays and any other activities in which 'the production of language is motivated by a communicative purpose, rather than by the need to display grammar knowledge for its own sake' (Thornbury, 1999: 93). This means that activities such as response drills 'which so frequently masquerade as communication' do certainly not belong to this group (Mothejzíková, 1988: 235).

The last aim is restructuring which involves 'integrating new information into old' and it is 'the dawning realisation that [learners] have moved up another notch in terms of [their] commands of the language' (Thornbury, 1999: 94). An example of an activity which evokes restructuring for the students is 'when learners are put in a situation where the message they are trying to convey is misinterpreted, [so] they may be forced to reassess their grasp of a rule' (Thornbury, 1999: 94).

The role of the teacher within the practising of new language is to provide 'scaffolding: the teacher supports the efforts of the learner; guiding them in the right direction' and this may involve 'designing activities that build on previous activities' or 'helping learners see how the knowledge they already have is useful for making sense of the new knowledge' (Lindsay, Knight, 2006: 4). It would also be counterproductive to throw the learners into deep water without giving them enough support; the teacher needs to 'break down the learning task into manageable stages' (Lindsay, Knight, 2006: 4).

2.3.2. WHY TEACH GRAMMAR?

Grammar is probably one of the most widely discussed topics in the language learning area. Both teachers and students can be very sensitive when it comes to discussing including grammar in their lessons and even 'Expert opinions on how important grammar teaching is for learning language change regularly' (Lindsay, Knight, 2006: 10). There are, of course, arguments for including grammar in the lessons, as there are against. The ideas against grammar arose especially as a response to the rigid grammar translation method and the time when lesson were concerned more 'with the "code" rather than the "use of the code"'(Mothejzíková, 1988: 39) which put off students who had no intentions of becoming linguists and who only needed to communicate. Consequently, such methods were challenged because '[some] people felt that teaching the grammar of the language did not necessarily help people to use the language. [...] Language is used, the argument went, actually to *do* things, to perform certain functions [..., so instead] of teaching grammar, we should teach functions. The problem, of course, is that the sentences that perform functions are made up of grammatical elements' (Harmer, 1987: 5). It is further believed that the learner 'must develop skill in manipulating the linguistics system, to the point where he can use it spontaneously and flexibly in order to express his intended message' (Mothejzíková, 1988: 46) and, unfortunately for those who would like to omit grammar, 'grammar permeates all language skills'(Mothejzíková, 1988: 234). Moreover, the learners in in-company courses are adults and 'for older learners, knowledge of how the language works in terms of sentence building, word endings, and the relationship between words is essential for them to be able to express themselves' (Lindsay, Knight, 2006: 10).

After trying to ignore grammar altogether, the situation has become less tense and 'there is now a general feeling that students do need to learn how to perform the functions of language, but that they need a grammatical base as well. Modern courses often teach a grammatical structure and then get students to use it as part of a functional conversation' (Harmer, 1987: 5). The modern approach to teaching grammar is not a return to the idea that grammar should be ‘the goal of teaching, nor that a focus on form alone is sufficient’ (Thornbury, 1999: 25) but it asserts the role of grammar for achieving other goals and for achieving sufficient language competence. We can say that the ‘[learner] must distinguish between the forms which he has mastered as a part of his linguistic competence, and the communicative functions that they perform. In other words, items mastered as a part of a linguistic system must also be understood as part of a communicative system’ (Mothejzíková: 1988, 46). This also means that it is important not to forget that a structure can have more communicative functions depending on the context in which the structure is used (Mothejzíková: 1988: 43-44).

It is also crucial that the teachers recognize the difference between the scientific grammar which aims at being as comprehensive as possible and pedagogic grammar which ‘is primarily concerned not to give a systematic account of a native speaker’s idealized competence, but to provide a comparatively informal framework of definitions, diagrams, exercises and verbalized rules which may help a learner to acquire knowledge of a language and fluency in its use’ (Mothejzíková, 1988: 39). The learner must be able to have a sufficient repertoire of both functional language and grammar structures of the language to be able to respond spontaneously because ‘there are many areas of business English or ESP where there is not much reliable information on what people actually say. (There are various reasons for this lack, such as the difficulty in recording natural discourse, people’s reluctance at being recorded, and business people’s concerns over issues of confidentiality.)’ (Frendo, 2005: 7).

Stating that the study of grammar is important, especially for adult learners, does not mean that grammar itself should become the aim of the lesson. The aim should always be a communicative one and grammar should be the means to achieve such aims. In line with that we can say that ‘”You shouldn’t start speaking in a foreign language until you can say things correctly” is simply wrong […]. Learners should be encouraged to use English to try to communicate as soon as they begin learning it’ (Lindsay, Knight, 2006: 10-11).

3. Theoretical Background: In-company Courses and In-company Students

3.1. The Characteristics of In-Company Courses

The aim of the present thesis is to examine teaching grammar in the context of in-company courses. In-company courses as we see them in this thesis are on-demand courses taught for a company as opposed to public courses which can be attended by anyone who enrols to an already existing course with a given syllabus. This means that the character of in-company courses depends not only on what the language school's visions are but also on what the client wants.

This section provides an overview of the standard types of in-company courses taught by language schools and their respective characteristics. Consequently, we will be able to delimit which type of in-company courses the thesis will focus on. In-company courses can be divided according to various criteria; it can be their syllabi and contents, or time allocation. It is also important to note that on the one hand there are courses which the employer provides as a form of a benefit or non-cash incentive to their employees and, on the other hand, there are mandatory courses. In addition to that, we could differentiate between individual courses and group courses which most frequently accommodate 2 to 12 students. Nevertheless, this classification can never be fully comprehensive as each company has different priorities, different requirements and different conditions for the courses and new mutations of the standard types are constantly emerging. Whatever the specificities of the course, one thing will always apply 'Business English learners expect a high level of professionalism in the way a course is run' (Frendo, 2005: 40).

In-company courses typically take place in the company's own premises, such as the company's meeting rooms or training facilities but a course can also take place in a hotel or at the language school's premises. According to Frendo, 'The teacher should allow plenty of time to check the layout [of the room] beforehand … [and] if the syllabus calls for lots of group work, the teacher will also need to ensure that the necessary break-out / syndicate rooms (rooms for additional activities such as preparation for a negotiation) are available […]. Other issues to think about include ventilation, heating, sunlight, and noise'

(Frendo, 2005: 41). However, the reality of Czech in-company courses frequently does not allow for any such arrangements, and students have to make do with a small meeting room, which cannot be adapted beforehand because the teacher cannot be admitted into the building without the students picking them up at the reception. It is not unusual that in case the meeting rooms are overbooked, tuition takes place also in students' offices, department's kitchens, or even hallways.

3.1.1. Syllabi of the Courses

The contents of courses are not limited in any way as most of the quality language schools today will be ready to prepare a tailor-made solution for each one of their clients. These solutions can be divided to several categories. The first category is business English courses. These typically follow the balanced approach of general courses and put equal importance on teaching grammar, however, what differs is the context in which the language is presented, practiced and finally produced. In business English courses it is the working context but the context still remains quite general and should ideally be applicable on more areas of business. Therefore, such courses include a wide range of business topics all of which are elaborated on only to such an extent that also students who are not specialists in this field can relate to them. Consequently, professionals from different fields of specialization or workers from different departments can attend general business English courses together. As a result of this universal usage of the course, they are the most frequent choice of employers paying for courses for their employees. It is also the reason for business English being the main area to focus on in Chapter 5.3.

The second category, general English courses, provide the participants with a balanced combination of skills – speaking, writing, listening, reading and the use of function language in the context of everyday situations. Grammar is an important component of these courses because their aim frequently is to increase the attendees' level and the ability to command more and more grammatical structures in more and more contexts and situations is one of the essential parts of this process.

A solution for students who already have reached a certain level of English and now wish to improve language skills they need for a specialized area are courses of English for specific purposes (ESP). ESP courses can be, for example, aimed at logistics, human resources or the wood industry. The role of specialized vocabulary is considered more important than grammar in such courses and this approach is often mirrored in the ESP course books[1]. The vocabulary-focused course books can of course be supplemented by grammar suitable for contexts a person will need in such working contexts[2].

Courses focusing on practicing specific business soft-skills are also demanded by clients. It can be a combination of soft-skills in one course such as telephoning, negotiating, presentation skills, business correspondence and participating in meetings, or it can be a course aimed solely at one of these areas. In this type of in-company courses, function language, phrases and strategies are of greater importance than grammar. As both skills-focused and ESP courses work within the students' achieved level and as their aim is not to improve their general level, they tend to have lower time allocation than business or general English courses.

Companies wishing that their employees become certified speakers of English may require that their employees take language exams at the end of the language training. There are three main types of language exams. First group would be general English exams. If the employer does not want their employees to spend too much time on the exam-specific preparation, they may opt for City & Guilds IESOL and ISESOL exams which do not require a special exam preparation course. However, there can be demand for exam preparation courses as well, for example courses focusing on Cambridge English Language Assessment exams such as FCE or CAE. The second group consists of courses preparing for business English exams. The most frequently taken of these would be the Cambridge BEC or City & Guilds EBC and SETB. The third group may be closely interconnected with ESP courses, as it consists of preparation courses for exams of English for specific purposes such as English for Office Skills by City&Guilds, or ILEC and ICFE by Cambridge. Due to the different formats and aims of the aforementioned language exams, the approaches to teaching grammar may differ within this type of in-company courses.

[1] Cf. for example the Express Series by Oxford University Press, *English for Football* or *English for Aviation.*
[2] Cf. for example the Oxford English for Careers *Tourism, Medicine, Oil and Gas* by Oxford University Press

Another type of in-company courses are conversation classes. These can be used as a kind of follow-up courses whose aim is to expand the knowledge on the level students have already reached before they start attending a higher level course. Such type may also be preferred by students whose passive knowledge needs to be transferred into active usage. Conversation courses can focus on business or general topics or it can be a combination of both depending on the learner's needs and preferences.

The last type would be a fusion of all these depending on the needs of the participants. It can be organized regularly, for example as a business English course with every third lesson aimed at presentation skills, or it can be decided according to the student's current needs, for example general English course complemented by a few lessons of presentation skills if the learner is about to give a presentation at a conference soon. These are, of course, only illustrations, there are countless other possibilities including more teachers teaching one group of students when each teacher focuses on a different type of lessons.

3.1.2. Time Allocation

There is not a unified time allocation for an in-company course. Different types of courses and different budgets require different time allocation. As a result, an in-company course can have various time arrangements. The first criterion is whether the course is regular, or we can also say extensive, or if it is intensive, or we can also label these as immersion courses.

The time allocations for intensive courses range from a single day filled with four or even six 90-minute blocks up to thirty 90-minute lessons a week or as Frendo puts it 'Intensive training can be anything from a few hours a day, for a few weeks, to ten days in a hotel working all day' (Frendo, 2005: 40). Intensive courses can be further subdivided according to the criteria mentioned in 3.1.1.

The frequency of the lessons during the extensive courses also varies but in general extensive training 'refers to regular but short sessions, such as two 90-minute sessions per week [which...] is typical of some in-company training […]. The advantage is that such classes cater for those learners who cannot find time to take an intensive course. The disadvantage is that attendance and motivation can be a problem' (Frendo, 2005: 40). 'Most experienced teachers will testify to the common problem of irregular attendance […]. There are many possible reasons for this; [learners] may have too much work, or they may find that the teaching is not proving as effective as they had hoped' (Frendo, 2005: 34). In the context of Czech in-company courses, there are typically once-a-week or twice-a-week courses but, especially since the financial crisis, demands for once-a-fortnight courses have been rising. The frequency of the course is closely connected to the total lessons intended to be taught in that course. The length of courses can vary from ten sessions up to ninety or more sessions per year depending on the aims of the course, number of participants, or the budget of the respective department or company.

The length of a typical in-company lesson is 60 or 90 minutes but there can also 120-minutes lessons. Lesson which are 45 minutes long, so typical at Czech state schools[3] are not very usual and many language schools prefer not teach them for practical reasons – teachers travelling to companies' premises do not wish to spend more time travelling to the location than teaching the actual lesson.

Apart from extensive and intensive courses there is also blended learning. It is a type of language training when e-learning or other electronic means of training are combined with face-to-face lesson taught by a teacher (Frendo, 2005: 40). Lessons with the teacher may differ in frequency but also in their role within the course. In the period between the lessons, the teacher may be available for consultations via email or other electronic means of communication.

3.1.3. Employer's Approach

At this stage it is important to introduce two terms which are also crucial for in-company courses. They are 'client' and 'learner'. In many other courses this could be the same person, however, in the context of in-company courses the client and the learner are

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[3] Section 26 School Lesson
(1) A school lesson in basic, basic artistic, secondary and tertiary professional education shall last 45 minutes. A lesson of vocational training and job practice at secondary and tertiary professional education shall last 60 minutes. A framework or accredited educational programme for pupils with special educational needs may specify a different length of school lesson. In justified cases school lessons may be divided or joined together. (ACT No. 561 of 24th September 2004 on Pre-school, Basic, Secondary, Tertiary Professional and Other Education (the Education Act))

typically two different entities who may have different expectations of the course. The client is the ‘sponsor’, typically a company paying for the courses (Frendo, 2005: 26) and the learners are the employees attending these courses. ‘A provider of language training must consider the needs of the sponsor, who may be a company, or a head of department, or the HR (Human Resources) manager. These will all have certain perspective on what the learners will need to cover on a course’ (Frendo, 2005: 26). Therefore the client sometimes can decide on the contents of the courses and students do not have their say and sometimes the courses are according to students’ needs. This can result in a situation in which students have to attend a course which is aimed on something their employer decided they needed but they themselves may not consider a priority.

The approach of the company paying for the course can vary depending on the size of the company or the needs of the company and it influences many aspects of the course from the number of participants, time allocations and contents to place where the tuition takes place and with which equipment. Depending on the company’s structure and size, there are mainly two people, or departments, which take part in the negotiations and decisions, human resources and procurement. At this moment there are no binding legislative criteria which would delimit the quality conditions of in-company language training (see 3.1.4.), so the priorities may largely differ.

As was mentioned above, some in-company courses are a benefit for the company’s employees. However, many courses are not, and in such cases what the clients require is a proof that the training has been efficient. It is ‘important to remember that businesses are interested in getting something worthwhile for their money. A company pays for training because it feels that the investment will lead to some sort of profit, be it more motivated workers, more effective negotiators, better presenters, managers, or whatever’ (Frendo, 2005: 26). Clients require certain levels of attendance are met by the course participants and ‘in some companies managers can get annoyed with staff who agree to attend a course, and then find that they have other more pressing priorities’ (Frendo, 2005: 34).

3.1.4. Legislation and In-company Courses

State education in the Czech Republic has to be conducted according to the ACT No. 561 of 24th September 2004 on Pre-school, Basic, Secondary, Tertiary Professional and Other Education (the Education Act). The role of this act is to specify in detail all necessary aspects of language tuition in state schools, for example the length of the lesson, time allocation or number of students in the class or the list of textbooks which have obtained an official approval clause from the Ministry. However, private language schools are much less legally regulated. Apart from the regulation of the conduct of post-secondary courses and the regulation of the language schools authorised to organise state language examinations, tuition in language schools remains unregulated and is entirely dependent on the schools' own criteria.

Consequently, clients may struggle with recognizing quality language school and quality tuition from schools whose only selling point is a low price. This situation on the market gave rise to two Czech organizations ACERT and AJŠA or even international organizations such as EAQUALS. These two Czech associations, ACERT and AJSA, started working on a manual for language tuition contracting authorities[4]. The aim of this manual is to help both public and private contracting authorities with setting objective qualitative and not only pricing criteria during the selection procedures.

3.1.5. In-company Learner

As was mentioned above, the present thesis aims to focus especially on the general business English. We cannot say that there is one characteristic to describe a learner of in in-company course of business English and what he or she wants. What will always characterize in-company students is variety, whether in connection to their age, work experience, goals and reasons for learning English, level in the company's hierarchy, language level, or learning styles. Some people already use English in their jobs, 'for others it is an investment which brings status and possibly financial reward', 'some people

[4] http://www.ajsa.cz/tiskove-zpravy/tiskova-zprava-10-2012/

have very specific needs, and some people just want their English to get better. Some people may be near the end of their working lives, and others may just be starting a new job, or career, or project' (Frendo, 2005: 1). We can try to group students according to these variables but the company not always allows that and teachers may have to embrace the variety in the group.

3.2. PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS

3.2.1. COGNITIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF AN ADULT STUDENT

When trying to depict the psychological characteristics of the target learner it is important to start with the cognitive domain of a typical adult learner as this domain 'is of key importance in the acquisition of both a first and a second language. The processes of perceiving, attending, storing, and recalling are central to the task of internalizing a language' (Brown, 2000: 78).

3.2.1.1. Critical Age / Period Hypothesis

Adult learners often express regret about not having learnt or not having had the opportunity to learn a foreign language when they were children because there seems to be a general belief that adults can never master a foreign language to the same extent children can. This opinion has spread regardless of the critical age – critical period hypothesis but it precisely this theory that can provide support for this belief. Critical age / period hypothesis, first proposed by Penfield and Roberts in 1959, claims that 'for the purposes of learning languages, the human brain becomes progressively stiff and rigid after the age of nine' and 'when languages are taken up for the first time in the second decade of life, it is difficult [. . .] to achieve a good result' (Penfield, Roberts 1959: 236, 255). In contrast to the age stated in the original hypothesis, Lenneberg who worked on developing the hypothesis, marked puberty as the critical age (Lenneberg, 1967: 176) and later on it was suggested, for example by Singleton and Ryan, that different components of language acquisition have their own critical periods (Singleton & Ryan 2004: 84–94).

Whatever age is argued for, this hypothesis still suggests that that there is a chronological age after which it becomes much more difficult to master a language. However, there have been disputes as to how accurate the critical period hypothesis is (cf. Singleton and Munoz's article 'A critical review of age-related research on L2 ultimate attainment', 2011). Also, there is a stereotypical image supporting the critical period hypothesis; a stereotype of a family which starts living in an L2 area and the children learn the L2 soon and parents sometimes struggle even after many years. However, this view is disputed by Munoz and Singleton (Singleton, Munoz, 2011: 14) and as Mothejzíková points out, this stereotype is a 'myth' and 'a distorted picture' of reality as

> [i]t ignores the fact that children spend many hours a day interacting linguistically with their native peers, while their parents spend very little time in such interaction. Given the same amount of exposure to and interaction in the L2, it is reasonable to expect that adults, with their greater cognitive ability and study skills, would acquire or learn an L2 faster and better than children, assuming they can overcome their inhibition and "take the plunge". The only exception to this [...] is that young children can acquire – not necessarily *learn* – L2 pronunciation better than adults as a result of the former's better motor memory (Mothejzíková, 1988: 33).

The abovementioned quotation argues for adult learners' capability of learning a foreign language due to adult learners' 'greater cognitive ability'. However, it mentions one of the possibly greatest hindrances to adult language learners, overcoming the fears and inhibitions, which will be further discussed in 3.2.2.

3.2.1.2. Learning Abilities of Adult Learners

As was mentioned in 3.2.1.1., adult learners of languages have a 'greater cognitive ability' than children (Mothejzíková: 1988: 33). Cognitive processes are those focused on thinking and include attention, memory, producing and understanding language or reasoning and problem solving and thus '*cognitive [learning]styles* are usually defined as an individual's preferred and habitual modes of perceiving, remembering, organizing, processing, and representing information'(Dornyei, 2005: 124). For all the concepts which contribute to creating a person's individual learning style, it is not possible to assign one typical learning style to adult; '[s]ome feel comfortable learning by watching and listening, whereas others feel they cannot learn unless they take down notes and analyze rules. They may also have preferences for learning through different sense modalities: touching, hearing, smelling, tasting, and seeing' (McKay, Tom: 1999: 3).

As adult learners have much more experience gained from their previous learning, they may have a much better understanding of what approach works best for them and they can be critical of teaching methods based on their prior experience because adult learners 'bring with them expectations of how language classes should be organized and taught' (McKay, Tom: 1999: 3). For example, if they experienced only the grammar-translation method before, they may 'feel threatened when they find that speaking and listening are major features of their new class' (McKay, Tom: 1999: 3) and it is up to the teacher to explain to the students the importance of incorporating these skills into the lessons.

Attention is the learner's 'tendency to respond to and to remember some stimuli more than others' (Kalat, 2011: 275) or it can also be defined as 'the process of allocating cognitive resources to a stimulus or task at hand' (Bruning, Schraw, Norby, Ronning, 2004: 58). Adults have longer attention span than children, 'have greater powers of concentration. They are far more disciplined and far more capable of than young children of steady work of a routine nature, something that may be an unavoidable type of activity in an efficient L2 programme' (Mothejzíková, 1988: 25).

What is also of crucial importance in addition to the attention span, is the 'working memory span', which is connected to short-term memory. This concept can further be subdivided into four sub-concepts,

> (1) *The phonological loop* is the specialized verbal component of working memory, concerned with the temporary storage of verbal and acoustic information. […]
> (2) *The visuospatial sketchpad* is the visual equivalent of the phonological loop, responsible for integrating spatial, visual, and kinaesthetic information into a unified representation, which can be temporarily stored and manipulated [… and] which can, for example, translate verbal information into an image-based code.
> (3) *The central executive* is […] responsible for [working memory's] attentional control. It constitutes the supervisory attentional system that allocates attentional resources and regulates the selection, initiation, and termination of processing routines (e.g., encoding, storing, and retrieving). […]

> (4) *The episodic buffer* [... is] a storage counterpart of the central executive, [... and it] combines information from different sources and modalities into a single, multi-faceted code, or 'episode' [...]. (Dornyei, 2005: 56-57).

However, what we strive for in language education is long-term memory and retention of the learned information because 'unless individuals can store, retain, and recall information, they have not really learned it' (Chastain, 1988: 39). There are several factors influencing the retention and recalling of information. 'For longest retention and greatest ease in retrieval, new knowledge must be associated with previous knowledge' which is a process often referred to as 'subsumption' because 'new knowledge is subsumed into the learner's pre-existing cognitive network' (Chastain, 1988: 42). Other factors are the meaningfulness of the information and its emotional value for the student because 'meaningful information is retained longer and recalled more easily than material that is not understood by the learner [and] emotionally charged material produces more vivid and long-lasting memories than those to which no feelings are attached', or the purpose why the student is learning the language (Chastain, 1988: 42). These factors influencing the retention of information introduce the next area which deeply influences learning together with the cognitive abilities of the learner, that is, the affective characteristics of the student.

3.2.2. Affective Characteristics of an Adult Learner Influencing Motivation

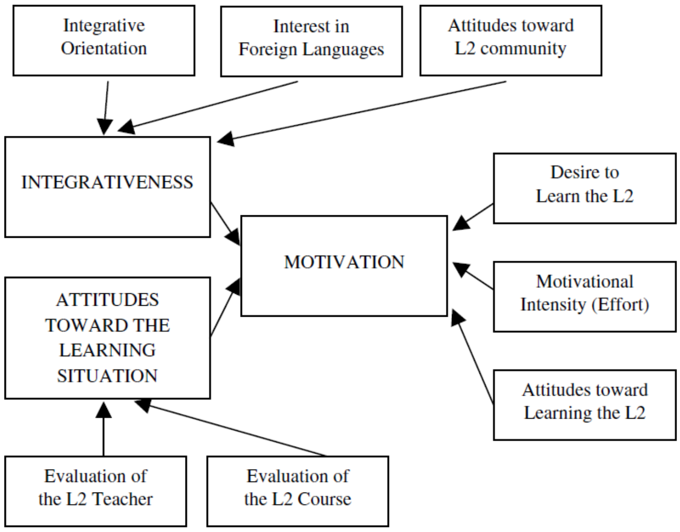
Affective characteristics are those connected to the emotions and affects of the language learner. The concepts which belong to this realm are among others the aims and motivation to study, satisfaction, zest or interest, self- esteem, but also frustration, discouragement, anxiety, embarrassment or disappointment. Affect is important in language learning because if the students are 'listless and disengaged, they are far less likely to remember what they encounter than if they are engaged and emotionally open to what is going on [and …] in a humanist classroom, learning a language is as much an issue of personal identity, feelings and emotions as it is about language' (Harmer, 2007a: 58-59). What is more, 'in the presence of overly negative feelings such as anxiety, fear, stress, anger or depression, our optimal learning potential may be compromised'(Arnold and Brown, 1999: 2). The teacher should also take into account that '[adults] are frequently more nervous of learning than younger pupils are. The potential for losing face becomes greater the older you get' (Harmer, 1998: 11).

What cannot be omitted is the teacher's approach as a motivating factor, 'the teacher can enhance motivation by providing interesting activities and by making clear the value of what is being taught and its relevance to [students'] goals' (McKay, Tom: 1999: 4). Teacher can also influence the learner's self-esteem. 'Self-esteem has been conceptualized both in a global [...], and in a situational [...] manner' (Dornyei, 2005: 211). Teachers should bear in mind both these concepts. They may not be able to influence the global self-esteem but they should be able to recognize when it is low and when the learner needs more support. However, what they can influence is the situational or task self-esteem by creating tasks which are challenging but at the same time achievable in which learners can succeed. Not only with children but also with adult learners teachers should 'focus on students' strengths to promote self-esteem' (Moreno, 2010: 40). In the context of in-company courses, the learners will be in the same group with their colleagues and being constantly unsuccessful might threaten their professional image.

3.2.2.1. Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation

We can observe two main motivational components of learning a foreign language – intrinsic (inner) motivation and extrinsic (outside) motivation. According to Dornyei, the first is the interpersonal / affective dimension which is also called integrative or orientation motivation (Dornyei, 2005). A schematic representation of the integrative motivation is presented in Figure 2. The second main component is the practical or utilitarian dimension which is connected to the advantages a better knowledge of the language may bring to the learner, such as better career opportunities, promotion or salary increase (Dornyei, 2005: 69). This component of existential motivation tends to be very important in motivating adult learners, especially in-company learners, as they often realize that being able to communicate well in English increases their value on the job market and thus also the salary they can ask for. On the other hand, having to study a foreign language may be quite demotivating for those in-company learners who do not feel the need to study because their jobs require them to communicate in a foreign language only seldom and in a limited way or who need only rather passive knowledge of the language to be able to read some manuals or guide and who attend the courses only because they are required to do so by their employer.

Figure 2: Schematic Representation of Gardner's (1985) Conceptualization of the Integrative Motive quoted in Dornyei (Dornyei, 2005: 69).



To measure and assess various components of self-determination and self-motivation of students, Noels, Pelletier, Clément and Vallerand's scale presented in Appendix 1 can be used. It works with a scale of reasons for studying a foreign language. The student marks each answer to the question 'Why are you learning a foreign language?' on a seven-point scale which ranges from 1 = 'Does not correspond at all' to 7 = 'Corresponds Exactly'. This scale, however, does not reflect the existential motivation of the learner connected to acquiring a better job.

In-company courses can run for many semesters and the motivation of students may be changing or developing. Despite this, a teacher cannot overwhelm their students by asking them to fill in such long questionnaires repeatedly. A good teacher should bear the areas of motivation in mind not only during more thorough and interactive needs analyses at the beginning of the course, but also throughout the whole course.

Young learners often learn in order to get better grades and grades tend to be a huge if not the main motivation for them, but according to McKay and Tom 'this is not the case for most adult second language students. They are not generally required to attend classes, nor to take tests. Motivation then, must come from within them and be based on their perception that what they are learning is of interest and of value to them' (McKay, Tom, 1999: 4). However, even adult students 'can be disruptive and exhausting' and they can ‘spend the lesson talking to their neighbours’ or ‘disagree vocally with much of what the teacher is saying’ or ‘arrive in class late and fail to do any homework’ (Harmer, 1998: 11). In addition to that, McKay’s and Tom’s characteristics do not apply to quite a large proportion of, in-company students at least in the Czech context. As was mentioned in 3.1.3., there are many clients who want to make sure their money invested in the language development of their employees is well-spent and who require the students not only take regular tests but some may even ask students to contribute towards the tuition costs if they do not pass the test or if their attendance does not meet the required limit. This can be motivating for some but very stressful for others as they may be afraid of the embarrassment in the eyes of their colleagues when they have to pay for the course.

3.2.2.2. Motivation and Achievement, Activities, and Agency

‘Nothing motivates like success. Nothing demotivates like continual failure’ (Harmer, 2007a: 101). Consequently, the desire to have highly motivated students could lead the teacher to designing too easy activities which everybody will be able to achieve. However, students need to have a sense of a real achievement and may even feel underestimated once they realize the teacher is not willing to challenge them. On the other hand, the activities should not be too difficult, it is important to set tasks students can succeed in (cf. also 3.2.2) (Harmer, 2007a: 101).

Apart from choosing an appropriate level of difficulty of the activities, it is also crucial to choose suitable ones which will engage the students because ‘students’ motivation is far more likely to remain healthy if they are doing things they enjoy doing, and which they can see the point of’ (Harmer, 2007a: 101). The teacher should, therefore, constantly observe students’ responses to activities and actively look for feedback on their choice. In addition to that, students themselves can participate when choosing the activities they consider enjoyable or important. ‘When students have agency, they get to make some of the decisions about what is going on, and, as a consequence, they take some responsibility for their learning’ (Harmer, 2007a: 101). This does not have to mean that the role of the teacher during such lessons is diminishing, but the learner’s role is changing from that of the passive recipient to that of an active partner who ‘may well have a view of the importance of learning which makes them stick to a course of study in a specifically adult way. The attention span that cooperative adults can offer is almost certainly greater than that of children and adolescents' (Harmer, 1998: 11).

3.3. Sociological Factors and the Role of the Teacher

The process of learning is also influenced by the sociological variables. In-company students cannot be defined in terms of a single social group; the variables differ and depend, for example, on the type of company they work for and its culture, their cultural and educational background, the position they occupy within the company's hierarchy, and the relation to other participants of the in-company course. In addition to that, the position of the teacher in relation to the student is crucial.

3.3.1. Company's Hierarchy

In-company courses are frequently attended by students from all levels of the company's hierarchy and their needs, wishes and expectations may differ significantly, 'a high-level manager in a multinational corporation will not have the same needs as a person on the shop floor, even if they both have the same marks in a language placement test' (Frendo, 2005: 26). 'Senior managers, for example, may wish to focus on specific skills like presenting or negotiating, or may wish to have 1-to-1 lessons because of their status within an organization, whereas more junior staff may not have such precise needs, or may not be able to influence how their training is managed. So a company may arrange separate classes for senior managers and other sessions for clerical staff' (Frendo, 2005: 2). Despite this, as a result of the financial crisis, many companies' budget for language training does not allow for establishing of enough groups and junior and senior staff often have to attend courses together which may cause tension and which may considerably influence the atmosphere in the classroom.

3.3.2. The Role of the Teacher in an In-company Course

The role of the teacher is always crucial in the creation of a suitable environment for successful learning. In an in-company course the position of the teacher in relation to the student is even more important, especially in business English courses or ESP courses. The reason is that students have to believe that the teacher is competent enough to help them, business professionals, develop in the language areas connected to their job. What can make the role of the teacher more complicated is if the students ‘come from a culture [or a generation] in which the teacher’s job is [or was] to transmit knowledge, [because then] they may feel uncomfortable with group or pair work and may question the validity of a class in which the teacher does not stand in front of the students and lecture [... and] they may doubt the competence of a teacher who admits to not knowing something’ (McKay, Tom: 1999: 3).

In a general English course or exam focused course, it is not as likely for the teacher to feel ‘lost’ because in these courses the teachers know more about the subject than their students. However, when it comes, for example, to discussing meetings and the importance of grammar for successful negotiating, students rely also on their own expertise and experience and may challenge that of the teacher. If the teacher tries to act as the sole knowledge provider, they may put themselves in a very fragile position and also influence students’ motivation in a negative way because

> however nice teachers are, students are unlikely to follow them willingly (and do what is asked of them) unless they have confidence in their professional abilities. Students need to believe that [teachers] know what [they] are doing. [...] Aspects such as the way [they] dress, where [they] stand and the way [they] talk to the class all have a bearing here. [...] When students have confidence in the teacher, they are likely to remain engaged with what is going on. If they lose that confidence, it becomes difficult for them to sustain the motivation they might have started with. (Harmer, 2007a: 101-102)

It is much more suitable for the teacher to see themselves in rather different roles than the role of the sole knowledge provider in such courses because ‘in business English the relationship can be more symbiotic: the teacher knows about language and communication; but the learner often knows more about the job and its content’ (Frendo, 2005: 5). This type of relationships allows the students to get the most out of their course but only under the condition that they accept such participating relationship when they also have to be responsible for the course of the lessons and that they respect the fact that the teacher is still a language specialist, not a business expert. However, it is not only the students who have to adapt to the situation, business English teachers ‘need credibility, professionalism, and an awareness of the business world. Above all, they must be able to adapt to a particular teaching context and be willing, themselves, to learn’ (Frendo, 2005: 5) and whether or not the learner is used as the source of materials and areas to focus on, 'the teacher remains the language expert' and should be able to present himself or herself as one (Frendo, 2005: 50).

3.3.3. Teacher as a Trainer, Coach, Consultant

Rather than the role of the sole knowledge provider, the teacher can adapt the roles of a trainer, coach or consultant. As was discussed in 3.3.2. and 3.2.1.2., adult students of languages usually come to the course with their own history of studying a foreign language and they may not be happy at all to be looking at the prospects of again becoming students who are subject to the authority of the teacher. Another reason why students may not identify themselves with the need of having an authoritative teacher is that 'a teacher is traditionally seen as someone whose task is to educate someone so that they can have more chance at succeeding in life' (Frendo, 2005: 5). In contrast to that, in-company students often are already successful and expect more of a partnership from the teacher.

Therefore, the students may feel better if the teacher adopts the position of a language trainer because trainers have now become quite common in the business context. In addition to that, they see the trainer as 'someone who is required to change a person's behaviour or ability so that they can do a specific job [...], a trainer is training them to behave – both linguistically and pragmatically – in a certain way' (Frendo, 2005: 5). As a result of this approach, the students can realize better that the teacher is there to help them improve in their tasks and not to be lecturing them.

Another role teachers may adopt is that of a language coach 'who can help the learner take advantage of the learning opportunities in their own working environment [...and] to better understand his or her own strengths and weaknesses, and plan accordingly' (Frendo, 2005: 5). Not only is it fashionable to have your own coach nowadays, but this label also stresses the importance of the balanced two-way relationship between the teacher and the student which is much more suitable for adult students because it supports their autonomy and responsibility for shaping the contents of the course.

Teachers are sometimes afraid that their students expect them to be business experts. However, teachers should realize that their language and communication skills are also expertise they may utilize to give consultations on language development. The position of a consultant may be wider and apply to the whole company, not only one course. Even in this role, the teacher leaves the students plenty of autonomy, choice and responsibility over the course.

In all these roles, it is crucial that a thorough needs analysis is conducted at the beginning of the language training. It should be both the analysis of the company's expectations and needs as well as the analysis of the language competencies of the individual students and the contexts in which they need to use the language and the new grammatical structures. The aim of the present thesis is to look at how the coursebooks support the teachers in 'selling' the importance of grammar to the students and in providing communicative real-life contexts in which grammar can be studied and activated.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The present thesis consists of two parts which complement each other. The first chapters, namely Chapter 2 and 3, provide the theoretical background to the thesis and offer a survey of relevant material dealing with teaching grammar and present the characteristics of in-company courses. The section about teaching grammar covers the concept of second or foreign language acquisition and the hypotheses related to this area. Next, selected teaching methods and their relation to teaching grammar are discussed. The section concludes with a current view on presenting and practicing grammar, and why grammar should be taught. The second section of the theoretical background focuses on the context of in-company courses and the characteristics of adult learners studying English in in-company courses. The chapter explores the typical characteristics of in-company language training and presents the vast variety of courses this field brings. The psychological and sociological factors of adult learners and their relationship with the teacher conclude this chapter.

4.2. PEDAGOGICAL RESEARCH

The aim of the present pedagogical research is to map the needs of the in-company students and relate them to the teaching methods discussed and to compare and contrast how two modern general business English textbooks, *Business Result* and *International Express*, approach teaching grammar.

There are two main approaches to pedagogical research, quantitative and qualitative. Each of them has their own characteristics, features and advantages and disadvantages. Qualitative methods are considered to be rather 'soft, flexible, subjective, [... or] speculative' in contrasts to the characteristics assigned to the quantitative methods – 'hard, fixed, [and] objective' (Silverman, 2000: 2-3). However, the quantitative features are present in a qualitative research and vice versa, '[b]ecause the term qualitative inquiry draws attention to one item in a contrasting pair, it might be thought that there should be nothing quantitative about it, but this is far from being the case' (Richards, 2003: 11). Qualitative and quantitative approaches are not to be seen as rivals because current pedagogical research combines them to benefit from the advantages of both[5] (Švaříček, Šeďová, 2007: 27).

The approach to pedagogical research adopted in the present thesis is more quantitative but as it endeavours to map learners' subjective experience of language training as well, it also includes qualitative features. From all the possible methods within the two approaches the form of an on-line survey which focuses on both quantitative and qualitative features was selected. This choice was governed by the field in which the research was conducted, the area of in-company courses. Companies are frequently not willing to let the classes to be observed for research purposes and even the results of the on-line survey had to be anonymized. In addition to that, in-company learners are very busy people and the length of the questionnaire needs to reflect that. The final form of the questionnaire was thus a compromise between the needs of the researcher and the interest of the learners[6] (Gavora, 2000: 107).

4.2.1. Needs Analysis Survey

The present pedagogical research is based on a needs analysis survey conducted with 231 in-company learners. The needs analysis forms were filled in by in-company learners who work for a corporation which is a part of a large multinational. Before their language training started, they took a complex language audit whose aim was to assess their language level and part of which was also an interactive needs analysis form.

The analysis was conducted with 231 learners but 59 of them chose not to answer any of the questions in the needs analysis form. The data were collected with the help of an on-line application. The needs analysis has the form of an interactive questionnaire and it is a voluntary part of the language audit and the students can decide if they fill it in or not which resulted in 59 of the analysed students not answering the questionnaire. The answers

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[5] ...'kvalitativní a kvantitativní přístupy nejsou soupeřící paradigmata. Naopak, současný rozvíjející se proud pedagogického výzkumu toto silně reflektuje a snaží se oba přístupy kombinovat s cílem maximálně využít silných stránek obou metodologických přístupů' (Švaříček, Šeďová, 2007: 27).
[6] 'Délka dotazníku je tedy často kompromisem mezi požadavky výzkumníka a schopnosti a zájmem respondentů' (Gavora, 2000: 107).

of these 59 learners are not included in the table in Appendix 2. Individual questions that other participants decided not to answer are marked 'x'.

When learners fill in the questionnaire, their answers are recorded in a language audit protocol together with the results of their language audit. These protocols are not anonymous; they contain the learner's name, email address and company details. This information is strictly confidential and it is not possible to share such information. As a result it was not possible to put the protocols per se to Appendix 2. The data collected during the needs analysis were exported to a table which aggregates all the answers from the protocols and which allows for better filtering and analysis. Any data identifying the names of the students or companies they work for were deleted and learners participating in the survey were only labelled by numbers.

The results of the survey were evaluated and used as the background for the discussion about what in-company students expect from their language courses in relation to grammar, what would suit such needs, preferences and expectations best and they also serve as a springboard for the comparison of two modern general business English coursebooks by Oxford University Press, *International Express* and *Business Result.*

4.2.2. Teaching Methods in Relation to In-company Courses

The teaching methods previously discussed in 2.2. are evaluated in the context on in-company courses. The characteristics of each method is considered in relation to the reason for studying English in-company learners stated in the needs analysis and in relation to the characteristics of in-company learners and in-company courses presented in Chapter 3.

4.2.3. Coursebooks Comparison

The course materials that were chosen for the comparison are both examples of business English courses, *International Express* and *Business Result.* We aim to focus on grammar within business English and not, for example, general or specific English, because it is one of the most frequently demanded type of courses by the employers who order the courses for their employees as English is the lingua franca of business and because business English is one of the most universal areas of in-company courses which can meet the needs of students from various departments and areas of specialization within one course.

The aim of this comparison is to observe how both the coursebooks treat grammar and whether it is in line with the method which suits in-company courses the most, and whether its approach to teaching grammar helps the teacher persuade the students about the importance of studying grammar for their working life.

5. PEDAGOGICAL RESEARCH

5.1. IN-COMPANY STUDENTS' NEEDS ANALYSIS SURVEY

In order to see what in-company students expect from their courses, thorough needs analyses should always be conducted at the beginning of their language. The results of the needs analysis then serve as a guide for the teacher and specify what students expect, need and prefer. In some cases, the initial needs analyses may be conducted before the tuition begins as they serve as the basis for setting up the whole system of language training in the company.

5.1.1. NEEDS ANALYSIS FORM

The needs analysis form starts with student's self-assessment of his or her language competencies and a job description, then proceeds to the contexts in which the student uses the target language most often and then it focuses on the contents of the course by asking the student what he or she would like to focus on during the course. Students choose their answers from a scrolling menu but can also specify any details they wish in open answer boxes. The results of the needs analysis are available in Appendix 2.

5.1.2. NEEDS ANALYSIS RESULTS

5.1.2.1. Language Level

After students' level of English was assessed by an independent language audit, they were asked to give also their own estimate of their language level. Table 1 summarizes the language levels of the analysed students according to the CEFR. The table shows that there are representatives of each level of the spectrum which suggests that also their expectations and language training needs may vary.

Table 1: Language Level of the Analysed In-company Learners

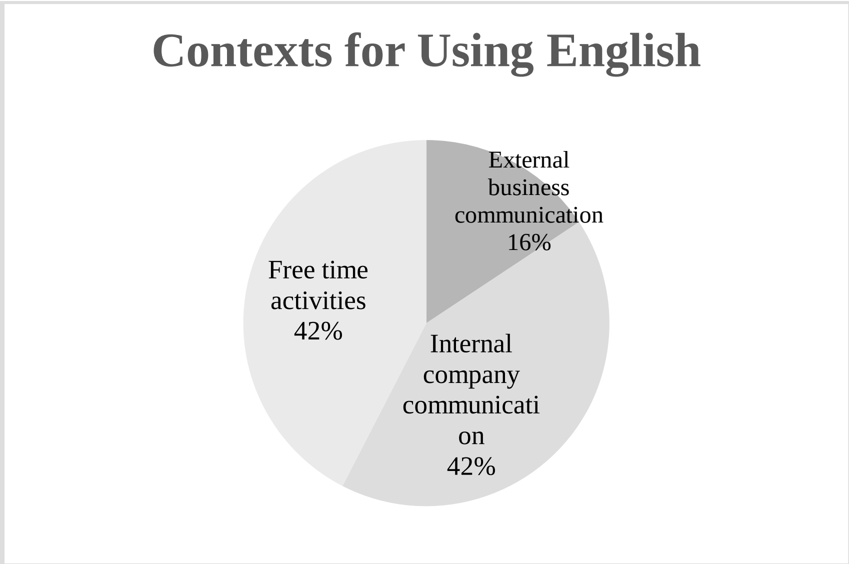
Language level		
CEFR level	According to language audit	According to self-assessment
Zero beginner (A0)	4	2
A1/ A1+	21	15
A2/ A2+	40	57
B1/B1+/B1++	62	59
B2/B2+	33	31
B2++ /C1	8	8
C1+/C2	4	0
Total	172	172

5.1.2.2. Most Frequently Used Contexts and Skills

In order to be able to choose the best materials for the learners, it is essential to know what their motivation for studying a foreign language is and in which contexts they need to be using the language. In relation to the ESA method, the teacher should engage the students and use their interest in the topic to motivate them. When the teacher can show the students in which exact situation they encounter every day they will be able to utilize the new language, their motivation is likely to be higher. In addition to that, the 'activate' stage of the lesson can then draw on practising the language in these specific situations. As a result of this, when students actually do encounter such situation in the real life in the future, they already feel much better prepared for it than if they have to transfer what they know from other contexts into the new one.

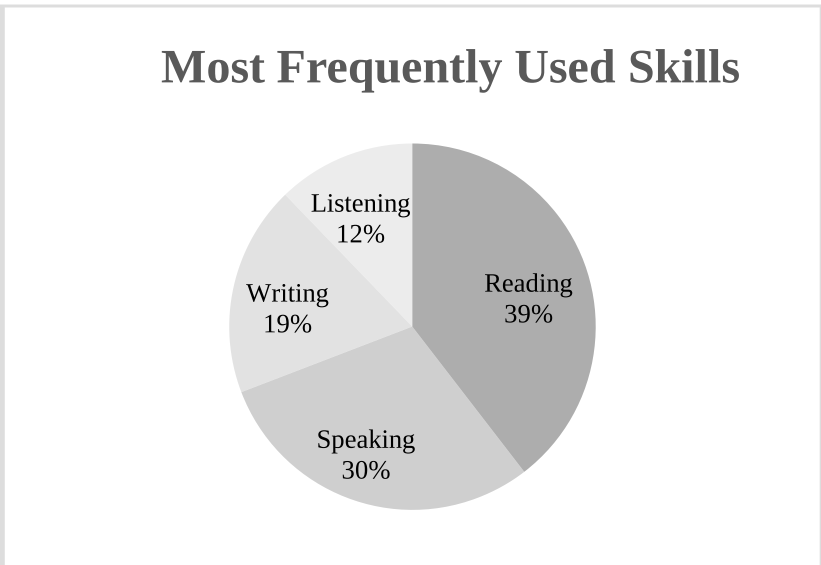
Graph 1 below summarizes the contexts in which the analysed in-company students use English. Only 16% claimed they use English for external business communication and contact with clients but internal company communication and contact with colleagues and superiors amounted to 42%. This may be caused by the fact that the corporation for which the analysed students work is a large multinational and not only do its employees have to communicate with the parent company, but also many foreign employees are sent for shadowing or regular posts in the Czech Republic. It is interesting, that the same percentage of students, 42%, said that their main area for using English is outside work – during social meetings and free time activities. However, when we contrast business-related communication to the communication during free time activities, business communication prevails with 58% to 42%.

Graph 1: Contexts for Using English



Another important criterion analysed in the survey is connected to the language skills that students need to use most frequently. The highest proportion of students, 39%, needs English especially to read texts whether they are connected to their work or private life. Second most frequent is skill is speaking with 30%, followed by writing, 19%, and listening with only 12%.

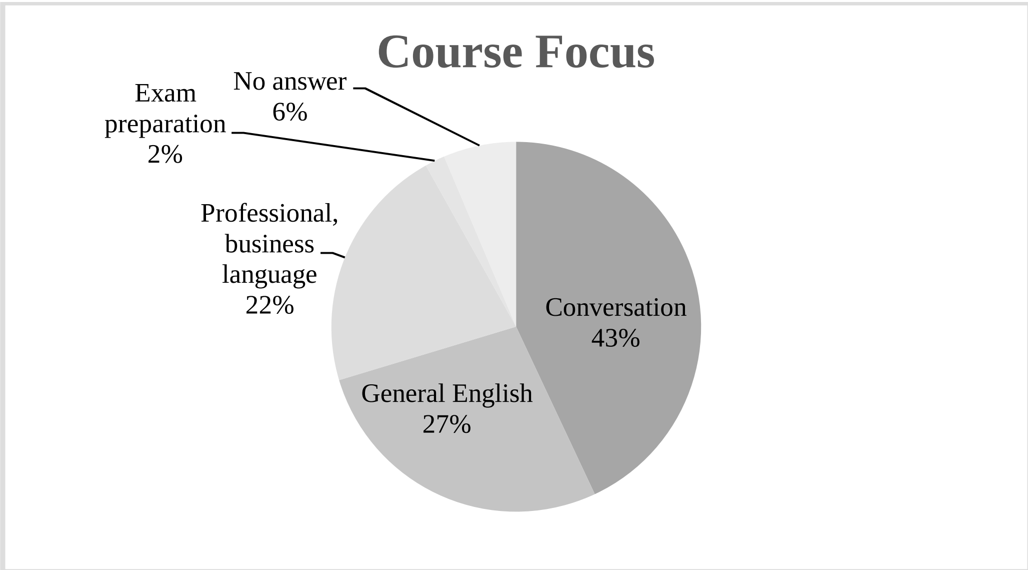
Graph 2: Most Frequently Used Skills



5.1.2.3. Preferred Course Focus

Many companies prefer to select the focus of the courses according to their policies instead of letting students choose for themselves. It can happen that employer's preferences differ from the preferences of the employees and the course focus cannot be changed. However, even in such situations it is useful for the teacher to know what students want to focus on most. The teacher has a chance to stress such aspects in any chosen area and thus motivate the students more or, when confronted with the results, some clients may decide that they will allow the employees to focus on the area they prefer.

Graph 3: Course Focus



As we can see in Graph 3, most of the analysed set of employees, 43%, said they preferred conversation-focused lessons. General English course was preferred by 27% of employees and business English, the choice mostly preferred by the employers, was third with 22%. When we contrast the results of the course focus with the contexts in which students use English most frequently, we can see that despite the fact that 58% of students said they needed to use English in business communication, whether external or internal, only 22% see it as their priority when studying the language. It may be caused by the fact that the students feel they have enough opportunity to use the language in these contexts and would prefer to have experience from other contexts as well. Another explanation may be connected to the possible interpretation of the word "Conversation" because it was not further specified in the questionnaire whether it should be general conversation or conversation on working or business topics, and there are also business-related conversation courses. Only a very small percentage, 2%, wanted to focus on exam preparation and 6 % of students expressed no preferences at all. It is surprising that none of the students chose ‘Specific language of my profession’. It may be caused by the fact that students already know the job-specific vocabulary as they use it frequently.

Students were further asked to specify which areas they would especially like to develop. The exact question was ‘The course should especially focus on developing:’. They could choose up to three options from: Speaking, Listening comprehension, Reading comprehension, Writing, Grammar, Vocabulary, and Fixed phrases. It is striking that not a single student out of the 172 students selected an answer. All three possible choices remained unanswered for all the students. Therefore, the results of this question are not a part of the table presenting the results in Appendix 2. The reason for not answering this question may be that the students prefer a rather balanced combination during their lessons or they did not see this as important as answering the other questions. In relation to the topic of the present thesis, teaching grammar, this section shows that students are interested in choosing the contexts in which they need the foreign language but do not feel it is necessary to choose how the teacher will help them achieve good performance in such situations.

Next question focused on the skills for business communication learners would like to improve in, see Table 2. Students could choose up to three options but not all students used all the options available. The most frequent business skill students wished to practice was “Making arrangements with colleagues/business partners” with 80 votes, followed by “Social conversation, small talk” with 73 and the third choice was “Formal and informal emails, correspondence” with 50. Of course, it can never suffice to learn only function language and fixed expressions typically used in these most wanted situations. There must always remain some space for manoeuvring and there is no such communication in the real world that could be reduced to functional language only. It is the role of the teacher to choose all the relevant language for being successful in these situations, and that includes not only the lexis and fixed phrases, but also appropriate grammar structures in the appropriate amount.

Table 2: Business Communication Skills

Business Communication Skills	
To improve, I need to focus especially on:	Selected by
Making arrangements with colleagues/business partners	80
No answer	79
Social conversation, small talk	73
Formal and informal emails, correspondence	50
Presentations	40
Negotiations	34
Management	33
Telephoning	23
Reports	23
Written analyses	22
Meetings	21
Selling	17
Understanding manuals, etc.	9
This is not an area I would like to focus on	5
Business trips, arranging them or going on them	4
Leading interviews	3
Total	516

Communication skills related to the students' specific professions were discussed in the following question. It is not possible to predict all the possible answers. Consequently, students did not select the answers but answered in open answer boxes. A vast majority of students, 72%, decided to leave the answer box empty and only 12% actually provided information about the specific job-related areas they would like to focus on such as 'specialised phrases, conversation' (Student 103), 'banking products' (Student 92) 'Speaking about collecting debts, method of working, ability to defend and explain processes which my department uses' (Student 107). It is interesting that 9% of students again mentioned areas from general business English which were also covered in the previous question, for example they asked for 'conference calls' (Student 6) or 'negotiation, comprehension, describing processes, writing emails' (Student 38). Despite the fact that these are nor 'skills', they also mentioned focus on vocabulary, 4%, grammar, 2%, and speaking, 1%, but they did not specify any special context in which they would like to use these as in 'grammar and listening comprehension' (Student 76). Despite the fact that students included answers that are not skills, we have kept the labelling of Table 3 to reflect the original question.

Table 3: Profession-related Communication Skills

Profession-related Communication Skills		
No answer	123	72%
In the context of their specific job	21	12%
In general business context	16	9%
Vocabulary (unspecified context)	7	4%
Grammar (unspecified context)	3	2%
Speaking (unspecified context)	2	1%
Total	172	100%

The last question focusing on course content asked students to specify general communication skills they feel they need to improve in. This question remained unanswered by 75% respondents. For this question, students can enter longer answers into the box so some of the answers combined more areas. Table 4 below lists the answers under the category which was prevalent in the answer. Despite being most frequently mentioned, grammar-related topics amounted to 11% only. Answers included ‘vocabulary and syntax’ (Student 161), ‘grammar – revision’ (Student 13) or ‘Gain experience using basic grammar so that it stops limiting me when speaking + improve vocabulary’ (Student 46). Again, students included answers that are not ‘skills’ the labelling of Table 4 is kept to reflect the original question.

Table 4: General Communication Skills

General Communication Skills		
No answer	129	75%
Grammar	19	11%
Vocabulary	11	6%
Productive skills (writing, speaking)	10	6%
Receptive skills (reading, listening)	1	1%
Other	2	1%
Total	172	100%

5.1.2.4. Results of the Needs Analysis in Relation to Teaching Grammar

The results of the needs analysis show that students do not feel a strong need to focus on developing their knowledge and ability to use grammar as there were only 11% of students mentioning grammar when selecting areas to focus on in general English. Even less, 2%, of students chose this option in the context of professional communication. This may be caused by the fact that many students still believe that focusing on grammar equals grammar-translation method and drilling grammar rules rather than using it to enlarge their repertoire of language they can produce spontaneously. Learners do not seem to realize that by selecting for example ‘negotiations’ at the same time they actually select, for example, first and second conditionals without which they cannot negotiate successfully and they say they do not need to focus on grammar. However, learners of a foreign language do not need to realize that. It should be the role of the teacher and not the student to ‘decipher’ the connections between the communicative aims the learners need and the grammar needed for reaching these aims. Students are able to identify situations in which they need to use the language whether they are business or free-time related and the coursebook’s or the teacher’s role is to select the target language, that is the vocabulary and the grammar structures, which needs to be mastered in order to be successful in such situations.

5.2. Teaching Methods Discussed in Relation to In-company Courses

The aim of this chapter is to evaluate the teaching methods discussed in 2.2. from the point of view of Czech in-company courses. The aim is to mark the most suitable teaching method to choose according to the information collected in the needs analysis in 5.1., characteristics of in-company courses, and typical characteristics of adult learners in Chapter 3. There is no method that would suit the needs of all learners, and there certainly is not a method that would suit all in-company learners of business English. ‘Classrooms and cultures across the world may have their own [...] appropriate way of doing things which takes into account local expectations and needs. The reality is that teachers pick and choose the approach best suited to their own experience and teaching style, what resources they have available, and the particular learning needs of the learners’ (Frendo, 2005: 14). The best method may not depend on the culture of the country but also on the individual corporate cultures of the companies. Despite this, it is possible to predict which methods have the potential to be suitable for in-company courses and which do not.

5.2.1. Grammar-Translation Method and In-company Courses

As was mentioned Chapter 3, the most frequent goal of employers paying for the courses is to have employees who are able to communicate in the situations of their everyday working life, they do not need them to become language specialists, and this view is also supported by the answers in the needs analyses presented in 5.1.2. Many Czech adult learners can also be prejudiced because most of them have experienced the grammar-translation method during their past language study at the state schools and they already know whether this method did, or rather did not, help them learn to communicate in the language. Another disadvantage of this method in the context of in-company courses is that lessons conducted according to it are heavily teacher-centred and students do not have much influence over the proceedings during the lesson which is not what adult learners typically prefer. Adult learns prefer being able to influence the subject matter covered in the course, in-company students expect it and often pay for it. Consequently, it cannot be said that the grammar-translation method would be in line with the needs of a typical in-company student. Translation may not come useless for some in-company students who are, for example, asked to translate some company documents to or from English. These are, however, rare exceptions and should not be considered typical.

5.2.2. Audio-Lingual Method, PPP, and In-company Courses

The audio-lingual method may be useful for some individuals but it will not meet the needs of the majority of adult in-company learners because they typically prefer to use the analytical abilities adults have to study a language rather than memorize some sequences or dialogues by heart. In addition to that, in-company students often claim they lead very busy and stressful lives and memorizing may be a rather time-consuming type of home preparation for them. Also the demand on practising communication will not be met if the lesson is conducted according to this method.

The later development of the audio-lingual method, PPP, seems much more suitable for in-company courses as the learners do not feel they are practising something without meaning due to the presentation phase. And the last phase, produce, gives them a chance to use the new language more freely and communicatively in a situation which requires the new pattern. Therefore, how useful this method really is for students, could be determined by how the ‘produce’ part is realised in relation to the situations the students really need to practice. If the produce part incorporates real life situations from the contexts students are interested in, it can be a very motivating method which directly shows students why they learned the new structure and in what concrete situations they will be able to use it. However, at this personalized form, PPP may already transform itself to Harmer’s ESA.

5.2.3. Direct Method and In-company Courses

‘The direct method […] has been very successful with […] students who have intrinsic motivation for language study and who believe that the study of conscious grammar is essential. For these students, the inductive study of grammar is in itself interesting, and provides all the interest necessary. In other words, grammar is subject matter. Acquisition […] comes from the teacher talk used to present the grammar’ (Krashen, 1982: 137). However, this is not what Czech in-company learners express as their preference. The needs analysis results in 5.1. show that none of the students prefers ‘grammar’ as the main focus of the course and also the companies paying for the language training do not need their employees to become language experts, but to be better in the everyday communicative situations in which they need to use English.

5.2.4. Total Physical Response and In-company Courses

Total Physical Response may attract adult learners’ attention, and thus also in-company learner’s attention, as it is something completely different from the once traditional method of the Czech state schools, the grammar-translation method, and it brings variety and a certain novelty feeling to the classroom. Nevertheless, precisely for the same reason, in-company students may have reservations about this method and they may feel ridiculed when asked to obey commands and act them out. In addition to that, ‘the necessity of producing overt physical responses right away may provoke anxiety in some students’ (Krashen, 1982: 142). We also must not forget the fact that a business suit is not the most comfortable type of clothing for performing the tasks and some small meeting rooms barely allow the students to work in pairs and standing up and moving around the room is practically unthinkable. On the other hand, 'TPR is not a complete method. It cannot do the entire job of language teaching, nor was it designed to do this' (Krashen, 1998) and if this method is used with caution, it may bring variety even to in-company courses and a creative teacher will find a way to use it to their advantage.

5.2.5. Communicative Language Teaching, Task-Based Learning, and In-company Courses

'Communicative Language Teaching has had a thoroughly beneficial effect since it reminded teachers that people learn languages not so that they know about them, but so that they can communicate with them' (Harmer, 2007b: 50). Consequently, the emphasis of this method is 'on students communicating real messages, and not just grammatically controlled language' (Harmer, 2007b: 50). This is important in relation to in-company students. The focus on real messages suits the purpose for which in-company students typically need to study English – everyday working life communication. However, the drawback of this method is that adult learners usually prefer more analytical approach to studying a language, as was mentioned above in 3.2., and omitting grammar altogether thus can be counterproductive. In addition to that, in-company learners are typically not in a situation in which they would need 'survival English' which is aimed at conveying the message rather than pursuing accuracy. On the contrary, they are established professionals who need to communicate efficiently but also accurately because they need to express complex ideas and explain them to others in detail. They need to make a good impression on their superiors or business partners and good grammar is an indispensable part if this impression.

5.2.6. Natural Approach and In-company Courses

Krashen's Natural Approach relies on thorough home preparation of the learners. Grammar is dealt with only in the form of home assignments because the lessons focus rather on providing enough input than explanations and practice. As a result, in the real world this method will never be suitable for busy and overwhelmed in-company students. Home preparation is something most in-company students never have time for as studying a foreign language frequently is not a priority for them in comparison to other aspects of their private and working lives. On the other hand, the natural approach is a method which puts meaning and communication before accuracy and this could be more important for some individuals than perfectly correct use of language.

5.2.7. Eclectic Approach, ESA, and In-company Courses

The abovementioned list of method is not an exhaustive list and there are many other more or less popular methods or developments stemming from the described methods. At the same time, there are many good and experienced teachers who have never studied any of the methods thoroughly and who only use their experience, estimation of the learner, creativity and passion for teaching to choose activities for their well-taught lessons without considering the fact that the methods come from completely different, if not mutually exclusive, methods. Eclectic approach, i.e. combining techniques from various methods when the teacher decides which activities suit best when teaching the given structure, the given learner and which best addresses the given situation, seems to be the most useful way of approaching teaching because it takes the best features of each method and combines it with the best techniques of other methods. Being eclectic, however, does not mean putting together any activities with any lesson structure in mind. It is going to be an efficient approach to language teaching especially, or maybe only, if based on ESA – Engage, Study, Activate.

Harmer's Engage, Study, Activate method seems to be the most suitable method for in-company learners because it stresses the need for engaging students and motivating them, but also the fact that they do not need grammar for grammar itself but grammar for active communication. At the same time, ESA can frequently correspond to an improved and more motivating version of the Present, Practice, Produce method which is one of the most suitable methods for analytical adult students. Last, but not least, following the Engage Study Activate stages will help the teacher to 'sell' the grammar as a valuable product and stress its importance in the eyes of in-company students. As the needs analysis shows, in-company learners are interested in being efficient negotiators, efficient email writers, or persuasive speakers. None of these goals are achievable without good understanding of grammar. Grammar will help the learners give professional impression even if they speak spontaneously from the top of their head and they will never be caught off guard, even if they forget a phrase because they will know how to construct an alternative.

5.3. APPROACHES TO TEACHING GRAMMAR IN CURRENT COURSEBOOKS

As we could see in the needs analysis results in 5.1.2., there is a discrepancy between the contexts in which the in-company students claimed they need to be using English and the course focus they prefer. External or internal business communication is what 58% said they use English for but only 22% selected business English as the primary course focus. When choosing a coursebook, we must also include the client's, i.e. the employer's, point of view. Unless the company paying for the language tuition organizes the courses as a benefit for their employees, it wants to see results in the contexts which are relevant to their employees' job performance. Moreover, many group courses are attended by employees from different departments and it is better to design a course syllabus which all of them can benefit from, even if they need to make a compromise, rather than try to cover all of their specific needs at once.

As a result of this need for compromise, many in-company course syllabi cover topics from business English or a blend of general and business English or business and specific English. For this reason, the analysis will focus on two modern and most frequently used English coursebooks by Oxford University Press, *Business Result* and *International Express*. The aim of this chapter is not to provide a thorough textbook analysis of these coursebooks but to compare their approaches to teaching grammar. We analyse whether the coursebook's approach suits the needs of the in-company learners and whether it follows the ESA principles; how the coursebook helps the teacher engage the students, study the new structures in relevant context, and how it activates the learners.

5.3.1. INTERNATIONAL EXPRESS

The *International Express, New Edition,* series was published by the Oxford University Press and it was issued in four levels – elementary, pre-intermediate, intermediate, and upper-intermediate. '*International Express* is a course for adult professional learners who need English for work, and for communication in out-of-work functional contexts, such as travel or socializing' and its ' balance of general and business English is suitable for those who need to interact in a variety of situations both in and out of the workplace' (OUP 1). Its balanced combination of general and business English is useful for those students who themselves would select general English but whose employer also expects them to be able to responds adequately in working situations.

Each level of the course consists of a Student's Book with Pocket Book which contains core grammar and phrases, Workbook with Audio CDs, Teacher's Resource Book with a DVD, Class Audio CDs, and on-line support for both teachers and students.

5.3.1.1. The Structure of the *International Express* Coursebook

Each level of the *International Express* course is divided into ten or twelve chapters which are complemented by three to five Review Units that help students revise the newly covered subject matter. The individual chapters are further subdivided into sections. The Elementary level has three sections, Language focus, Wordpower, and Focus on communication. Higher levels, Pre-intermediate, Intermediate, and Upper-intermediate, have four sections – Language focus, Wordpower, Skills focus, and Focus on functions. The Skills focus is, however, not the only difference. In contrast to Elementary level's Focus on communication, further levels speak about Focus on functions and this change in labelling is quite confusing because there does not seem to be any difference between these sections.

At the beginning of each unit, there is always a summary of what will specifically be covered during the unit called 'Agenda', see Appendix 3. The individual sections of the unit are at least loosely connected by the topic of the unit.

5.3.1.2. *International Express* and Its Approach to Teaching Grammar

Grammar is dealt with in the section called Language focus which is always the first section of the unit. The description in the teacher's book stresses that there are four steps in the Language focus – an introductory activity, presentation, grammar analysis, and practice. The introductory activity 'aims to stimulate interest, to find out what learners already know about the topic', 'presentation of the target grammar [is done] in a realistic context, a listening or reading text related to the topic of the unit'(Harding, Taylor: 2005TB, 4). What should follow next is the 'grammar analysis, which focuses on examples of the target grammar from the presentation text, and guides learners towards formulating rules' and the whole process is concluded by the practice section which 'provides a series of activities, moving from controlled to freer practice [... and finally to] an opportunity for freer communicative practice' (Harding, Taylor: 2005TB, 4).

This description gives an impression that the teacher will not have too much extra work trying to create activities that would engage, activate and motivate the students and that on the condition that s/he follows the steps as they are presented in the coursebook, the lesson will practically follow the principles of Harmer's ESA. However, the coursebook does often not follow its own description of how grammar should be treated and the teacher usually has to rearrange the activities in order to meet these principles.

A typical example of this course's approach to grammar can be seen in Unit 4 from *International Express Elementary* in which the Past Simple is presented and practiced (Taylor, Lane, 2007: 33-36). Students first have a chance to get some information about the topic of the unit before they are asked to read a short article about the history of a company. The article is first used as a reading task and students have to find information in the text. This strategy helps stimulate students' interest in the topic. Only after the teacher makes sure the students understand the main ideas of the text in which they have already seen the new structures, is the Past Simple form introduced and presented to the students in a clearly arranged table. The learners are presented with the positive and negative forms of the tense in a table. The course is consistent and always uses the same background colour for the grammar boxes so the students can quickly see where the new structures are. At this level, the book presents the grammar without any eliciting from students during the process of the discovery. However, higher levels involve students in discovering new grammar rules (cf. the upper-intermediate level by Harding, Wallwork, 2010).

What follows is a controlled practice in the form of four exercises. The first two of them aim only at the practice of regular and irregular past forms which are isolated and do not provide any context. The third and fourth exercise show the new forms in a larger context and are interconnected – first, students choose the correct forms in the gap-fill exercise and based on the text of this exercise they correct the statements in the following one to practice making negative forms. However, all of these exercises are examples of controlled activities which are not by themselves related to any real life situation in which the students would be practising the use of the language for work or for other contexts. If we looked at this from the PPP or ESA point of view, we would have to say that the coursebooks provides only the present and practice elements, or engage and study, and that the ‘produce’ or ‘activate’ components are missing. It is up to the teacher to supplement such activities if they want to include this stage.

The second language focus of the same unit is aimed at the question formation in the Past Simple tense. However, the presentation box of this grammar is not directly followed by practice that would help the students drill the structure of the questions but again by an exercise on making declarative sentences in the Past Simple tense, i.e. by an activity practising language from the previous, not the adjoining language focus. It is interesting that the previous edition of the student’s book did not focus on declarative sentences again and went straight to practising the questions, which seems much more reasonable and logical (cf. Taylor, 2002: 32). The practice of the question form comes after this interruption and it has the form of a gap-fill exercise in which students fill in the first question word. Students do not get a chance to practice creating the whole questions. Next, they are asked to use the questions to ask their partners. This is all the practice connected to question formation the student’s book provides. The activity does not provide the learners with any feedback on if they would be able to construct the questions now. It may be argued that as the course also contains a workbook, additional practice may be taken from there but it still would not provide a productive or activating activity for the students. In addition to that, many students or companies refuse to invest in anything but the main student’s book and teachers have no power to make them buy it. As Opluštilová points out in her work mapping another area of the Czech language training market, post-secondary courses, frequently ‘the selection of textbooks and other teaching materials is driven by economic rather than educational factors’ (Opluštilová, 2012: 10).

Even greater complications to teacher’s lesson planning are such units which combine multiple new grammar structures at the same time without covering them in previous units or levels. An example of this can be Unit 6 on the intermediate level which at the same time introduces the Past Simple, Past Continuous and Past Perfect (Harding, Taylor, 2005SB: 59). It would be absolutely suitable to have such a review of past tenses all contrasted to one another if the students had had a chance to become familiar with the individual tenses before. Unfortunately, this is not the case. The elementary level covers only Past Simple and the pre-intermediate level also deals with only one past tense, the Past Simple (cf. Taylor, 2004). As a result of that, on the intermediate level both the students and the teacher face quite a challenge when the book requires them to quickly understand the contrasts among these three tenses literally within one page. Unfortunately, this is not the only example of when two or more new structures are put together, other examples can be found in the upper-intermediate level Unit 4 in which the Future Perfect tense is introduced for the first time and all the activities count with the fact that students already know its form and functions while it is the first time it is presented (cf. Harding, Wallwork, 2010: 40), or in the intermediate coursebook, Unit 2, which combines and mixes together four areas - Past Simple and Present Perfect Simple review, *used to,* and subject and object questions without introducing them before (Harding, Taylor, 2005SB: 17-18). The teacher has to rearrange and regroup the exercises in the practice section to be able to focus on one grammar area at one moment and not to confuse students with practising more structures at once.

5.3.1.3. *International Express* and *ESA*

The abovementioned teacher's book descriptions of how grammar is dealt with sound very student and teacher-friendly and they give the impression that each step follows the next one in a logical order. However, this coursebook often does not follow the whole PPP or ESA, the practice sections need to be reorganized in order to fulfil the criteria that they should proceed from controlled to freer practice. Productive activities to practice the new grammar are sometimes missing completely and designing the produce or activate part is left up to the teacher. In addition to that, if there is some productive activity it frequently does not observe any clear communicative aim and there is no real-life setting for the communication to take place. An example of this can be seen in Unit 8 of the intermediate level, see Appendix 4. This exercise is trying to practice the grammar structures for making arrangements and expressing intentions but it does not give any real-life setting to the conversation and it is limited to a few unrelated questions only. A solution would be if the teacher took the idea and added some real-life context, e.g. *Student A is a bank clerk. Student B is your line manager. You are at an annual assessment meeting. Student B asks, 'What intentions and plans do you have for next year?'*. This would help the students realize why they need such structures much better than only when they ask and answer questions taken out of any context. However, it leaves a substantial amount of responsibility to motivate students and show them how they can use the newly introduced grammar in a situation that relates to them up to the teacher.

5.3.2. Business Result

Business Result series is a course published by the Oxford University Press and it is a five-level course, starting from the elementary level and leading students up to the advanced level. It is a ‘business English course that gives students the communication skills they need for immediate use at work’ and one of its key features is the ‘practical, functional language presented and practised in a work-related context’ (OUP 2). This course also provides ‘[t]ips and advice from the Cranfield School of Management [which] introduces an authoritative business perspective, and applies professional theory to real situations’ (OUP 2).

The course consists of a Student’s Book Pack, which includes a Student’s Book and an Interactive Workbook on a CD-ROM, Teacher’s Book Pack, consisting of a Teacher’s Book and a Teacher Training DVD, and Class Audio CDs.

5.3.2.1. The Structure of the *Business Result* Coursebook

Business Result is divided into twelve or sixteen units depending on the level. Each unit contains five sections – Working with words, Business communication skills, Practically speaking, Language at work, and Case study or Activity. All these sections are closely interrelated not only by the topic of each unit but also by the language needed for each section. Each unit starts by stating its learning objectives, see Appendix 5. The objectives are formulated in a much more communicative way than in *International Express* (cf. Appendix 3), and instead of simply stating that the unit will focus on the Present Simple, it stresses its communicative functions, ‘Using the present simple and frequency adverbs to talk about your job and routine activities’ (Hughes, Naunton, 2008: 6). The communicative formulation helps the teacher motivate the students more because from the very beginning they know what the new structures are useful for.

5.3.2.2. *Business Result* and Its Approach to Teaching Grammar

As is obvious from the way Learning objectives are formulated, *Business Result* approaches grammar from a much more communicative perspective. The course explains its approach in the teacher's book description of the section which deals with grammar – Language at work, '[t]his section focuses on the key grammar underpinning the communication skills section that precedes it. The grammar is reviewed from a communicative point of view; this will meet your students' expectations with regard to learning form and meaning, but also reminds them how the grammar they need to learn commonly occurs in business and work situations' (Appleby, Grant, 2009: 5). This course embraces the fact that the importance of studying grammar must necessarily be supported by evidence from real-life situations in which students will see the need to use the new grammar.

In *Business Result,* grammar is typically introduced in reasonable amounts and thus students do not get lost in the new patterns. The activities usually follow one another in a logical order from controlled to freer practice and are complemented by communicative activities. The view of grammar from the communicative point of view is mirrored also in the way the contents of the book presents the outcomes of the individual lessons in the form of communicatively formulated 'can do' statements, see Appendix 6.

The typical procedure taken in the Language at work section is exemplified in Unit 1 of the upper-intermediate level (Duckworth, Turner, 2012:10, 103). The presentation of the grammar structures in question, Present Simple and Continuous, starts by examining the extracts from the audio recordings which were covered in the previous section – Business communication skills. Students answer questions to connect the correct form with the correct function and meaning. Next, they go to the Practice file where they can study the language box which explains both the form and the meaning of the respective patterns in a systematic way. After that comes controlled practice in the form of an exercise with isolated sentences which students complete by the correct form of the verb in the brackets. The next controlled practice that follows requires students to create questions using state verbs. Last exercise again focuses on the contrast between the two structures and asks the students to choose the correct form.

In contrast to *International Express*, the procedure in *Business Result* does not conclude with controlled practice only. After the students get a chance to practice the form in the controlled practice in the Practice file, they return back to the Language at work section and continue with freer and more communicative practice. The exercises try to set a real-life situation for the students and instruct them to imagine in which contexts they would need to ask such questions – 'You want to find out this information from someone you meet for the first time. What questions would you ask?' (Duckworth, Turner, 2012:10). Next, students ask their partners. This is a small change but compared to the more traditional instructions such as 'Make questions and ask your partner,' it provides at least some context to the use of the new language and, even more importantly, it shifts the responsibility of choosing the relevant questions to ask in such a situation onto the student.

The lesson is completed by a productive activity which helps to activate the new language. Students give a short presentation about their company using the provided prompts which bring about the use of the respective tenses. To make the activity even more related to a real-life context of the in-company learner, the teacher can introduce this activity by connecting it to the case study of this unit or by saying *Imagine you are at a networking event which connects people from various areas of business. You want to attract new business partners*. and follow with the coursebook's instructions 'Give a short presentation about your company using these points' (Duckworth, Turner, 2012:10). The case study mentioned above is yet another way to practise not only the grammar structures but also the new functional language introduced in the unit. Case studies at the end of each unit are typically designed to stimulate free communicative production of all the new language covered within the unit which is challenging but motivating at the same time.

5.3.2.3. *Business Result* and ESA

The communicative approach to grammar presented by this course is a way to help the teacher motivate students into studying grammar because it shows them the real-life situations in which they will need to be using the language. However, teachers may have difficulties with the engage component at the beginning of the lessons focusing on Language at work. The course uses the Business communication section in which students first focus on functional language as an introduction of the new grammar at the same time. Both the sections cannot be covered within one 90-minute session and despite the fact that the sentences to present the new language usually explicitly refer to the recordings that students heard during the previous lesson, it is up to the teacher's skill to efficiently remind the students of what the context was and to engage them into the topic again. The other two elements of ESA, study and activate, are included in the materials provided by the book and need only minor alternations depending on the specific needs of the students.

Therefore, *Business Result* seems better than *International Express* in the context of meeting the needs and expectations of in-company students as they were described in the theoretical background but also in the pedagogical research.

6. CONCLUSION

The aim of the present thesis was to suggest how the teaching grammar of English as a foreign language should be treated within the context of Czech in-company courses to suit the needs of in-company learners and to meet the expectations of the sponsors of the language training, the employers.

In order to evaluate the best method and coursebook for the treatment of grammar in in-company courses, it was first necessary to provide a theoretical background to foreign language acquisition, teaching methods, and teaching grammar. Next, the specificities of the Czech in-company language training were discussed and complemented by the psychological and sociological characteristics of adult in-company learners. The pedagogical research presents the answers of 172 respondents in a quantitative-qualitative survey about their expectations of language training. The teaching methods discussed were then evaluated in relation to the results of the survey and a suitable coursebook to suit such needs was selected.

The results of the pedagogical research conducted with in-company learners show that the learners are interested in, or capable of, choosing the contexts in which they need to use the foreign language. However, the learners are not language specialists, they do not know or realize which specific functional language phrase, lexis or grammar structure will help them achieve the best performance in the situations they selected. It is up to the teacher to present the grammar to the students in the form they need it, that is, not as grammar for grammar but as grammar for achieving a communicative aim they have.

To use metaphors from the world of the in-company learners, the area of business, grammar needs to be presented to in-company learners in a nice ‘gift-wrapped packaging’, in the context of the situations they need for their daily working life. Using the communicative aims and situations which require certain structures for the ‘promotion’ of grammar is the best way to ‘attract a lot of custom’. It may sound as we are tricking and deceiving the ‘customers’ but actually it is quite the opposite. Such approach of ‘selling’ grammar to the learners and of using attractive ‘marketing strategies’ means embracing the role of grammar as a step on the way to the real target – spontaneous and natural communication in real-life situations in which students need to use the foreign language.

Consequently, from all the teaching methods discussed, the most suitable one for achieving such aims of in-company learners is Harmer's Engage, Study, Activate method in combination with the eclectic method. This method stresses the fact that the students need to be engaged into the situations in which they will need to be using the structures. It seems that also communicative language teaching would be suitable for this group of students because of its emphasis on communicating in real situations and focusing on conveying the meaning rather than the accuracy of the message. However, communicating in the business context, whether it is internal or external communication, is also about making a professional impression on the partners in the communication and a professional image cannot be kept when the communication is not up to the expected level and full of grammar mistakes and misunderstandings arising from insufficient knowledge of grammar. There are many situations when in-company students need to be able to differentiate between subtle details of communication which are also conveyed by using distinct grammatical structures, for example when negotiating contract conditions or dealing with misunderstandings.

When we decide to follow the Engage, Study, Activate, the best material to choose from the two coursebooks analysed is *Business Result* by Oxford University Press. This coursebook has fully embraced the idea that grammar needs to be taught in the communicative context and the structure of the coursebook supports this view on all levels of the course. It would be possible to use *International Express* as well but the amount of work required from the teacher to alter and adapt the material may be rather demotivating. In addition to that, many less experienced teachers do not realize that they should be working with a book published by a renowned publishing house, Oxford University Press, in a highly selective manner and with caution, and that following the procedures as they are described in the book is not enough to meet the in-company learners' needs and expectations.

Despite the fact that there are coursebooks that reflect on the need to treat grammar within communicative situations and communicative aims, teachers should always bear in mind that even the best coursebooks cannot reflect the exact situations in which students will need to be using the language. To really ‘Engage, Study, and Activate’ the students, adaptation and personalization will always be needed. Therefore, the background set in the present thesis and the findings of the research could be used as a starting point for further work that would observe the adaptation and personalization of coursebook materials to suit the general needs of in-company students and the specific needs of an observed set of learners.

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Analysed Coursebooks

International Express

OUP 1

http://elt.oup.com/catalogue/items/global/business_esp/international_express/?cc=global&selLanguage=en&mode=hub

Harding, Keith. **Taylor**, Liz. (2005SB) *International Express Intermediate Student's Book, New Edition.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Harding, Keith. **Taylor**, Liz. (2005TB) *International Express Intermediate Teacher's Resource Book, New Edition.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Harding, Keith. **Wallwork**, Adrian. (2010) *International Express Upper-intermediate Student's Book, New Edition.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Taylor, Liz. (2002) *International Express Elementary Student's Book.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

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Business Result

OUP 2

http://elt.oup.com/catalogue/items/global/business_esp/business_result/?cc=cz&selLanguage=cs&mode=hub

Appleby, Rachel. **Grant**, Heidi. (2009) *Business Result Advanced Teacher's Book.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Duckworth, Michael. **Turner**, Rebecca. (2012) *Business Result Upper-Intermediate.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

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8. RÉSUMÉ

Tato diplomová práce nazvaná Výuka gramatice ve specifických formách výuky (Firemní kurzy – Výuka dospělých) si klade za cíl určit na základě zmapování specifického kontextu firemní jazykové výuky a psychologické a sociologické charakteristiky účastníků těchto kurzů, která výuková metoda pracuje s gramatikou nejvíce v souladu s potřebami a očekáváními účastníků firemních kurzů.

Práce je rozdělena na dvě hlavní části, část teoretickou a část pedagogického výzkumu. Teoretická část se nejprve zaměřuje na principy a hypotézy akvizice cizího jazyka, na kterou navazuje výběrový přehled výukových metod cizího jazyka. Cílem sekce zabývající se výukovými metodami není poskytnout úplný přehled všech dosud známých metod, byly vybrány pouze hlavní metody, které se mohou vztahovat ke kontextu současné výuky cizího jazyka v rámci firemního vzdělávání. Navazující sekce poskytuje stručný přehled technik a aktivit vhodných k prezentaci a procvičení nově probíraných gramatických struktur a zároveň poskytuje odpověď na otázku, zda a proč gramatiku vůbec vyučovat. Schopnost samostatně aktivně tvořit věty poskytuje mluvčím cizího jazyka volnost při vyjadřování. Gramatika je nezbytným základem pro samostatný spontánní projev, kterého není možné dosáhnout pouhým skládáním frází a jazykových funkcí. Zároveň i tyto jazykové funkce musí být tvořeny gramaticky správnými větami, jinak nebude nikdy dojem z daného projevu plně profesionální. Cílem firemních studentů není díky cizímu jazyku „přežít v cizím prostředí“, ale komunikovat v rámci svého osobního i pracovního života s úrovní odpovídající jejich postavení.

Druhá polovina teoretické části prezentuje charakteristiku firemních kurzů z hlediska typického zaměření a sylabů kurzů, časové dotace jednotlivých lekcí i celého kurzu, legislativy a přístupu zaměstnavatelů. Není možné vytvořit kompletní výčet všech možných hodnot vztahujících se k firemní výuce, protože požadavky na firemní kurzy nejsou nijak omezeny, jsou vždy určeny přáním a potřebami konkrétního zákazníka, kterému často jazyková škola vytváří řešení jazykového vzdělávání na míru. Další součást této sekce tvoří také psychologická charakteristika účastníka firemního jazykového kurzu, která se zabývá jeho kognitivními a afektivními vlastnostmi ve vztahu k učení se cizímu

jazyku a zejména pak jejich vlivem na motivaci. Nedílnou složkou je také popis účastníka ze sociologického hlediska, z pohledu hierarchie v dané společnosti, na kterou navazuje popis role lektora ve vztahu k účastníkům firemních kurzů. Lektor má ve firemních kurzech roli daleko méně autoritativní než v jiných formách výuky, jako vhodnější role než „pan učitel“ se pro něj ukazuje partnerská role, která může mít i podobu jazykového kouče.

Druhá část práce patří pedagogickému výzkumu, který oslovil 231 účastníků firemních kurzů před začátkem jejich výuky. Celkové výsledky ovšem shrnují odpovědi pouze 172 účastníků, protože 59 z nich se rozhodlo na otázky neodpovídat. Průzkum probíhal formou webové aplikace jazykové školy Glossa, ve které studenti vyplňovali interaktivní dotazník zaměřený na kvantitativní i kvalitativní kritéria. Protože protokoly s výsledky dotazníku, které aplikace uchovává, nejsou anonymní a obsahují citlivé údaje se jmény účastníků průzkumu i společností, pro které pracují, musely být výsledky vyexportovány do souhrnné tabulky, kde jsou jednotliví respondenti označeni pouze čísly.

Výsledky pedagogického výzkumu ukazují, že nejvíce studentů, konkrétně 58%, uvádí, že potřebuje anglický jazyk pro obchodní komunikaci. Přesněji lze říci, že komunikaci v rámci společnosti uvedlo 42% a externí komunikaci 16%. V kontrastu s tím si ale zaměření na obchodní angličtinu explicitně přeje pouze 22% respondentů. Toto přání je rovněž v rozporu s požadavky zaměstnavatelů, jejichž cílem je nejčastěji vyšší jazyková kompetence zaměstnance v kontextu pozice, kterou pro daného zaměstnavatele vykonává. Žádný respondent nezvolil gramatiku jako hlavní zaměření kurzu a v pozdějších detailnějších otázkách přání zaměřit se cíleně na gramatiku zmiňuje pouze velmi malé procento dotázaných, v rámci obecných komunikačních dovedností a jazykových prostředků ji zmiňuje 11%, v rámci profesních dovedností pouze 2%. Studenti dokážou určit, která témata a kontexty jsou pro ně stěžejní, je už ale v rukou učitele nebo autora učebnice, aby jim ukázal, že k tomu, aby v dané komunikativní situaci uspěli a zachovali profesionální dojem, potřebují také znát konkrétní gramatické struktury a umět je spontánně a nezávisle používat.

V návaznosti na výsledky průzkumu tato práce hodnotí uvedené metody výuky anglického jazyka z pohledu charakteristiky firemních kurzů a firemního studenta. Jako nejvhodnější metoda pro výuku gramatiky se v tomto kontextu ukazuje *Engage, Study, Activate*, kterou popisuje Jeremy Harmer, v kombinaci s metodou eklektickou, která nyní při výuce v jazykových školách převažuje. Na základě těchto poznatků práce porovnává dvě ucelené učebnicové řady nakladatelství Oxford University Press z pohledu firemních kurzů a výuky gramatiky. První porovnávaná učebnicová řada, *Interantional Express,* sice vyváženě kombinuje obecný a obchodní kontext a nabízí tak vhodný kompromis mezi požadavky zaměstnavatele a studentů, ale výuka gramatiky v ní velmi často není dotažena do komunikativních situací, díky kterým by student pochopil, k čemu mu daný jazyk bude platný v reálném životě. Oproti tomu učebnicová řada *Business Result* od stejného nakladatele přistupuje k prezentaci gramatiky, procvičení i produkci výrazně komunikativněji. Odráží se to například jak v prezentaci cílů jednotlivých lekcí studentům, tak v dostatečném množství aktivit pro aktivizaci nově probraného jazyka v reálných kontextech.

Závěrem lze říci, že prostředí firemních kurzů je velmi specifické, flexibilní a neustále se vyvíjí, mění a je utvářeno novými přáními, požadavky a očekáváními zaměstnavatelů i samotných studentů. Tato práce by mohla sloužit jako základ dalšímu výzkumu, který by se ještě více zaměřil na adaptaci a personalizaci výukového materiálu pro firemní kurzy obecně a zároveň v návaznosti na potřeby konkrétního vzorku studentů.