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UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

TEACHING ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES IN TWO SOCIOCULTURAL CONTEXTS

A DISSERTATION

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A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND ACADEMIC CURRICULUM

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To my parents,

Who made me drop a Gardening class and enroll in an English language class when I was twelve because they recognized my potential … and it did not include growing the perfect cucumber.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract		ix
Chapter 1	Introduction	1
	Goals of Language Instruction	2
	Contexts for Language Instruction	5
	Methodology in English Language Instruction	8
	Purpose and Research Question	11
	Definition of Terms	14
Chapter 2	Literature Review	17
	Communicative Competence Models	18
	Linguistic Competence	23
	Social competence	25
	Cultural competence	27
	Strategic competence	30
	Teaching Communicative Competence	32
	Curriculum	32
	Instructional Approaches	33
	Authenticity	39
	Teacher Talk	43
	Context for English Language Instruction	45
	Summary	52
Chapter 3	Methodology	55
	Participants	56

Participant Recruitment 59

Data Sources 67

Procedures 72

Researcher's Role 75

Data Analysis 79

Chapter 4 Findings 82

Teachers' Definitions of Communicative Competence 83

What to Teach? 88

Content Related to English Language and Linguistics 89

Content Related to Literacy Skills 92

Content Related to Social and Cultural Norms 96

How to Teach? 100

Teacher's Role and Teacher Practices 101

Classroom Organization and Student Tasks 106

Differences Attributed to Context 114

Curriculum 115

Students' Native Language 117

Students' Motivation 121

Summary 123

Chapter 5 Discussion 124

Summary of the Methodology 124

Discussion of the Findings 126

The Communicative Competence Model 126

The Communicative Competence Model Applied to Content of Instruction 129

The Communicative Competence Model Applied to Teaching Methodology 133

Comparing Sociocultural Context Influences 135

Implications of the Study 141

Future Research 145

Limitations 147

Summary 148

References 150

Appendix A Semi-structured Interview Questions 160

Appendix B Survey of Classroom Practices, Events and Materials Used 167

Appendix C Main Code List 178

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	Research Questions and Sub-questions Tied to Each Data Source	68
Table 2	Chronological Order of Data Collection	73
Table 3	List of Codes Used In Data Analysis	178

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	Components of communicative competence	23
Figure 2	Typical seating arrangement in Nancy's class, school A	107
Figure 3	Typical seating arrangement in Nancy's class, school B	107
Figure 4	Large classroom layout in Hanka's school	110
Figure 5	Small classroom layout in Hanka's school	111
Figure 6	The Communicative competence model applied to content taught	132
Figure 7	Communicative competence model situated in context	140

ABSTRACT

This research study examined two teachers teaching English to speakers of other languages in two different sociocultural instructional contexts. Specifically, the purpose of the study was to determine the teachers' definitions of what makes an English language learner communicatively competent in the English language, their beliefs about what knowledge they consider important to teach in order to achieve the communicative competence for their students and what role the different sociocultural context plays.

A qualitative design of a comparative case study was used as the method to explore and compare a teacher, who was an American citizen teaching English to speakers of other languages in the USA and a teacher, who was a Slovak citizen, teaching English to speakers of Slovak language in Slovakia. Data were collected from several data sources in each country, including semi-structured interviews, class observations with field notes during both fall school term and spring school term, short clarifying post observation interviews, and online demographic and short concept surveys. All data were analyzed using thematic qualitative analysis tools and a matrix for each participant was developed. Once the coding and the matrices were finished, themes were identified that allowed the address of the research questions.

The findings of the study showcased that the teachers who teach English to speakers of other languages in different sociocultural context are influenced in the way they organize their instruction by the requirements placed on them by their respective school districts. However, it is each teacher's personal belief of what constitutes a

communicatively competent speaker that ultimately provides the structure for the instruction and the curriculum.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Today approximately 800 million people use English along with some other language for interpersonal and online communication. More than 300 million people use English as their primary language (Kachru & Smith, 2008). Over the last decades, the English language has secured its top position as *lingua franca*, the most likely language used for communication across the world (Graddoll, 2006). Considering the fact that not everyone is born a native English language speaker, the numbers of English language learners (ELLs) across the world rise equally with the rising use of the English language. Graddol (2006) estimates, that there will be two billion ELLs worldwide in the next decade. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics, in the United States during the years 2003-2004, there were 3.8 million ELL students in elementary and secondary schools, which translates to ELLs representing eleven per cent of all the student population in the US alone (NCES, 2006). Nationwide enrollment of ELL students has increased by fifty seven per cent between the years 1995 and 2005 (Maxwell, 2009). In the European Union, the market that sells textbooks and other materials related to English language learning within the European Union and Great Britain, contributes to Great Britain's annual revenue of approximately eighteen billion Euros (Grinn, 2005). The increasing numbers of ELLs worldwide naturally leads to an increased worldwide demand for teachers of English to speakers of other languages.

The teaching of English to speakers of other languages is a broad concept that encompasses both teachers and learners who meet and interact in a variety of instructional contexts. From a global perspective language learning can take on many forms. There are

endless choices of books, tapes, software packages, schools, exchange studies, self-study initiatives, immersion practices in the target language culture, public education, private tutors, as well as other methods. The goals for language learning differ for each of the language learning method and range from wanting to speak the language fluently to wanting to be able to read research in the target language with no desire for interpersonal communication. While I acknowledge the variety of language learning methods, for the purpose of my study, I will only focus on language learning and language teaching as it happens in a public secondary school setting with a classroom arrangement in which the teacher regularly meets with groups of students and operates with a set of curricular goals. I specifically chose to concentrate on two public education contexts in which English language learning is defined by the teachers' and the students' access to the target language outside of the classroom setting.

Goals of Language Instruction

The teachers who teach in such different contexts have the same goal for their students – to help them become communicatively competent. The role of the instructor in any language classroom is to provide the language learner with sufficient exposure to and practice with the new language. In the United States, the educational policy behind the No Child Left Behind government program (2002) sets the standards for English language learners to achieve language skills that allow for understanding and learning grade level content. The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) Position Paper (2008) explains that the role of the ELL teachers is to provide instruction that equips language learners with the skills to interpret social, cultural, and linguistic clues in order to be able to use the English language well in social as well as academic

contexts. In the document Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (2001), The Council of Europe calls for an intercultural approach as a central objective of language education. The goal is to help the language learner to construct their linguistic and cultural identity through the experience of "otherness," through another language, another culture, other people or new areas of knowledge. A document published by the Ministerstvo Školstva Slovenskej Republiky [Ministry of Education of Slovak Republic] (2002) states that one of the learning goals for English language instruction is the need to develop the four skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening). The Ministry of Education (2002) in the secondary education curricular guidelines further states that the English language instruction should develop learning strategies that promote independence and critical thinking leading to lifelong learning and the ability to use English as an international language in commerce, travel, and science.

When a language teacher is asked about the goal for the students, the answer has been *fluency* for the past decades (Pietro, 1970). Recently, the answers have changed to *be competent* or *proficient* in the new language (Cheng, Rogers & Wang, 2008). Answering the question about what it means to be proficient in a language requires a complex theoretical approach which makes the language proficiency an interesting concept referred to by many labels. For example, Lee and Schallert (1997) explained that language proficiency relates to language competence, metalinguistic awareness, and the ability to speak, listen, read, and write the language in contextually appropriate ways. Automatic fluency is defined by Gatbonton and Segalowitz (2005) as the smooth and rapid production of utterances without hesitations and pauses and such production

results from constant use and repetitive practice. This definition, however, does not account for hesitations and pauses in the native speaker's speech attributed to personality traits rather than lack of fluency in English (Pietro, 1970). Hymes (1972) distinguished between the knowledge of the linguistic systems related to the grammatical rules of language use and knowledge of the social rules of language use. Hymes (1972) referred to the latter as the communicative competence and to the former as the linguistic competence. Ernst (1994) claimed that learning a language should involve knowledge about when it is appropriate to speak, in which circumstance, how to gain the right to speak, how and when to change a topic, how and when to invite someone else to speak, and so on. In other words, new language learning involves the acquisition of lexical, phonological, grammatical, strategic, and sociolinguistic knowledge. There is much more to learning a language than just learning the structural aspects of language, for a speaker to be competent.

The term *communicative competence* was introduced and coined by Hymes (1972) as a reaction to the inadequacy of Noah Chomsky's notion of linguistic or grammatical competence (Woods, 2007; McConachy, 2008). Hymes (1972) proposed that an acceptable language competence model which represents language knowledge adequately must include a sociolinguistic dimension, as language proficiency presupposes the ability to use language which is not only grammatically correct but also contextually appropriate (McConachy, 2008). The notion of communicative competence has since been adapted and applied by theorists working in various fields, such as early childhood education, foreign language teaching, cross-cultural psychology, and speech and language impairment (Woods, 2007). For the purpose of this

study and guided by English language teaching and learning theories, I am defining what it means to be a competent speaker of a new language as consisting of several sub-competences. Three of these competences: linguistic competence, social competence, and cultural competence work together guided by the fourth sub-competence, the strategic competence. A more detailed explanation of the term is a part of the literature review.

Contexts for Language Instruction

The context for language learning and instruction is a multileveled concept when viewed in the light of sociolinguistic and sociocultural analyses. In sociolinguistic theories, where the social concept meets the language, the core definition of language learning context comes from Hymes who in 1974 listed eight factors which he believed made up context in interpersonal communication, such as the one found in language classrooms. Hymes (1974) used the acronym SPEAKING to identify the factors. They include: setting, participants, end (or purpose), act sequence (form and content of an utterance), key (verbal and nonverbal manner), instrumentalities (choice of channel and code), norms of interaction and interpretation, and genre. Another type of context less frequently mentioned is the context created by the interaction itself. Ellis and Roberts (1987) claim that along with the internal (linguistic) and external (social) dimensions of context which are set before the encounter, the participants in a communication exchange will be continuously scanning each other's verbal and nonverbal communication (contextualization cues) for insights into the meaning of their interactive encounter, constructing and reconstructing the meaning of such interaction.

A second perspective on the context is the sociocultural standpoint. Context, defined within the sociocultural framework, is the focus of this particular study. A

sociocultural analysis of context for language learning and instruction, where the social concept meets the culture, deals with the notion of the learners' different levels of access to the target language outside their primary learning environment. The differentiation by the target language access leads to recognition of two different educational contexts in which the language learners can find themselves (Oxford, 2002). These contexts are defined by the learners' location in relevance to a society in which English is the primary language of communication. These contexts determine the intended language use as well as the required level of proficiency (Green & Oxford, 1995) and learner motivation (Dörnyei, 1990).

One English as a second language (ESL) context, is characterized by learning a language in an immersed situation where the interaction with the new language commences both outside and inside of the classroom. This way of learning a language is also referred to as learning in a naturalistic context (Saville-Troike, 2006). Students in the ESL context interact with the English language in the language classroom as well as outside the classroom. English is often the official or the most commonly used language for day to day communication of the area. An example of an ESL setting is represented by a student from a European non-English speaking country, such as France, learning English in a language classroom in school in the United States. The second widely used reference to a different context in which learning of a language can occur is English as foreign language (EFL) instruction. In an EFL context, the teaching of English occurs only within a language classroom setting along with most of the learning. There is usually very limited or nonexistent learning outside the classroom. Access or interaction with English language materials outside of the classroom is likewise limited (Richards & Rodgers; 2001; Saville-Troike, 2006). However, with the recent increase of the popularity of the English language,

its position as a trade language and pop culture influences from the leading English speaking countries, even the EFL context does not exist in a no-English language vacuum. Students come into contact with isolated vocabulary in English printed on clothing, on store fronts, and in large international food chains. English language is also accessible in movies that are subtitled with the native language with the original English language audio. High school student population are also one of the largest customer groups for the music industry, with many songs sung in English. English language exposure outside the classroom is not supported or supervised by the classroom environment but it does provide active interactions with the language for students in an EFL context. Thus, the teachers in the EFL context can provide opportunities for students to simulate language use and turn the language classroom into an artificial society with English as the main language used for communication. The teachers can also draw students' attention to the English used outside the classroom. An example of an EFL setting is represented by a student whose first language is not English, for example a Slovak student studying English in her home country of Slovakia. The official language is Slovak and English is one of the many foreign languages offered as a part of the elementary and secondary curriculum. The students learning in the EFL and ESL settings differ in the manner of their exposure to English language and their either frequent or limited interactions with English language used in different social and cultural contexts for communication (Richards & Rodgers; 2001; Saville-Troike, 2006).

Although, ESL and EFL are very useful acronyms to differentiate between two particular contexts, recent developments in the English language teaching field have brought forth acronyms such as English as a new language (ENL), primarily used in the

United States (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 1998), or English as an additional language (EAL), primarily used in European resources (Department for Education, 2003). These new terms define the English language learning as less dependent on the context and more focused on the learner. In this study, however, context plays an important role and so I will use ESL and EFL acronyms where context needs to be identified. I will use the acronyms for the English language learning/learner (ELL) or English language teaching (ETL) where the context does not need to be identified.

Methodology in English Language Instruction

Finding the best instructional method is the ultimate goal for any instructor. What works best? There are several language acquisition theories that pose suggestions about how a language is acquired. Long (1990) compiled a list of observations that a linguistic theory needs to explain. One of the observations is the fact that exposure to target language input is necessary for language acquisition. Students will not learn the target language unless they are exposed to it and consciously attending to the meaning of the language. Another observation is that much of the language acquisition happens incidentally. Students learn language not only by consciously paying attention to the forms and meaning of language but also by accidentally *picking up* language. Language acquisition is variable in its outcome. Not all learners achieve the same level of competence in the target language, even if they had the same conditions for the exposure. There are limits on the effects of the instruction of the target language. Teachers and learners often believe that what is taught and practiced is what also gets learned. Second and foreign language acquisition theories try to explain the observations supplying the instructors with instructional methodology that fits best with a learning theory.

Over the past few decades, linguistic theories have undergone a significant development. Before 1990, explanation of foreign or second language learning fell into two periods: behaviorism and post-behaviorism with Stephen Krashen's Monitor Theory as the leading theory (VanPatten & Williams, 2007). In the behaviorist theory the language learning was seen as a process of imitation and repetition of what was heard in a controlled learning environment. Behaviorist theory translated into language learning methodology in the form of the Audio-Lingual Method. This method was vastly popular in the 1950s and 60s'. When this method was developed it was thought that the way to acquire the sentence patterns of the second language was through conditioning or by helping learners to respond correctly to stimuli through shaping and reinforcement (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Language learning was believed to be a habit formation and mistakes needed to be corrected immediately because they led to formation of bad habits.

Krashen's Monitor Theory brought the distinction between learning and acquisition. Language learning is defined as conscious effort on the part of the learner. Language acquisition is defined as accidental mastery of the language without conscious effort. Conscious learning is only available as a *monitor*, i.e. learners can consciously control and edit their language output (speech utterances or written work) to make themselves more fluent or comprehensible, based on what they have formally learned about the second language (Krashen, 1987; VanPatten & Williams, 2007). Some parts of Krashen's theory can be found in the Natural Approach to language teaching where the main principle is that language acquisition is the only way towards achieving competence in a target language. Conscious learning operates only as a monitor or editor that checks or repairs the output of what has been acquired. Grammatical structures are acquired in a predictable order and it

does little good to try to learn them in another order. People acquire language best from messages that are just slightly beyond their current competence. The learner's emotional state can act as a filter that impedes or blocks input necessary to acquisition (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

More recent language learning theories reflect the shift from viewing the learners as individual language producers to seeing them as members of social and cultural communities. Recent work investigates language learning as a socioculturally situated practice grounded in the Vygotsky's notions of the sociability of learning (Norton & Toohey, 2002). Learning a new language is a social act. The route to learning a new language is through interaction. Learners learn best when they interact and engage with others (Kozulin, 2003). Learners learn by discussing what they read, write, hear, know, or learn in order to develop their language competence and to develop their own identities as readers or writers, users of the language and as social human beings. Conversation is not just an opportunity to practice what was learned but also serves as a learning opportunity (Kozulin, 2003). When learners of a new language communicate with native speakers or other learners of the same language often the negotiations of meaning take place through feedback in conversation or by asking questions (Bardovi-Harlig, 2002). Sociocultural theory is partially reflected in the Communicative Language Teaching method (CLT) as well as Cooperative Learning. Main principles of the CLT method are related to promoting activities that involve real communication, meaningful language and meaningful tasks, all leading to successful language learning (Larsen-Freeman, 2000) while Cooperative Learning promotes the social and peer mediated aspect of learning.

Purpose and Research Question

Research in the field of English taught as a second or foreign language has established over the past three decades that there is a connection between learners, their sociocultural background, and the context in which the learners are situated (Hinkel, 2005; Kaplan, 2002). Recognition of these connections has allowed language researchers and educators to focus their work around the following concepts related to second and foreign language learning. First, the idea of context where the teaching/learning happens, defined as the social and cultural context in which language learning occurs and influences students' second or foreign language learning. Second, how the teaching is designed, the teaching methodology. There is not a set methodology for teaching English to speakers of other languages because learners in different locations and contexts have different needs and they learn languages differently. And third, the content, what needs to be taught. Students who learn language with included information on social and cultural language elements achieve higher language proficiency and consider their language learning experience more meaningful.

The studies looking at the second and foreign language acquisition focus on different aspects of the three concepts – context, methodology, content (c.f. Lybeck, 2002; Taguchi, 2008). They may limit their scope to only looking at particular narrow features such as spelling, pronunciation or slang acquisition (c.f. Canado, 2006; Charkova, 207; Elliot, 1997). Or the studies look at general questions that cannot provide information applicable across a wider range of areas and populations (c.f. Duff, 2001; Sercu, 2006).

Research that looks at foreign and second language acquisition in a classroom setting tends to separate the exposure to language (either frequent or limited) that students have when they are not in the classroom, and the incorporation of such exposure into the methodology used by the teacher in classroom instruction (c.f. Bardovi-Harlig & Dornyei, 1998; Schauer, 2006). Especially in the instances when the teacher is not the direct initiator and mediator of the language learning activity, much of the information about what students learn and utilize in their learning from those instances is lost or not considered relevant to what goes on in the language classroom.

Studies that look at methodology and curriculum fostering the development of communicative skills in a foreign or second language do not provide information about how a teacher in an environment that is rich with the authentic language outside the classroom goes about structuring her class compared to a teacher whose students are in an environment where authentic and varied language models are scarce. Many studies focus on explicit vs. implicit instruction, or the acquisition of a specific language skill but they tend to remove the teacher as a possible contributor to the results of the language instruction by looking at the depersonalized instruction method (Chang, 2008; Klapper & Rees, 2003). Bax (2003) and Holliday (1994) argue that instruction needs to be context specific and methods cannot be exported easily from one context to another. This argument leads to beliefs that a teacher in an ESL context should be using very different methods from a teacher in an EFL context even if the language goals for the students are the same. Yet, the language instruction methods and language learning theories that support them do not distinguish between ESL and EFL contexts.

Research on what a student needs to know in order to be competent in communication struggles with recognizing and defining what knowledge (if any) that goes beyond linguistic knowledge is important for a competent speaker. Some studies define native-like language knowledge as of utmost importance (Elliot, 1997; Weyers, 1999) and some define appropriate social, cultural and strategic knowledge as equally important as grammatical accuracy (Mochizuki & Ortega, 2008; Zha, 2006). Often the interpretations of the results and implications for improved instruction do not reflect the needs of a well rounded, competent language speaker as defined from a sociocultural point of view.

The current study aims to fill in the gaps in the knowledge particularly the gaps related to instructional context, content, and methodology interactions. The study is situated in two different sociocultural environments that serve as contexts for English language instruction. One of the contexts is set in Slovakia, a country that has undergone significant change in its political alliance and has recently redefined its educational goals. The other context is set in the United States, where ELL education has been reformed many times. The purpose of the current research was to explore three facets. First, a teacher's definition of what makes an English language learner competent to communicate in English, second, the knowledge of what a teacher of English to speakers of other languages considers important to teach in order to achieve the communicative competence. Third, how the different English language teaching contexts influence what goes on in a language classroom. Specifically, the study was grounded in the following research questions. How do teachers of English to speakers of other languages teaching in different sociocultural contexts define what content is

necessary to teach English language learners in order to achieve communicative competence? How do teachers of English to speakers of other languages teaching in different sociocultural contexts define what methodology is necessary to use to teach English language learners in order to achieve communicative competence? What role does the setting play? What methods does each teacher employ? Is there a difference in the teachers on this definition and how they teach? If so what are the differences? If not, why not?

Chapter Two of this dissertation thesis will focus on the recent literature and introduce in more detail the concepts of context, methodology, and content, tied around the model of communicative competence. The chapter will examine the concepts as they are understood and reviewed through current research carried out in the field of English language instruction worldwide. Chapter Three will be devoted to describing the qualitative study methodology which was carried out with participants on two different continents to ensure different instructional language learning context. In Chapter Four you will find the resulting themes of the study and Chapter Five will discuss the results of the study as they fit with the literature. Implications for further research, limitations of this current study and practical applications of the results will also be included.

Definition of Terms

There are several terms used in this study that may take on several meanings based on their contextual use. For the purposes of this study, the following definitions will be applied to the use of these terms.

Context is used to describe the setting or environment in which the instruction and language learning takes place. In this study the context is either English as a second language context or English as a foreign language context.

Target Language or L2 is the language learned. In this particular study the target language referred to is the English language.

L1 describes the native language.

Language Instruction is operationalized as the teaching and learning of language in a traditional classroom setting led by a teacher.

English as Second Language instruction is the instruction of the English language in an environment where the English language is also the mainstream (official) language spoken outside of the classroom environment. English is the language of the majority of population, widely used in public.

English as a Foreign Language instruction is instruction of the English language in an environment where language other than English is spoken outside of the classroom environment.

Immersion describes a language learning environment in which students are immersed daily in the target language both outside and inside of the classroom setting (e.g. English as a second language setting).

English Language Learning/Learner (ELL) is a learner of English, a non-native speaker.

Communicative Competence includes a set of sub-competences, mastery of which provides the speaker of a new language with all the skills and knowledge he or she needs in

order to be able communicate and be understood in the new language in a written or in an oral form. Communicative competence is explained in detail in the Literature Review.

English Language Teaching (ELT) refers to teaching the English language to speakers of other languages.

Language Learning refers to conscious, focused, and intentional language learning, based on Krashen's explanation (Krashen, 1981).

Language Acquisition refers to subconscious and unintentional language learning or picking up language without being formally taught (Krashen, 1981).

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

Language learning across the world is based on the underpinning function of language as a tool for thinking and communication. Whether it is children learning a native language (Vygotsky, 1978) or adults learning a new language at an older age (Coleman, 1996), communication in the new language is the desired outcome. Learners' desire to communicate in the new language positions demands on the instructors and the instruction to focus on achieving communicative competence. There is an agreement in the academic community that language learning results from participation in communicative events and interaction of learners with peers, teachers, native speakers and written texts (Kramsch, 1992). Despite any claims to the contrary, however, the nature of this learning remains undefined and the classroom itself as a social context for learning has been neglected (Savignon, 1991).

The role of the learning environment in second language development has been much discussed in the field of second language learning, mainly in studies comparing the effects of study abroad, learning English in an English speaking country, at-home instructional contexts, or learning English in a traditional classroom setting in a non-English speaking environment (DeKeyser, 1991; Dewey, 2004; Diaz-Campos, 2004; Freed, Segalowitz, & Dewey, 2004; Huebner, 1995; Segalowitz & Freed, 2004). A common assumption is that the study-abroad environment with exposure to the target language input both inside and outside class and authentic language use opportunities with native speakers is potentially more beneficial to the new language (L2) development. At the same time, recent studies (c.f.Dewey, 2004; Freed, Segalowitz, &

Dewey, 2004, Tanaka, 2004, Taguchi, 2008) have shown that the study-abroad environment is not always advantageous for L2 development. Groups of students studying abroad that share a common native language do not always spend more time using the L2 nor do they necessarily make more progress than their peers who study the L2 at home. The literature thus suggests that the relationship among environment, language contact and language gains is complex and calls for further empirical investigation.

In order for any English language learner (ELL) in any learning environment to effectively develop his or her language competence, he or she needs to master a certain level of grammatical knowledge of the new language as well as appropriate strategies that help the ELL use the language correctly and appropriately. Teachers of English to speakers of other languages consider a variety of skills and concepts to which they introduce their students in order to teach them fluent speech production in L2 (Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1997; Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1991). One of these concepts is the term *communicative competence*.

Communicative Competence Models

In the field of teaching English to speakers of other languages, the term communicative competence refers to the ability of a speaker to use the English language appropriately and effectively in achieving communicative goals. Language learning has traditionally focused on learning vocabulary and grammar. However, successful communication involves not only the ability to form correct sentences but to use them at appropriate times (Hymes, 1973). The term communicative competence has undergone a significant evolution since its first appearance in the works of Hymes. Hymes

extended the work of Noah Chomsky (1965) who explained the concept of linguistic competence (knowledge of rules and form of language) and the concept of linguistic performance (the use and function of language). Hymes viewed Chomsky's definitions as restricted and relevant only to an ideal speaker who was a member of a homogenous community not distracted by speech limitations, distractions or shifts of attention and focus. According to Hymes, Chomsky's linguistic competence explanation lacked the consideration of the sociocultural context in which language utterances were created and thus, the explanation needed to be redefined. Hymes coined the term communicative competence to include both the linguistic competence (knowledge of grammar and language use), and the sociolinguistic knowledge which directs the appropriate language use in a specific context. Since then, a growing number of researchers (c.f. Bardovi-Harlig, 2002; Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2005; Kramsch, 1997; Van Els, 2005) supported the claim that to be communicatively competent in a language should not be restricted to producing grammatically correct utterances. As Gee (2008) points out, some speakers may have poor grammar skills and still be able to communicate and function in society. Similarly, knowledge of correct linguistic forms does not guarantee that a person can communicate or be understood by others.

Since the 1970s number of researchers (c.f., Widdowson, 1978; Canale & Swain, 1980; Canale, 1983; Bachman, 1990; Van Els, 2005) have outlined models of communicative competence that share common points. These include recognition that being competent speaker of a native or a new language means to possess knowledge beyond the basic knowledge of how to form syntactically accurate sentences. Three models of communicative competence helped to shape the knowledge in the field of

language acquisition. In the first model by Canale and Swain (1980), later developed more by Canale (1983), there are four subcategories of communicative competence: linguistic (grammatical), discourse, socio-linguistic, and strategic competence. In this model, linguistic competence refers to the mastery of lexical items and of the syntax of a language and is only one aspect of the competence required for appropriate target language use. Discourse competence allows the speaker to build shorter utterances into larger cohesive language chunks. Socio-linguistic competence regulates the appropriateness of the chosen linguistic form for the situational context. Strategic competence prevents communication failure by coordinating the other three competences. The model singles out the discourse knowledge as a separate competence from both linguistic and socio-linguistic competences. Considering Gee's (1996) definition of discourse as connected stretches of text defined as linguistic or nonlinguistic in nature that make sense to a particular community of people, the isolation of discourse competence from either linguistic or socio-linguistic competence seems redundant.

In 1990, Bachman introduced his model of communicative competence under the label of communicative language ability (CLA) and proposed the following subcategories: linguistic competence (grammatical and sociolinguistic competence), strategic competence, and psycho-physiological mechanism (neurological and psychological processes involved in language use). Bachman's model differs from Canale and Swain's (1980) and Canale's (1983) model in the definition of strategic competence. For Canale (1983), strategic competence serves as an equilibrium restoration mechanism when insufficient knowledge occurs and breakdown in communication is imminent. Bachman sees strategic competence

as a dynamic link that interconnects language competence, the language user's knowledge structures, and the context in which communication occurs. Bachman's model crosses over from the field of applied linguistics to a combination of applied linguistic and cognitive and neuropsychological fields, which are outside the focus of the current study.

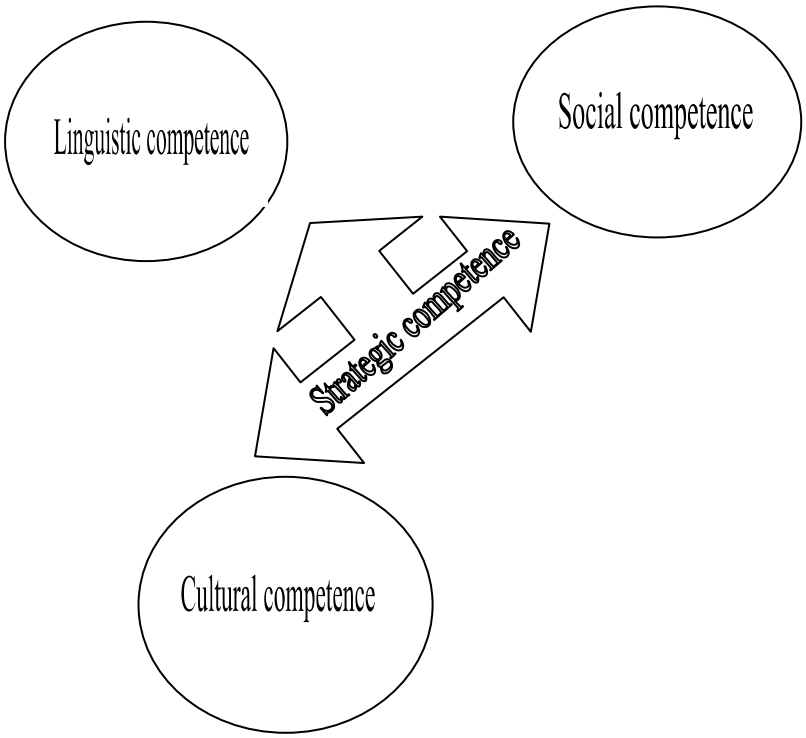
A more recent model of communicative competence by Van Els' (2005) defines it as mastery of linguistic competence plus five other components: sociolinguistic, discourse, strategic, sociocultural, and social. Van Els' competence components are organized and interconnected. The core competence, according to Van Els, is the discourse competence together with sociocultural competence because they both represent knowledge of social factors, cultural norms and other information related to pragmatics that influences the choice of linguistic material. Strategic competence refers to how well the language learners utilize the information from discourse competence and sociocultural competence to reflect in their linguistic choices for interpreting meanings and getting their own message across as intended. Van Els' (2005) definition shifts the language description from linguistics (phonology, grammar, etc.) and the four basic skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening) to a situational and functional description. Discourse becomes a core competence in language learning and it becomes a central concept to focus on in language instruction. The need to know what to say, how to say it and when to say it, as well as knowledge of who the speaker and audience are and what the unfolding situation is, are basic types of information which need to be agreed on if an utterance is to *make sense* (Gee, 1996). Compared with the previous two models, Van Els's model dissects the contextual clues a speaker utilizes into social, sociolinguistic and sociocultural competences. It shifts the focus on accurate analysis of the context and the language in use, discourse "with a

lower case d" towards what Gee (1996) refers to as Discourse "with a capital D," a way of talking, writing and acting that communicates a specific role recognizable by others. Speakers in conversation utilize predictable places in a particular conversation and the meaning of their utterances is socially as well as pragmatically conditioned by the actual situation (Meierkord, 1998), thus demonstrating the need for awareness of sociocultural conventions. Van Else's model, similar to Canale and Swain's (1980) model, singles out the discourse competence as an isolated one. The model also includes both a social and a sociocultural competence which refer to understanding social norms and cultural nuances respectively, making the socio in sociocultural redundant.

For the purpose of this particular study, a more parsimonious model of communicative competence has been developed (see Figure 1). This simplified model recognizes the need for the three competences: cultural, social, and linguistic working together under the direction of a fourth competence, strategic competence. All four competences equip a speaker of the English language to understand and be understood in communication. The central part of the model represents the three competences that focus on the knowledge that the speaker has about the language, the social context and the cultural symbolism. The driving force behind each of the competences is strategic competence, represented by the arrows. Strategic competence oversees and regulates the use of each competence. It is activated when there is a breakdown in communication and helps the speaker overcome the speaking barrier. A detailed description of each competence follows.

Figure 1

Components of communicative competence.



Linguistic Competence

Linguistic competence is the tacit knowledge of the abstract properties of the spoken language (Juffs, 2002). English language learning begins with this competence. The English language learner is introduced to the sounds of English, the new phonological system. The sounds and the way they are produced can either be similar or very different from the phonological system of the learner's native tongue. The identical observation applies to the other systems of English language, lexical, morphological, syntactic and discourse systems. Competence in the linguistic systems of the English language contributes to performance in the language but even the most highly educated adult native

speaker of English cannot be expected to master all the potential resources of the language within a community.

Chomsky's concept of linguistic competence represents the native speaker's knowledge of the syntactic, lexical, morphological and phonological features utilized in production of well-formed words and sentences. This knowledge provides the linguistic base for the rules of language usage and the combination of the knowledge with the application of rules results in accurate performance in the language (Altepkin, 2002). The research in English language teaching is moving away from the naive and ideal presentation of the native speaker as a point of reference for language learning (Álvarez, 2007; Kenning, 2006; Knutson, 2006). Kramsch (1997) argues that the native speaker is an imaginary construct in terms of both linguistic authority and social and cultural authenticity. The native speaker's speech production under normal circumstances is broken up with stops, hesitations, incomplete sentences or incomplete words as well as regional, dialect and slang expressions that contribute to the overall choppy utterance. Thus expecting the ELLs to have full linguistic mastery of a language is highly unrealistic and unnecessary (Saville-Troike, 2006). Instead the goal is for the English language speaker to be able to use the grammar and vocabulary correctly within any given context in order to be understood by native and non-native speakers (Kramsch, 1998).

Blum-Kulka (1982) discussed the levels of acceptability for lower proficiency learners in social acceptability, which signifies the ability of the speaker to determine when to perform a speech act with regards to appropriateness, linguistic acceptability (i.e. grammatically correct but idiomatically incorrect creation of utterances), and pragmatic acceptability (i.e. the intended meaning of an utterance). He indentified that

shifts in the pragmatic acceptability (i.e. if a speaker does not get the intended message across) have the most serious consequences in realization of the speech act. Blum-Kulka's evaluation means that the success of a speech act does not stand or fall on the perfect linguistic competence of the speaker.

The importance of explicit grammar instruction is a much discussed area of English language teaching (ELT). Communication cannot take place if there is complete absence of any kind of structure, grammar, or shared assumptions of how language works accompanied by the participants' willingness to negotiate meaning (Savignon, 2005). Grammar and rules of language formation are important features of communicative competence, and research (c.f. Kramsch, 1997; Savignon, 1971, 1972) suggests that language learners focus best on grammar when it interconnects and relates to their communicative needs and personal experiences. In order for a speaker of English to be functional and effective in communicative situations, the mastery of linguistic competence, grounded in knowledge of correct grammar and vocabulary, is of utmost importance. Equally important is the mastery of non-linguistic competences that allow the speaker to activate thinking processes that help with selecting appropriate linguistic tools (Dorneyi & Thurrell, 1991; Kramsch & Sullivan, 1991).

Social Competence

Social competence describes the ability to use basic social strategies by the speaker with attention to social conditions and social identities present in the language experience (Byram & Feng, 2005). Social competence in this particular model encompasses several sets of rules for language use, many of which fall under sociolinguistic or discourse rules. Sociolinguistic rules are concerned with the appropriateness of vocabulary for a given

situation, the relationship of the speaker with the audience and the type of vocabulary register used. The focus is on the current given situation in which the communication is taking place. Byram (1988) asserts that language does not function independently of the context in which it is used and so always refers to something beyond itself, which Byram calls the cultural context. His description of the cultural context as the set of circumstances under which speakers participating in communication come together at a particular time and place suggests that his cultural context label is used for what in this communicative model is represented as the situational or social context.

Knowledge and familiarity with the social context in which communication happens allows the speaker to assess the expectations and intended message and fine tune the communication attempts to fit the situation. Heath (1986) states that, to a large extent, interactions people have are based not on the knowledge the individuals have about one another but on the understanding the individuals have of the context in which the communication takes place. Social competence functions much like the cognitive notion of the schema theory that views learning as the collecting, organizing and reevaluating of all the background knowledge people have that is the abstract mental representation of their understanding of the world. In the case of social competence, it is the understanding of the context in which the communication occurs that shapes the communication efforts. While it is possible to have a meaningful conversation with a person about that which one has no information, it is much more difficult to develop meaningful conversation when there is no understanding of the context of the situation.

Included in the social competence is the notion of discourse. The rules of discourse help in making decisions about combinations of short language structures and in producing

long unified texts in different situational contexts, such as a job interview, a love letter, or a radio advertisement. The focus in rules of discourse is on cohesion devices (i.e. grammatical links) and coherence rules (i.e. appropriate combinations of communicative functions) to organize the forms and meanings (Dorneyi & Thurrell, 1991), making the discourse knowledge fluctuate between the linguistic and social competences. Ultimately, however, it is the assessment of the situational context that determines the language used that places discourse in this model in the social competence category.

Language exists only in social context (Gee, 2008). When language is produced, a design is produced that communicates an intended message to fit a specific situation. At the same time, that situation is created by the participants (Gee, 2005). The more similar the communication intentions, language knowledge and background knowledge of the speaker and the listener, the more similar the meaning encoded by the speaker or the writer and subsequently the meaning constructed by the listener or the reader (Bardovi-Harlig, 2002). Meaning and communication are socially as well as pragmatically conditioned by the actual situation (Gee, 2000). Ways of using language to communicate, the discourse patterns (Gee, 2008; Perez, 1998), change in different social relations to reflect the relationship, hierarchy, status and/or conventions utilized by the participants using the language.

Cultural Competence

The third sub-competence in the communicative competence definition is cultural competence. It includes knowledge, understanding, valuing and acceptance of the traditions, beliefs, skills, knowledge, languages, practices and values of diverse cultural communities and groups (Kramsch, 1993). Cultural competence regulates the

use of language in agreement with cultural norms, the language learners' understanding of other cultures and their motivation for language learning (Byram & Feng, 2005). Awareness of culture associated with the target language influences the choice of linguistic material (Van Els, 2005). Especially when speaking with members of other cultures, participants in the exchange expect to use their own cultural conventions in communication. Culture shapes and binds one's linguistic concepts, making them likely to be misunderstood by outsiders to the culture (Hinkel, 2006). Cultural competence as well as cross-cultural understanding is necessary for mutual understanding (Kachru & Smith, 2008).

Language expresses, shapes and symbolizes cultural reality (Kramsch, 1993, 1998). Culture is not only something existing within the self but also is a tool to understand the self. Cultural awareness must be viewed as both enabling language proficiency and being the outcome of reflection on language proficiency (Kramsch, 1993). Proficiency in the new language means using the language appropriately with respect to the culture (Byram & Feng, 2005).

There is a body of research which sheds some light into what is needed for including culture in language education (c.f. Duff, 2001; Genc and Bada, 2005; Kramsch, 1993, 1997; Pataray-Ching, Kitt-Hinrichs, & Nguyen, 2006). One of the issues being researched is looking at whose culture should be taught in the classroom. In their ethnographic longitudinal study of the relationship between professional beliefs and practices and the achievement of culturally and linguistically diverse students, Harry, Arnaiz & Klingner (2008) concluded that schooling is culturally responsive to the children of mainstream families when they compared the education in the United States

and Spain. Thus, the challenge for teachers in today's age of global and cross-cultural development is to learn to be culturally appropriate for all ELLs. While the teacher may only possess knowledge about the culture from which she or he comes, it is necessary to understand the cultures of the students in class for effective communication. The other issue explored in the research is related to the definition of culture. Much cultural knowledge is often superficial and stereotypical, because developing stereotypes is often the easiest way to deal with an unfamiliar culture (Byon, 2007). Although stereotypes are often viewed as negative in cross-cultural education, they can be valuable resources for helping second language instructors to design, implement and evaluate second language culture teaching curricula. Even if the educators do not agree with the cultural stereotypes, being familiar with them helps to define what is wrong about stereotyping and introduces critical thinking about culture into a language classroom.

Cultural competence includes knowledge related to the speaker's own cultural background, the culture of the audience, and the culture related to the language used. When all three references to culture are represented homogenously by the same understanding, communicative competence is achieved more easily. However, that is rarely the case. When the cultural references in the communication differ in the speaker, the audience and the context of the target language, the competent speaker needs to work harder on understanding the best ways to get a message across. At this point, strategic competence is activated.

Strategic Competence

Strategic competence is the ability to cope with gaps in the speaker's command of the language (Van Els, 2005). It is a skill that allows the speaker to identify the communicative goal, to select information needed to achieve it, to use appropriate resources for the information and their combination, and to plan and execute the language utterance (Brindley, 2002). Strategic competence is needed for the appropriate combination of the other competences based on the situational context of communication. If correct information is selected and combined, then the speaker communicates the desired message. From that point, the receiver of the message uses the same strategic competence to understand the intended message and to construct meaning. The need to know what to say, how to say it, and when to say it, as well as the knowledge of who the speaker and the audience are, and what the unfolding situation is, are basic types of information which need to be agreed on if an utterance is to be meaningful (Gee, 2008).

Dorneyi and Thurrell (1991) describe strategic competence as the ability to get one's meaning across successfully to communicative partners, especially when problems arise in the communication process. The authors also point out that strategic competence is a skill utilized by both native language speakers and English language learners, since strategic competence involves strategies to be used when communication is difficult. They offer a list of strategies a speaker may try to resolve communication problems that include paraphrasing (i.e. describing the object or action instead of directly naming it), approximation (i.e. using a similar label that is close to the meaning, such as frog when the word toad is not in active vocabulary). Another strategy is using non-linguistic means such as gestures, miming and acting out concepts. The last strategy on their list is to use invented

words that characterize the original concept, such as meow animal instead of cat. A fluent speaker may fail at an attempt to communicate without sufficient strategic competence knowledge. At the same time, there are language learners who can communicate successfully with a very limited vocabulary and grammar knowledge while they rely entirely on their strategic competence, the understanding of the situation and culture and use of non-verbal clues (Dorneyi & Thurrell, 1991; Gee, 2008).

Strategic competence allows speakers of the language the opportunity to negotiate meaning by exercising control over the course of the communicative exchange, asking for clarification, and/or using alternative linguistic or non-verbal communication tools to get their message across and be understood (Kenning, 2006). Strategic competence is the competence that ELLs can transfer from their L1. It is important to note that strategic competence is not a competence used exclusively by ELLs. A reference to previous discussion of the linguistic competence and the native speaker needs to be made to explain the activation of strategic competence. When listening to any uninterrupted continuous speech made by a native speaker, it is noticeable that not all sounds utilized in the speech are meaningful words. Below is an example from unedited speech cited in Pietro (1970):

> It's uh .. it's uh not .. I mean he .. (throat cleared) actually well he he we we had just sort of . . in many ways sort of given up . . trying to do very much .. until.. bedtime. Unless it's something that he can be included in .. whereupon he will .. usually isn't interested for long enough to really . . carry through with it.

The example of a continuous speech by a native speaker illustrates that there were many instances when the speaker used strategic competence skills to get the message across. The same behavior needs to be exhibited by the audience. By using the strategic competence

skills, the message can be converted into a smooth uninterrupted speech. Strategic competence then, is the competence most involved in making meaning in communication through acting as the guiding agent and support to the linguistic, social and cultural competences. In order to fully understand the concept of communicative competence, a look at instruction is needed.

Teaching Communicative Competence

Curriculum

While the curriculum for teaching English to speakers of other languages does involve a substantial grammatical and theoretical knowledge about the language, the social and cultural competences are equally represented in the worldwide English language curricula. Acknowledging the need for recognizing cultural competence as a part of the curriculum for language instruction is grounded in educational policies and curriculum standards worldwide. One example is the document published by the Ministerstvo Školstva Slovenskej Republiky [Ministry of Education of The Slovak Republic] (2002) which states as one of the learning goals the need to learn tolerance and acceptance towards other cultures. In the United States, The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) Position Paper (2006) covers cultural tolerance and understanding as a part of the ELT curriculum. It also asks teachers to utilize culturally appropriate materials in the classroom. The Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (2001) calls for an intercultural approach as a central objective of language education with the goal of helping the language learner to construct their linguistic, cultural and social identity

through the experience of *otherness* (p.12), where the other is another language, another culture, other people or new areas of knowledge.

Genc and Bada (2005) conducted a survey in Turkey in the English language teaching department examining the importance of inclusion of culture into the language acquisition curriculum. The respondents were twenty eight university students studying English as a foreign language. The participants took a separate culture course in addition to the regular English language development courses. They were asked their opinion on the benefits of studying culture and language, cultural knowledge contributing to their language skill development, and attitudes and awareness of the target language culture. The resulting survey of participants indicated that students considered studying the culture of American/English societies very beneficial for their linguistic competence and overall communicative competence development. Cultural competence was defined by the participants in the study as knowledge that is helpful in understanding a behavior from the perspective of the members of a particular culture. The cultural knowledge also helped them behave in a way that would be understood by members of the culture.

Instructional Approaches

The instructional approach historically connected to teaching communicative competence is communicative language teaching (CLT) (Belchamber, 2007; Savignon, 2005). Communicative language teaching refers to both processes and goals in classroom learning. CLT teaches language learners to be communicatively competent while building on psycholinguistic and sociocultural perspectives in second language acquisition research (Savignon 1972, 1997).

The research project by Savignon (1971) used the term communicative competence to characterize instruction grounded in the ability of classroom language learners to interact with other speakers and to make meaning, as distinct from their ability to recite dialogues or perform on tests of grammatical knowledge. This study of adult language learners learning French as a foreign language looked at the effect of practice using coping strategies as a part of instruction. The participants were encouraged to ask for clarification, to seek clarification, to use circumlocution and whatever other linguistic and nonlinguistic resources they could gather to negotiate meaning. The teachers' roles were to be leaders of learners into safe risk taking with language communication strategies. The communication strategies identified in this study became the basis for subsequent identification by Canale and Swain (1980) of strategic competence as one of the components in their model for communicative competence, along with grammatical competence and sociolinguistic competence. The focus of CLT is the learner while identification of learners' communicative needs provides a basis for curriculum design (Van Ek, 1975). Teaching students how to use the language is considered to be at least as important as teaching the language itself.

A useful summary of basic principles of CLT is provided by Berns (as cited in Savignon, 2005). The summary includes the principle that language teaching is based on a view of language as communication. In agreement with Vygotsky's (1986) theory, language is a social tool that is used to make meaning. Diversity is recognized and accepted as part of language development and use in second language learners and users, as it is with first language users. A learner's competence is considered in relative, not in absolute, terms. More than one variety of a language is recognized as a viable model for learning and

teaching. Culture is recognized as instrumental in shaping speakers' communicative competence, in both their first and subsequent languages. No single methodology or fixed set of techniques is prescribed. Language use is recognized as serving ideational, interpersonal and textual functions and is related to the development of learners' competence in each. It is essential that learners be engaged in doing things with language — that is, that they use language for a variety of purposes in all phases of learning.

An opposing view on CLT as the best method to teach communicative competence, particularly while paying attention to the context in which the learning occurs, comes from Bax (2003). Bax asserted that CLT is a method that focuses on the teacher's desires rather than learner's needs, on what and how to teach rather than the context of the learner or that of the environment. What Bax failed to define, however, is the very concept of context. By multiple references to geographic characteristics (Holland, Czech Republic, Taiwan) or local context (Japan) it is suggested that his argument is not against the notion of context defined as situated language instruction, but rather against the rigid application of CLT across a variety of environments, cultures and learner communities without considering the social and cultural differences that might influence the application of CLT.

In any classroom setting, it is ultimately the teacher who decides what the students benefit from most and what instructional approaches to use in order to meet their students' language competence needs. Chang (2008) and Liang (2004) both examined classroom methodology focusing on implementing a variety of instructional practices and the way students from different social and cultural backgrounds were able to participate in them. Chang (2008) explored the methodology of class work organization in a math instruction to the ELLs and native-speakers in an immersed

learning environment. The purpose of the study was to see which grouping practice yielded best results in students' math concept understanding with the focus on the ELLs. The author implemented four different class organizational methods: teacher-directed whole class activity, teacher-directed small-group activity, teacher-directed individual activity, and student-selected activity. The results indicated that students from different cultural backgrounds benefited from different methodology. The Hispanic ELLs displayed low math performance in teacher-directed whole-class activities, while the Asian ELL students showed low math performance in teacher-directed small-group activities, and the Hispanic bilingual students benefited from teacher-directed individual activities.

Liang's (2004) study examined ESL students who were immigrants from China in an English learning environment where cooperative learning was the leading methodology. The researcher found that the learners responded both positively and negatively to the variety of cooperative learning tasks. Liang concluded that the students' confusion when making decisions about cooperation and non-cooperation stemmed from their sociocultural background and previous educational systems. Both competition and cooperation exist in Chinese societies and the author contributed the students' dilemma (e.g. sharing an idea with group members vs. keeping it to themselves for a better grade) to the way their identities formed prior to entering the country of their current education.

While both of these studies showed that the difference in the sociocultural background of the students affects the way language learners performed in language related tasks during specific classroom practices, they did not offer clarifications of any

meaning related negotiations related to strategic competence that possibly went on in the classroom during the activities. More information is needed also about the teachers' role in the classroom and teachers' cultural and social awareness as reflected in the decision to structure the classroom practices in a certain way.

Klapper and Rees (2003) studied two groups of British higher education German learners in a foreign and a second language learning setting. The learners were exposed to two different instructional approaches. One group received substantial explicit teaching of the grammatical forms in the EFL setting. The other group, situated in an ESL setting, received more meaning-focused instruction with attention to the use of authentic language materials in German with only occasional and, generally, more incidental attention to the linguistic form. The study followed the development of the two groups' language competence over a period of four years. The authors found that the group that learned the language in the naturalistic setting showed weaker results on the explicit grammar related tests, but their overall language proficiency and fluency was better. The researchers concluded that some grammatical forms were not fully mastered by the group in the naturalistic setting because they were not as frequent in everyday language. Other forms did not need to be taught explicitly because they were easy to master in the naturalistic setting. The authors concluded that for best results in mastering the grammar of English language a combination of explicit and implicit teaching was recommended. This study focused on the grammatical aspects of language learned with two different instructional approaches. Although the overall fluency and proficiency were tested, the authors did not elaborate on how grammatical knowledge contributed to the overall fluency in either setting or whether the explicit or the implicit

instructional approaches contributed to the overall proficiency and fluency in communication in any way.

Canado (2006) explored the effects of types of instruction on learning spelling in a foreign language setting when the learning was an implicit, top-down, whole-to-part approach or an explicit, bottom-up, part-to-whole approach. The experimental and control groups were measured on their performances in five main spelling dimensions prior to the development of an intervention program which drew the students' conscious attention to spelling aspects, after its conclusion one year later, and six months following the finalization of the intervention. The results highlighted the importance of teachers bringing students' focus to issues and concepts related to English spelling instruction. In Canado's study (2006) the findings indicate that focus on explicit instruction is important for faster understanding of spelling in English language, especially when the instruction is situated in a foreign language learning context. In order to know more about whether it is indeed the explicit spelling instruction that contributed to the improved spelling, more should have been included about the control group's instruction. The author only mentions that the control group followed ordinary curricular materials. It is not clear, however, what was included in the instruction the control group in the study received and whether other variables related to methodology could have contributed to the results of the study.

Both Klapper & Rees (2003) as well as Canado (2006) in their studies concentrated on instruction situated within a classroom. Both studies are missing any discussion on the influence of context outside of the classroom on students' learning. Another variable that neither of the studies addressed is the students' exposure to

language models that do not represent correct language forms and the influence of such exposure on classroom talk and on the methodology used by the teacher.

Authenticity

In order to achieve a high level of linguistic competence, the use of authentic English language materials has proven to be effective in the EFL setting. In the ESL setting, references to environmental print and directed, focused attention of learners' to language in their environment is equally highly recommended for successful development of correct linguistic habits. Authentic language, authentic materials, and simulation of authentic situations in classroom play an important role in supporting students' communicative competence. While grammar drills and correct sentence structure activities build linguistic competence and help the students practice creating language using a grammar template, providing students with opportunities to produce language based on what the situation requires fosters the social and cultural competences and encourages the development of strategic competence.

Studies investigating the importance of combining authentic materials and authentic language in language learning support the idea that ELT is the most effective when the new linguistic knowledge is situated in the authentic or simulated real life context with deliberate focused attention on the new knowledge (Nation, 2005). A study by Liu and Jiang (2009) explored the effects of integrating contextualized study of vocabulary and grammar into corpus driven instruction. The definition of corpus linguistics is to discover patterns of authentic language use through analysis of actual usage. A corpus consists of a databank of natural texts, compiled from writing and/or a transcription of recorded speech and this databank is analyzed by a concordance, a software program which analyzes

corpora and lists the results (Krieger, 2003). Liu and Jiang (2009) conducted their study in EFL and ESL courses in Chinese and US universities with 244 participants that included students and instructors. Their data sources included students' corpus search projects and reflection papers, teachers' lesson plans and teaching journals and a post study assessment survey. The study results included positive effects of the integrated instructional approach, such as improved command of vocabulary and grammar and increased critical understanding of grammar. The positive effects also included an increase in discovery learning skills that were transferable to areas other than English language learning.

Providing students with understanding and enough practice in what to say, how to say it and be understood is a challenging task. Zha, Kelly, Park, and Fitzgerald (2006) focus on various competences that a speaker of a foreign or a second language should have. Zha et al. (2006) examined students' language development through the use of electronic discussion boards. The elementary school students who were ELLs in the immersed setting were observed over a period of six weeks as they used a computer-mediated environment to improve their language proficiency. The activities included planning a holiday menu, planning a party and forming a club. The first activity was organized as an individual activity and the other two were a group-consensus-needed type of activities. Zha et al. (2006) found positive changes in the students' communicative competence, specifically their social, cultural and strategic competences. The students improved in using appropriate language in the different social and cultural settings. The authors found that students' communicative competence significantly increased in those activities that required the students to engage in negotiations and peer collaborations, but decreased in the individual activity.

When viewing students' messages within the activities, changes were observed where students learned from one another's messages and adopted slang and idioms. The researchers recommended that group based task instruction was a useful practice for developing students' language use in a variety of social contexts. The focus of the study was on language use in real life contexts with topics that were familiar and interesting to students. Other topics with less familiarity should be investigated to see if students implement and improve their language competence in an equally enthusiastic way.

The following studies examine the importance of authentic language and authentic language materials used in a classroom setting. Students who need to achieve communicative competence in either immersed or foreign language setting benefit when authentic language materials are included for them to explore how language works in a variety of contexts. Vogely (1995) examined students' comprehension of the authentic oral language input and the strategies the learners use for comprehension. The participants in the study watched and listened to three authentic video programs and completed a comprehension strategy questionnaire. The results showed that on a metacognitive level, students knew the types of listening strategies they needed to use, but preferred certain strategies for the execution of the listening task. The most popular strategies proved to be the understanding of the gist of the text and the use of background knowledge, both classified by the author as top-down strategies. Very few students, however, reported their actual use. Similar results surfaced with the bottom-up strategies, such as understanding the meaning of each word and focusing on the details of the text. More learners recognized them as effective strategies than reported using them. Overall comprehension in fact decreased in the examined groups that studied the

language longer. Vogely (1995) concluded that exposing students to authentic materials allowed students to practice comprehension strategies they needed in order to be competent speakers. The reluctance of students to actually use many of the strategies they knew stemmed from infrequent exposure to authentic materials and lack of systematic practice focused on strategic knowledge. Knowledge of comprehension strategies, however, does not guarantee their correct use. Vogely's study did not include social and cultural interpretations of why students would not use the listening strategies despite listing them as popular. This opens opportunities for future research on how the strategic competence when included with the linguistic competence might improve students' overall language performance.

Authentic materials and the strategies students used for comprehension were the focus in Weyers' (1999) study as well. In his report, the authentic materials were television programs. The study was situated in a foreign language learning context. Students learning Spanish as a foreign language in his classroom were watching soap operas in Spanish. Weyers (1999) found that as a result, that students' listening comprehension increased. The author reported that exposure to authentic video had positive impact on language acquisition process, especially with a statistically significant increase in the number of words students used in a discourse as well as in the linguistic competence, and the social competence. Weyer's (1999) found that the authentic TV contributed to an increased level of confidence in students' language performance. The exposure to authentic language also contributed to an increased level in the students' willingness to take chances in their speech as demonstrated in daring to make mistakes in order to communicate an idea, fostering their strategic knowledge.

Weyer (1999) does list as one of the positive outcomes a more fluent, native-like narration that was not choppy. The soap operas the students watched were Mexican, and so was the Spanish language variation, so it is assumed that fluency in speaking as contributed to interaction of social and cultural competence was mainly based on one language variant coming from Mexico.

Both studies demonstrated that students benefit from the inclusion of authentic language materials, because the examples of varieties of language use aid students' comprehension development. Authentic materials also benefit the students' understanding of what language use in the real world contexts looks like especially when there are limited chances for students' outside classroom interactions with such real world contexts. While Vogely's study (1995) focused only on fostering linguistic competence in looking at how students analyzed mainly grammar related properties of the input, Weyers' (1999) study looked at a language form as well as the social competence. The use of the authentic materials provided opportunities for cultural and social competence development, however, both studies were centered mainly on the understanding of the language form (Vogely, 1995) and acquiring native-like fluency (Weyers, 1999), and not on negotiations of meaning that occurred when students engaged in the discovery of situational, social and cultural meaning of the language models.

Teacher Talk

In a language classroom, the teacher is often the main source of the correct language model, especially in a foreign language learning setting. Since learning a language is an active process on the part of the learner, the types of teacher talk and

amount of the teacher talk can influence the language learning outcomes. Gibbons (2003) and Chavez (2006) both found that the way teachers structure their teaching with focus on the teachers' language use, language practice, and amount of first language use in the classroom determines how students react to the learning opportunities created for them in the classroom setting. Gibbons (2003) examined the types of the teacher-student speech interactions in a science class where the focus was on language development in an ESL setting. The participants for this study were teachers of elementary students. She found that when the teacher served as a mediator of the language, students progressed towards engaging in specialist discourses required by the school curriculum. The teachers built linguistic bridges to span the difficulty, difference or distance between the students' linguistic capabilities and the new concepts that required comprehension. Because in a content classroom the learning of concepts goes hand-in-hand with the development of the ELLs' language, classroom interactions are a major site for the language development. Gibbons (2003), however, documented only the types of language mediating techniques the teacher used, but not the change and/or increase in students' language proficiency.

Chavez (2006) studied the teacher talk in a foreign language setting with the focus on the amount of teacher/student talk, the use of native language, the class pace and the teacher/student turn-taking, as well as the basic structure of a class. After comparing the methodology of three different teachers, she found that each used a different approach to teaching the language. The first teacher's focus was on accuracy, correct grammar and a constant form checking. The second teacher was more relaxed in her approach to correct grammar and the students in her class were taught that they can

always rely on their first language, the use of which was very generous in the classroom. The third teacher's approach was one that operationalized the view that success in learning means taking risks. His approach was also the most popular with the students, although the researcher admitted that the popularity was mostly influenced by the grading techniques, and not the teaching techniques. The evaluations in Chavez's study (2006) came from students' narratives about the teaching methods the teachers implemented and the students' perceived language improvements but it is not clear how the teachers evaluated their students' progress.

While both studies focus on teacher talk, they fail to mention the actual language development assessment of the students in each of the classes. More information is needed about how the teachers determine what their students learned as a result of a particular language teaching methodology. Both studies were set in a foreign language setting and therefore preference for interactions in the language is given to teacher/student interaction within class. For a complex picture, teachers' perspectives on students' contact and types of interactions with other language sources outside of class, however limited these interactions are, should be considered as well. It is clear that a teacher deciding on an appropriate way to teach or assess language skills should take into consideration the context, setting, and sociocultural background of their students.

Context for English Language Instruction

In order to understand what is happening inside a language classroom, it is helpful to look at what goes on outside of it. The studies collected around the theme of

context in language teaching and learning provide an overview of the connections made between language learning and the context in which that learning occurs.

Interactions outside of the classroom account for a large portion of the learning behavior, the attitude to language learning, and the way learners go about satisfying their learning needs. Although much of the guided and traditional instruction happens in the classroom, the studies by Bongartz and Schneider (2003), Lybeck (2002), and Springer and Collins (2008) demonstrated that students' interactions outside the class influenced their language development in addition to the development under the guidance of a classroom teacher.

Bongartz and Schneider (2003), Lybeck (2002), and Springer and Collins (2008) in their studies looked at the direct influence interactions outside the classroom had on students' linguistic knowledge in a foreign and in a second language setting. Bongartz and Schneider (2003) followed two English speaking boys age five and seven over a year as they learned German language in an immersed setting. They found that the two boys achieved full range of the syntactic development in the new language, but their speech production and accuracy were different. One of the boys clearly preferred imperative phrases and the other one declarative. The researchers were able to tie the cause of the differences in speaking to the different opportunities for social interactions the boys participated in outside the classroom, as these social interactions were reflected in their speech production. The findings of this study suggest that linguistic development does depend on social contexts in which language learners engage and the two concepts, context and linguistic knowledge, should be considered as related. However, as the authors admitted, some of the difference in the participants'

communication could be attributed to the boys' personality types. Furthermore, the age of the boys was five and seven, and the language of a five year old can often be more egocentric in their speech development than the seven year old child's speech. This developmental feature could contribute to the younger boy's use of imperatives. While the study did show the influence of social interactions in the environment on language development, there are many other variables that could be the cause of the difference in language, thus calling for a clearer investigation of the context and the role it plays on language development.

Lybeck (2002) studied Americans studying the Norwegian language in Norway. She reported a direct connection between social networking and second language learning. She found that second language learners who are able to engage in exchange networks with native speakers improved their language learning. Positive connections outside the class led to a desire for more native like fluency and pronunciation in the students' learning. Learners who had limited or negative interactions with the native speakers developed a stronger cultural distance and experienced more difficulty in language learning caused by lack of the target language norm enforcements in their social networks. Lybeck's study (2002) showed that the nature of the interactions language learners have with their social networks in an immersed setting shaped the motivation of the learners to improve their new language. The study did not show, however, how the negative experiences from the environment influenced what the learners did in the language classroom, or whether the change in attitude towards language learning was the only reason for worsened pronunciation and grammar. It

would be helpful to see to what extent (if any) the teacher in the language classroom was able to build off of the students' opportunities within their social networking.

Springer and Collins (2008) studied adult ELLs and their language learning inside and outside of an ESL classroom. They reported that in the classroom context, the focus of learners was on the language and on the accuracy, even at the expense of not finishing the tasks. The students were frequently carried off the group tasks because they were involved in debating what the most accurate language form should be. In the outside classroom, the real world context, volunteering in a high school, the ELLs' focus was on a completion of tasks and getting their message across instead of focusing on language accuracy. The language became a vehicle for communication and both students in the study were less concerned with how correctly they spoke the language. Their desire for language correction or help rose only when the intended meaning was lost. Springer and Collins (2008) call the ELLs in the classroom setting *the language learners*, and in the outside of the classroom *the language users.* The researchers found that the language learners in the different learning contexts showed different language learning outcomes but the research did not address the outside environment and classroom contexts combination and its impact on language learning. Also, the fact that many of the tasks in the classroom did not get finished can be attributed to the teacher's methodology, rather than to the contextual influence. The study was grounded not only in the notion of different contexts for language improvement but also in the different goals for the use of language, a focus on learning vs. a focus on real life task accomplishment. A study replicating the concept of the two different contexts but

matching the goals for language use/learning more closely would provide more coherent results about the role of different contexts in language learning.

A number of studies in the field of second or foreign language learning explore the connections between the context and what learners pay attention to in the language they are learning. Charkova (2007) and Duff (2001) examined the importance of culturally relevant information from the outside of classroom as a part of communicative competence. Charkova (2007) studied Bulgarian ELLs set in the foreign language context to discern the age and gender differences in acquiring American slang expressions in the outside of the classroom context. She found that high school aged teens and males learned more slang, including the American dialect vocabulary and phrases, idioms, and taboo words. The students' sources for learning were a combination of classroom materials, as well as outside of classroom access to movies, songs, and internet visits. Reasons the participants listed for learning the slang ranged from wanting to be able to express themselves to wanting to understand lyrics of songs. Charkova was particularly concerned about a high rate of vulgar slang that her participants (aged 17-18 and 22-25) acquired from pop culture media but she did not include any information on what the teachers' regulation techniques of the vulgar slang use were. She failed to address the strategic and social competence related to the appropriateness of language in a variety of social settings. The author also failed to mention whether the knowledge of slang contributed to the overall communicative competence of the language learners.

Taguchi (2008) studied the effects of the immersed setting on the pragmatic language improvement in ESL students. She found that over a four month period,

students improved their accuracy but not their speed of comprehension of the pragmatic meaning. Taguchi (2008) attributed the comprehension accuracy improvement to the frequent interactions with language in the outside of classroom socialization context. The author assumed that the pragmatic intervention did not occur inside the classroom because there was no explicit systematized pragmatic instruction embedded as part of the ESL curriculum.

Bardovi-Harlig and Dornyei (1998) and Schauer (2006) compared learners of English in a foreign language setting and in a second language setting with native-speakers of English in their response to pragmatic and grammatical errors. Bardovi-Harlig & Dornyei's (1998) study looked at differences in how English language learners in two different learning contexts, an immersed second language setting and a foreign language setting, ranked grammatical and pragmatic errors. The authors defined grammatical errors as errors of the accuracy of a language structure such as morphology and syntax. They defined pragmatic errors as errors concerned with the appropriateness of utterances taking into consideration specific content, situations, and speakers. The pragmatic errors can be considered as lack of cultural, social and strategic competence. While all groups found some errors, both pragmatic and grammatical in nature, the EFL students in two different countries (Hungary and Italy) ranked pragmatic errors as less significant in nature. The ESL students studying in the US ranked pragmatic errors as more serious. Bardovi-Harlig & Dornyei (1998) included the EFL and the ESL teachers as their observed population as well and found that the teachers matched their students in the responses, the EFL teachers marked grammatical errors as more significant and the ESL teachers marked pragmatic errors as more significant. The researchers in their

findings indicated that three factors played an important role in the learners' linguistic awareness; the proficiency level, the learning environment, and the students' access to authentic language input. The EFL students and the native speakers found more grammatical errors, then the ESL students. Schauer (2006) replicated Bardovi-Harlig and Dornyei's study (1998) and her findings were similar. Both studies revealed that the significant differences in the EFL and the ESL learners' awareness of grammatical and pragmatic errors indicate that the learning environments play a substantial role in shaping of the language learners' linguistic awareness. Language learning that occurs in an immersed setting provides the language learner with contextual, social and cultural clues in addition to linguistic clues for the evaluation of language correctness and appropriateness, whereas the language learning in a foreign language setting steers the focus onto almost exclusively linguistic clues. Both studies also found that the ESLs' pragmatic and grammatical error awareness in communication increased after the students spent some time in an immersed setting, because they became more sensitive to how language was used in the contexts outside of the classroom. Authors of both studies mentioned in their conclusions and implications that the context and the methodology of learning a language are in a direct relationship. In both the original and the replicated study, it is suggested that the methodology in the foreign language context is focused on grammar with no outside of class interaction possibilities, whereas the immersed setting allows more meaning focused communications outside of the classroom. It is unclear how the language knowledge students acquire during their active participation in the social setting affects what goes on in the classroom. Information is needed on how or whether teachers in the different contexts take into

consideration, and/or incorporate their student's interaction possibilities in the different real world language learning contexts into their classroom content.

Summary

The theoretical and empirical literature overview in this chapter showed that the field of foreign and second language research focuses on communicative competence, the instructional methodology and the context of the learning environment because these tenets influence how language learners learn. The theoretical overview introduced the need for a communicative competence model based on existing models that have shaped the understanding of what knowledge is included in communicative competence. The research in instruction leading towards communicative competence revealed a need for an organized look at what communicative competence is as defined by teachers in two sociocultural contexts of language instruction, ESL or EFL settings. The analysis of the existing research showed that the second and foreign language acquisition focus is on different aspects of the four sub-competences: linguistic, social, cultural and strategic as isolated funds of knowledge the teachers consider important to teach (Chang 2008; Liang, 2004; Klapper & Rees, 2003), or limit their scope to only looking at particular narrow features such as spelling, pronunciation or slang acquisition (Canado, 2006).

The leading suggestion for most effective language instruction includes the importance of ELLs' exposure to authentic language and the use of authentic materials. The positive effects of using materials and instruction that provide students with opportunities to observe language in its natural form are undisputable (Liu and Jiang, 2009; Zha et al., 2006). A closer look is needed to assess what are the benefits for ELLs

in more specific terms than the generic term of language improvement. Research that looks at foreign and second language acquisition in a classroom setting tends to separate the exposure to language (either frequent or limited) that students have when they are not in the classroom, and the incorporation of such exposure into the methodology used by the teacher from classroom instruction (Bardovi-Harlig & Dornyei, 1998; Schauer, 2006). Especially in instances when the teacher is not the direct initiator and mediator of the language learning activity, much of the information about what students learn and utilize in their learning from those instances is lost or not considered relevant to what goes on in the language classroom.

Studies that look at methodology and curriculum that foster the development of communicative skills in a foreign or second language do not provide information about how a teacher in an environment that is rich with the authentic language outside the classroom goes about structuring her class compared to a teacher whose students are in an environment where authentic and varied language models are scarce. Many studies focus on explicit vs. implicit instruction, or the acquisition of a specific language skill but they tend to remove the teacher as a possible contributor to the results of the language instruction by looking at the depersonalized instruction method (Chang, 2008; Klapper & Rees, 2003).

Research on what a student needs to know in order to be competent in communication struggles with recognizing and defining what knowledge (if any) that goes beyond linguistic knowledge is important for a competent speaker. Some studies define native-like language knowledge as of utmost importance (Elliot, 1997; Weyers, 1999) and some define appropriate social, cultural and strategic knowledge as equally

important as grammatical accuracy (Mochizuki & Ortega, 2008; Zha, 2006). Often the interpretations of the results and implications for improved instruction do not reflect the needs of a well rounded competent language speaker as defined from a sociocultural point of view.

The current study aims to fill in the gaps in the field of applied linguistics specifically related to definitions of communicative competence from the perspective of teachers in two sociocultural contexts with the focus on whether the difference in the sociocultural context matters. The communicative competence model will be applied to teachers' definitions of communicative competence, their choice of content to teach and their choice of instructional approaches, and evaluated to see it fit in both sociocultural contexts. The study also aims to add to the knowledge of the perceived difference between the teachers teaching English to speakers of other languages in the EFL and the ESL contexts. The study will also provide information about how teachers' beliefs about what is important to teach translate into the instructional approaches they carry out and whether the sociocultural context in which the instruction is situated plays any role in the methodology chosen by each teacher.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

The goal of this study was to explore how two teachers in two different sociocultural contexts define what is necessary to teach English language learners in order for the ELLs to achieve communicative competence. The study looked at similarities and differences in what the teachers do in their classrooms that supports communicative competence.

A qualitative comparative case study design was chosen to find answers to the research questions. Case study is classified as descriptive methodology that looks at individuals or small groups, discovering interactions and relationships among factors defining them, and offering a holistic and in-context account of a topic under investigation (Creswell, 2005; Merriam, 1998). The case study approach is appropriate because the research questions focus on specific individual teachers of the English language. Stemming from this method's descriptive nature, detailed information about a participant or small group, including the accounts of subjects themselves, are collected and presented. This particular research involved working with two teachers in two different geographical locations which provided the different social and cultural contexts where language learning occurs. One case was situated in the context of immersed English language instruction in a location where English is the mainstream language spoken outside the English classroom, the Midwestern part of the United States. The second case was situated in the context of foreign language instruction in a location where English is not the mainstream language spoken outside the classroom, in a central European country geographically and a former Eastern European communist bloc country, politically. The low number of participants allowed thorough exploration

and understanding of their actions and behaviors over a period of time. Studying one teacher in her environment over a longer period of time and through many daily observations provided a multitude of options for learning about her classroom routine and instructional approach, allowing an in-depth exploration of the topic which is the underlying goal for a case study.

In a case study, emphasis is placed on exploration and description (Creswell, 2005; Mertens, 2005; Punch, 2005) while looking at a bound context that identifies the edge of the case that will not be studied (Merriam, 1998). In this particular study, the individual teachers are set in a specific context - a bound context of teaching English to speakers of other languages. Using the methodology of exploration and description, including procedures such as classroom observations and interviews, a case study approach provided the insight, discovery, and interpretation of the data collected rather than hypothesis testing.

Participants

Participants needed to meet several criteria to be eligible for participation in the research, hence a purposeful criterion sampling method was used for recruitment.

Criterion 1: A Qualified Teacher of English to Speakers of Other Languages

The participants had to have a minimum of five years of teaching experience of which at least two or more years were spent teaching ELLs. The five year experience threshold was chosen to guarantee that the participants were not beginning teachers. This minimum level of experience ensured that the participants had enough knowledge and teaching experience to draw on when talking about their instruction practices.

The participants had to be fully qualified to teach English to speakers of other languages. This criterion was approached with the two different cultural environments in mind and stated as a requirement to be a qualified teacher of English to speakers of other languages *in their native country*. Each country follows a different path in preparing professionals for teaching English to speakers of other languages. In Slovakia, a qualified English language teacher must attend a five year college taking general education courses, pedagogy and psychology courses, as well as courses related to the instruction of a foreign language (English). The studies end with a state exam and a thesis defense. The degree awarded is a Magister degree (Mgr.). Although there exists a two to three year course of study that ends with a bachelors degree awarded in education, those graduates are not qualified teachers. Those graduates can work as teacher assistants, school administrative help, after school care attendants, and at similar non-teaching positions (University of Comenius, 2010). The next level degree for an education major is either a Ph.Dr. or a Paed.Dr. degree. Both these degrees are a step above a magister's degree but a step below a doctorate of philosophy (Ph.D.) degree. They do not involve original research and contribution to knowledge, only a theoretical literature based thesis and subsequent oral exam. The highest academic graduate level degree involving original research is a Ph.D.

In the United States, in most states, a qualified teacher of English to speakers of other languages who plans to teach immigrant school age children in public schools, is a teacher who holds at least a bachelor degree in a content area, such as English, Language Arts, or Reading, as well as a certificate in teaching English as a second language. In some states in addition to the ESL certification exam, there are alternative

routes to become a certified ESL teacher. These routes are determined by each state's Department of Education and may differ state by state.

Criterion 2: Location and School Type

Participants had to come from two different sociocultural environments to provide the two different contexts for English language instruction. One chosen participant pool was native English speakers teaching English to ELLs in a Midwestern state in the United States. There is a high number of immigrant students, labeled as ELLs, who have come from all over the world and are taught in public schools in the Midwest (Shin & Bruno, 2003). They are learning English language as a second language in addition to their native tongue and any other language they might speak already. The teachers who teach these students are primarily native speakers of English.

The second participant pool consisted of Slovak citizens who learned English as their additional language while in school. These teachers would teach English to mainly Slovak students. Slovakia is a small country with the population of a little over five million people whose native languages include Slovak, Hungarian, Polish, Czech, German and Roma. Slovak students are given the choice to learn the English language as a foreign language in early years of elementary school. They begin learning English as early as in the first grade and continue all through their compulsory school years. When the students begin their secondary education, their English language experience varies because of different language learning histories before the high school.

Criterion 3: Teaching in a Secondary School

The schools the teachers represented in the research are high schools with a certain percentage of students classified as English language learners. The high school in each context represented a type of secondary education comparable to the other by level because they each offered general secondary education level classes as well as a choice for students to continue their education at a tertiary level after graduating. Using secondary schools ensured that the instruction in both contexts was geared towards the same age group and that the English language skills of the students in both locations were beyond the stage of beginners with at least some basic language skills.

Participant Recruitment

In the United States, participant recruitment began with obtaining the necessary permissions from the school district. The school district is situated in a suburban town near a metropolitan area. The town is a home to a major university which is the largest employment provider followed by businesses related to fields of technology and engineering. The town also has a flourishing oil and gas industry. Some percentage of the labor force travels outside the town for work. A contact for a qualified ESL teacher was received from a professional contact in the ELL field in the district. The teacher met the criteria for my study.

I contacted the principals of the high schools, described my research to them and asked if I could recruit the teacher from their school for my research. After the principals agreed, I met with the teacher, explained my research, asked for her interest in participation, and left her with the Informed Consent. After the teacher agreed to participate and signed the consent form, I proceeded to schedule appointments with the teacher to begin the study.

In Slovakia, no formal research application process is required if the research does not interfere or does not seek to amend the school's curriculum. To recruit via direct contact, a local contact person was involved in providing names of possible participants in the school district. The school district is situated in a suburban town located near a large metropolitan city. The town houses two large universities and has a predominantly agricultural industry. The town's job market is largely supported by foreign investors in technology and a car building industry.

An active search for participants was also used as I looked up schools online and sent out emails to principals in the school district. Once the principal of a school supported participation of his or her school, I instructed the local contact person to meet with the teacher and leave them with the informed consent form. She explained the research to the teacher, asked for their interest in participation, and left an informed consent form in Slovak to be mailed to me. In the process of the recruitment, a teacher who had initially agreed to participate in the research chose to withdraw her consent and refused to sign the informed consent form. A new possible participant was located through mutual acquaintances using the same criteria. The teacher agreed to participate in my research and signed the informed consent form. A personal contact via email was initiated with the teacher and we proceeded to set up the study.

Nancy Rain (all names are pseudonyms)

Nancy is a high school teacher born and raised in the United States. She grew up on the east coast. She speaks Spanish but by her own admission, she is not fluent. She has been teaching English language learners for fifteen years during a seventeen year teaching career. Her current employment is split between two different high schools in

the town, since there were not sufficient ELL numbers of students at each school to warrant a full time ESL teacher. Both high schools are situated within the town. One school serves students from the east and south side and Nancy spends the morning teaching there. The other high school has students from the north and west side of the town and Nancy commutes to spend the afternoons teaching in this school. Both high schools are four-year comprehensive public high schools with a steady enrollment of approximately two thousand students. In Nancy's class, the students are a mix of cultures and a variety of ethnicities, including Hispanic, Middle Eastern, Asian and European descent among others. Their length of stay in the United States ranges from a few weeks to a few years and so does their level of English. In a typical class of Nancy's, there would be about twelve students who come from all over the world whose English proficiency ranges from speaking a few words to speaking with difficulty but understanding well. Her class is mandatory for all English language learners whose language proficiency proves to be below sufficient for succeeding in academic content determined by a language aptitude test at the time of their enrollment.

Nancy shares her classroom at both schools with another teacher who may or may not be in Nancy's classroom during Nancy's instruction. The different groups of students come to Nancy's room at different times during the day. This arrangement provides her with her own desk, a computer, and places for displaying students' work, as well as places for storing class materials and books. On a typical day, Nancy would teach two classes at one high school, and two classes at the other high school. The classes last from fifty five minutes to an hour with a five minute recess between class periods.

Nancy shared with me that her beginning as a teacher of English as a second language (TESL) were not voluntary. The principal of the middle school where she was teaching at that time had decided to accommodate the large number of ELLs in the classrooms by asking all the teachers of fourth and fifth grade language arts to be dually certified. So Nancy decided to go back to college and took the required coursework to become an ESL certified teacher in addition to her reading teacher qualification. Since then, teaching ESL has become her passion and she would not teach anything else. Her highest degree is Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary studies (Grades 1-8). She is a certified reading and ESL teacher. She is also a certified Sheltered Immersion Operational Protocol (SIOP) Trainer of Teachers as well as a certified Student Assistance Program (SAP) Mentor. The SIOP model introduces a framework for instruction that organizes methods and techniques, and ensuring that effective practices are implemented (Pearson, 2008). The SAP provides a comprehensive model for the delivery of K-12 prevention, intervention, and support services to reduce student risk factors and promote protective factors.

Nancy is in her forties. She is a person full of energy with a bubbly outgoing personality that permeates love and passion for what she does. She likes to put herself in the student role and keep on top of the latest research and teaching trends. She also likes to try new things and apply them to her students. She is very open to new teaching techniques and opportunities that could improve her students' language performance. She constantly thinks on her feet, reacting to any situation in class with a kind, respectful and authoritative, and sometimes even motherly tone. Students clearly respect her and her classroom is an environment of trust and support, where it is okay to make a

mistake and learn from it. Often, when students are unruly, it is enough for Nancy to call on the misbehaving student and they return to being focused on the work. She is continuously establishing the appropriate behavioral norms by talking openly about what the students do that is considered interruptive or disrespecting to her or to the other students. Nancy expressed that she is aware that her position of an ESL teacher makes her the advocate for the students who may not have enough confidence in the school system or enough self-confidence to be their own advocate. She takes that part of her job very seriously.

From her perspective of an English language teacher Nancy thinks that English is a difficult language to learn since there are so many varieties of English, different regional dialects within the United States, regional colloquialisms, and slang. To her, learning English is almost like learning several different languages at once since English is a mixture of influences from other languages making it more difficult to explain why a certain rule is a rule. As far as teaching English, she articulated that her first reaction was that it is easy to teach it since she is a native speaker. But then she continued that the hard part is to put herself outside the native speaker role and be conscious of the language she uses, especially the figurative language. She is aware that many of her students might be at such a literal stage that when she says something in the figurative sense, they take it literally and then comprehension problems commence.

Hanka Slovakova

Hanka is a high school teacher in Slovakia. She is a Slovak citizen, born and raised in Slovakia. She began learning English when she was a high school student. She also worked on improving her English at home through self-study. Her decision to

choose to learn English was influenced as much by what she did not enjoy as much as by what she did enjoy. The high school she attended was primarily oriented towards prioritizing technology and natural science related classes and English was one of the few subjects she enjoyed. She was also learning German at the same time but was more attracted to English, which led her to choosing a career of an English language teacher. In her interview with me she recalled that English was something attractive, something new and she was successful at doing it. Hanka also speaks Russian, German and some Italian. She has been an ELL teacher for six years. Her current employment is in a catholic high school with an enrollment of over six hundred students. The school is a four year high school that combines secondary education with Catholic spiritual upbringing. Students who wish to study at this particular high school are asked to consider the fact that religion is an active part of the school life. The English language instruction is not directly influenced by the religious direction of the school but it is most visible at the beginning of the day, during the first class period, which begins with a prayer for the day broadcasted through the classroom speakers followed by the Our Father prayer. The rest of the day resembles general instruction in any high school. The students also have an option to attend Catholic mass in the foreign language they study (English, German, French).

Classrooms have an average of thirty students who attend classes as a permanent group, except for language instruction when the class is split in half. There way the instruction is set high school attendance and attend all courses together as a permanent group. There are four groups of students in each year, labeled A,B,C, and D. Ultimately, if a student is identified as a student from 3.B, it means, it is a third year student

belonging to the B class group of 30 students. In a typical classroom where Hanka teaches English, there would be about fifteen students who primarily speak Slovak at home. Their language proficiency is established during their enrollment into the high school and follows the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2001) proficiency level description. It is assumed that the students who enroll in secondary education have had some prior English language education, since in Slovakia students are required to choose a first foreign language in third grade and a second foreign language in fifth grade. With English being one of the most popular languages, it is improbable that a student will be a complete beginner.

I observed Hanka teaching English to different groups in the 3rd and the 4th year. She does not have an assigned classroom in which she teaches. In this high school, the faculty does not have a home room where they would teach majority of the time. The students migrate to different classrooms for each class period during the day and so do the teachers. The classes last forty five minutes and there is a recess of ten minutes and a longer midday snack time recess of fifteen minutes. During a typical day, Hanka would teach anywhere from 3-4 English lessons to 3-4 different groups of students and she would go to 3-4 different classrooms to do so. Since the classrooms are used by other content areas as well, there is no place for storing materials or student work. The classrooms are kept locked with the students waiting in the hallways for the bell and for the teacher to come and unlock the classroom. Hanka has a teacher's desk in a teachers' lounge which houses desks for each of the faculty members that teach at the school. The teachers' lounge room is filled with approximately nine rows of four desks. This room is where Hanka begins her day, where she returns after every class she teaches to drop

off course books and materials she used and pick up a different course book and materials for the next class. She also has access to a language teacher lounge which has four teacher desks and currently serves as storage for dictionaries, books, and other language materials. She often enlists the help of students to help her carry her teacher's book, a few dictionaries, a CD player, and anything else she needs for a class.

Hanka has been teaching English language learners for six years. Her highest degree achieved is a Ph.Dr. in English language and translation. Hanka regularly partakes in professional development such as workshops and lectures organized by the British Council Slovak offices, and the Pedagogy Method Center. The British Council is a leading English language resource for students, and teachers of the English language. It provides access to British publications such as English language textbooks and abridged fiction, online teacher resources, as well as professional development opportunities for language teachers. The Pedagogy Method Center is an organization appointed and directed by the Slovak Ministry of Education primarily aimed at providing professional development for faculty and staff employed by schools and after school care centers.

Hanka is a tiny woman in her thirties who could be confused for a student. She is shy and introverted but when she opens up and talks about herself and her students, it becomes clear that she loves her students and her job. She speaks with a shy smile but has strong opinions on some subjects. She has a positive stance on using English at home with her two elementary school aged children to give herself more practice and to give her children an English language foundation. She said it was inevitable that any child including her own will run into English language vocabulary on a daily basis

because it is everywhere in a form of environmental print, such as food containers, clothing print, and toy packages. She and her children also watch cartoons in English and make the English language an active part of their everyday lives.

Hanka knows she is liked by her students. She said that often they come to her with problems related to instruction and to her that is a sign of trust and respect. Often during class, the students solicit her help with words in English they collect from other than school resources and she either helps them with the meaning, or learns the meaning together with them. Hanka does not try to hide the fact that she herself is a constant English language learner. She doesn't think learning English was difficult. Since the English language is very visible in today's world and it is everywhere, she feels it is enough to have the eyes and ears open. As far as teaching the English language, she did not think it was difficult either. She added that a teacher needs to know what exactly she wants to teach and who the students are. The knowledge of the goals and the students makes teaching English easy for her.

Data Sources

Data sources were the field notes of classroom observations, post observation informal interviews, individual semi-structured interviews, and surveys of classroom practices, events, and materials used. Table 1 illustrates how each data source tied to a specific research question.

Table 1

Research Questions and Sub-questions Tied to Each Data Source.

Questions	Data Sources
How do teachers of English to speakers of other languages teaching in different sociocultural contexts define what content it is necessary to teach English language learners in order to achieve communicative competence?	Survey, Interview, Observation, Post observation interviews
How do teachers of English to speakers of other languages teaching in different sociocultural contexts define what methodology is necessary to use to teach English language learners in order to achieve communicative competence?	Survey, Interview, Observation, Post observation interviews
What role does the setting play?	Interview, Observation
What methods does each teacher employ?	Observations
Is there a difference in the teachers on this definition and how they teach?	Survey, Interview, Observation, Post observation interviews
If so what are the differences? If not, why not?	Survey, Interview, Observation, Post observation interviews

Individual Semi-Structured Interviews

The purpose of the interview was to explore teachers' understanding of communicative competence and related concepts, teaching methodology and activities,

views of learners' needs, and assessment practices. The teachers were interviewed using a semi-structured interview protocol. Questions (See Appendix A) addressed definitions of communicative competency, methodology used in language instruction, importance of grammatical accuracy in language, and definitions of fluency in English language. The questions also asked the participants to come up with personal definitions of what it means to be a successful English learner, and how their perception of cultural differences, if any, in their classroom relates to language learning and teaching. Questions further elicited elaboration on teacher responses on the survey. While both interviews began with the same set of questions, clarifying questions were individual, based on the responses given. Probes elicited further information and asked for expansion and clarification.

The language used during the interview was English with the American participant and Slovak with the Slovak participant. I provided each participant with a copy of the interview protocol ahead of time so that each participant could offer more thoughtful answers. The interviews were audio taped and transcribed. The length for each interview was approximately 90-120 minutes. Because of the considerable amount of time needed for the interviews, I decided to break the set of the interview questions into two parts. Both participants agreed that it was better to do the interview in two meetings rather than one. As I was still waiting for the participants to finish the online surveys, I decided to do the second half of the interview designed as elaboration and clarification of the survey answers at another meeting with the participant.

Classroom Observations

The purpose of the observations was to discern what the teachers do in their classrooms to help their students improve their English language skills. The observations provided descriptive data to some answers given in the survey. I was a non-participant observer taking field notes on what I observed occurring in the classroom. The field notes were labeled by date, time, grade level, and unit taught (if applicable) and described the activities of the teacher, what was going on in the class, language used by the teacher, kinds of questions the teacher asked, and class work arrangements (group work, whole class work, individual, etc.). The notes also described any materials the teacher used during instruction. I collected examples of the materials to use in the final narrative description.

The notes also contained questions that I needed to ask the teacher after observation to clarify what I observed. I used a laptop computer to write the field notes using Microsoft's Office One Note. This software allows the beginning of a written note to be anywhere on a page. The software also made it possible for me to organize the field notes by day and class period observed and go back and forth between lines and paragraphs in a non-linear manner.

In Slovakia, the high school teacher taught three to four different groups of students each day. I observed her during the different classes for a total of twenty school days. In the US, I observed approximately the same number of classes. The teacher in the US taught three different groups of students each day, and commuted between two different high schools. I followed her to both schools because my study wasn't tied to a particular school but to a particular teacher. During the observation planning period,

importance was placed on ensuring I had the same number of opportunities to observe each teacher in each country. The length of each observed lesson was in compliance with the particular school's class period allotted time. In Slovakia, the class period lasted 45 minutes. In the US, the class period lasted 55 minutes in one school and 60 minutes in the other school.

The planned long-term observations with both participants were split into two shorter periods of time to allow me to observe different units and curriculum related practices in the classroom. Since the school years in the US and Slovakia end and begin in different months, it was possible to schedule the observations for the same time period of instruction during the academic year in both countries. The first part of the observations focused on what both teachers do when they are closer to the end of a fall semester. The second group of observations focused on spring semester.

Post Observation Informal Interviews

The purpose of the post observation informal interview was to immediately clarify any inconsistencies in my notes or answer questions about what I saw. These interviews were conducted on the way with the teacher to the teachers' lounge from the class, or while putting away materials after class, and so they did not require scheduling time. The language used during the interview was English with the American participant and Slovak with the Slovak participant. The informal interviews lasted on average of 2-5 minutes.

Survey of Classroom Practices, Events and Materials Used

The purpose of the survey (see Appendix B) was to collect demographic information for constructing a brief personal history of each participant and to find out

basic information about the teacher's classroom practices and routines, materials, and learning activities used during instruction. The personal histories were used in later stages of the study when data was analyzed and conclusions drawn. The survey also collected information about the teacher's classroom practices, materials, and general information related to English language teaching and assessment. Several answers to questions in the survey served at departure points for the semi-structured interview questions. Categories of information surveyed included background information, concepts related to foreign/second language instruction, English language materials used by students and the teacher, teaching practices and routines, and assessments.

The survey consisted of both multiple choice questions as well as open ended questions that required short answers. It was placed online to www.surveymonkey.com to allow the teachers to complete it in their own time without my presence. The language of the survey was English. The Slovak participant felt comfortable reading the questions in English but chose to answers in Slovak. The length of time needed to complete the survey as reported by the teachers was approximately 30-45 minutes.

Procedures

The procedures for data collection were scheduled and fulfilled in three stages. Because the study was carried out in two different countries, a considerable coordination of travel and data collection was required. Table 2 illustrates the chronological order of data collection in each country.

Table 2

Chronological Order of Data Collection.

Stage	Data Source/Activity	USA	Slovakia	Month/Year
1	Interview and Observations, part 1	□		October 2009
1	Interview and Observations, part 1		□	November 2009
2	Survey	□	□	Nov 2009 – Jan 2010
3	Observations and Interview, part 2		□	January 2010
3	Observations and Interview, part 2	□		February 2010

Interviews

During the semi-structured interview and classroom observations in the US, part 1, I met with Nancy in her classroom in October and we scheduled my classroom observations. I spent three weeks going to her classroom and observing a total of seventeen class periods. After the fifth observation, we stayed after the last class period and recorded the first half of the semi-structured interview.

During the semi-structured interview and classroom observations in Slovakia, part 1, I traveled to Slovakia in November to meet Hanka. We had scheduled our meeting and class observation time frame by email. I visited Hanka's classroom during my stay in Slovakia in a two week period and I observed 14 class periods. We also agreed on day and time for the semi-structured interview. Hanka chose to interact with me in Slovak. Her interview was transcribed and translated into English. I selected several random passages of the translation and asked Hanka to examine and check the translation. For the trustworthiness of the study, it was essential for the teacher to approve of the meaning and expressions used in the English translation.

Survey

Both teachers received an email form me within the first two days of my observations in their classrooms. The email contained a link to the www.surveymonkey.com site where the survey was uploaded. I gave the teachers initially a two week limit to complete the survey, but they both needed more time. The teachers used a period of two months to fill out the survey. They each completed it in time for me to begin stage 3 of data collection procedures.

Classroom observations and semi-structured interviews, part 2

After the winter break I returned to Slovakia and began classroom observations in Hanka's classroom. Because of the testing scheduling conflicts, I only had a week to observe her teaching. I saw twelve class periods and I also finished the semi-structured interview with Hanka. Upon my return to the US, I began class observations in Nancy's classroom in February and had two weeks to observe fourteen class periods. I also finished the semi-structured interview. The procedures remained the same as with the first half of classroom observations and the first half of the semi-structured interviews in each country with each participant.

The first interview that I transcribed was the interview with the US participant. I listened to the tape several times and transcribed word for word the whole interview converting the spoken text into a typed word document. I had another person listen to the tape and check my transcriptions for accuracy. The interview with the Slovak participant was in Slovak. I transcribed and translated the interview into English. I chose a few random passages of the translation and asked the Slovak participant to check and see if she agreed with the translation. Because translations sometimes do not

capture exactly the meaning of the original, I made sure the teacher approved of how her answers to the questions sounded in English.

Researcher's Role

In this study, my role was as a non-participating observer and interviewer. My bias as a researcher is grounded in my past and current education and my membership in Orava Association for Democracy in Education. My role as a researcher who has past and present experience with second and foreign language learning and teaching could be regarded as an asset or a liability for this study due to my own beliefs of how language should be taught. I am a speaker of five other languages in addition to Slovak, the language officially spoken in my country. Two of the languages I speak, English and Russian, I learned in a context of a classroom setting with virtually no contact with either language outside of the classroom. I proceeded to learn more about each language and pursued a teaching degree in both. Another language I speak, Hungarian, I learned in a context of immersed setting, because it is my parents' and my grandparents' native tongue used to this day as the primary language for communication in my immediate and extended family household. I have no formal grammar knowledge in Hungarian but I am fluent in conversation. My grandparents were monolingual, speaking Hungarian only. The last two languages, Czech and German, I learned through unconscious and conscious attention I paid to environmental language input from media, reading texts in both languages that were works of fiction, as well as environmental print. I also used personal communications as a way of learning during frequent visits to Czech Republic, Germany, and Austria where these languages are spoken.

My practical personal experience in learning languages ranges from the contexts of the immersed setting to the classroom only environment, influencing the way I look at how languages should be taught with each context in mind. In each of these languages, I understand how contextual and cultural environment influenced the choice of linguistic forms necessary but my fluency is on a varied level in each due to different active word stock.

In Slovakia, I am a qualified teacher of English and Russian to speakers of other languages holding a Magister degree. Prior to my coming to the United States, I taught English as a foreign language methodology for five years to pre-service elementary, middle, and high school teachers. I was also the practicum supervisor with frequent visits to elementary and high school classes where English was taught. I have extensive knowledge about English as foreign language taught in high schools in Slovakia and especially in my hometown, where many of the current teachers are my former undergraduate students. My membership and serving as board member in the Orava Association for Democracy in Education has changed the way I view education, teaching, and learning. I consider the knowledge I have from this professional development opportunity almost equal to knowledge I have from my college classes. I was known to my students as the teacher who refused to lecture and made them think critically about the language they were learning. My current graduate studies are a continuation of my education as a teacher of English to speakers of other languages towards a doctoral degree in ESL.

My theoretical perspective is built around sociocultural and constructivist frameworks with focus on critical thinking. I believe that students learn best when they

understand why the knowledge, skills, and behaviors are important and should be connected to their previous knowledge, skills, behaviors. I believe that reflecting on an experience provides useful knowledge about how the experience is meaningful for each individual. Particularly in learning a new language I believe in social interactions with peers. Active production of the new language in written or oral form and critical feedback help to speed up language improvement and provide solid foundations in language.

Exposure to a variety of language models with structured guidance about the function and form of language helps students understand and learn the social competence one needs for meaningful language production. Students come into the classroom with a variety of perspectives and world views that should be recognized, respected and challenged as a part of social and cultural competence in a new language. Teaching students about multiple ways to look at language gives them the necessary tools for successful functioning and use of the English language outside the classroom.

My goal for the research was not to evaluate whether what the particular teacher fit my personal image of what English language instruction should look like. I was interested in finding out what the teachers considered important to teach and why, so that their students would be able to communicate in the new language. I also wanted to find out what the teachers do in their classrooms that matched or contradicted their beliefs.

I was an active member of the education community as a teacher in Slovakia, and as a former faculty at a local university a little over five years ago. Slovakia has undergone relatively recent political changes in the past two decades. The change of the

political system, formation of an independent country, joining of the European Union followed by the opening of the borders for job markets all over Europe were just the first few. Opening borders for visa free travel across the Schengen zone in Europe in 2007, joining the list of countries with tourist visa waiver treaty with the US in November of 2008, and the most recent event in January of 2009, the change of local currency to Euro, have increased the status of the English language in Slovakia. I have lived in the United States through many of these changes and I knew that going back to observe classrooms was going to be a new learning experience for me. Thus, I believe that I was able to separate my English language teacher role and my former English language learner role from my researcher role throughout the entire the data collection and analysis process.

I kept a personal journal that did not become a data source. Instead, it helped me to evaluate my own ability to be objective and subjective. It was a useful personal tool for learning more about myself by reflecting on my own values, beliefs, attitudes and interests. It also prevented my personal goals in improving as a teacher of English to speakers of other languages to interfere with analysis. After each interview with the participant, I reflected on my own thoughts, reflections and answers to questions. I also wrote down any judgmental or evaluative responses I might have felt as a fellow teacher. I repeated the same process after each observation. The journal became an important asset helping me to identify my bias is in order to separate it from the data I collected. During the interpretation stage of the data, I consulted my journal and continued writing down my own reflections about the process. I was the principal investigator and the major analytic lens for the case study and I needed to be explicitly

aware of any thought process that reflected on the reality I was investigating. Keeping a journal throughout the research process allowed me to separate my personal opinions from interpretations dictated by the data.

Data Analysis

Prior to beginning the study I analyzed the research questions to isolate categories for focused data analysis. Guided by the theoretical framework outlining communicative competence as a mastery of complex linguistic and social skills (Canale & Swain, 1980; Van Els, 2005) I sought to analyze and compare the instructional approaches teachers in two different sociocultural environments consider most effective for their students. The initial broad categories for data analysis were direct interpretations of the research questions – what to teach (curriculum), how to teach (instruction), and context (setting for the language instruction). I began the analysis with the interviews. A transcript of each interview was read in its entirety several times to get the general sense of what the interview was about and to plan possible organization of the data. Margin memos about structure, groupings of similar responses, and rephrased statements were utilized in the creation of more detailed, specific, and descriptive sub-categories. Further reading and rereading of the interviews and classroom observations showed that a finer description of some categories was necessary and so level one and level two subcategories were introduced into the code list. For example, in the *Instruction* broad category, a more specific category was *Class Organization*. For this specific category, level one subcategories were *Whole Group*, *Small Groups*, and *Assigned Helper*. During further analysis of the data, especially classroom observation notes, the subcategory *Small Group* required a more expanded breakdown into level

two subcategories of *Pairs*, *Random*, *Student selected*, *Language based*, and *Achievement Based*. The categories and all levels of subcategories of codes were defined by explanations or examples.

The code list became the main tool for data reduction and analysis (see Appendix C). It was applied to both interviews, to classroom observations, as well as to the surveys. I paid special attention to discrepancies in data and to data that did not fit the code sheet and adjusted the codes if necessary. Subsequently, data already coded was re-inspected.

The data analysis procedure for this study was thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is more involved and nuanced. It goes beyond counting explicit words or phrases and focuses on identifying and describing both implicit and explicit ideas. Codes developed for ideas or themes were applied or linked to raw data as summary markers for later analysis, which may include comparing the relative frequencies of themes or topics within a data set, looking for code co-occurrence, or graphically displaying code relationships (Namey, Guest, Thairu, & Johnson, 2007). Trustworthiness is a concern with thematic analysis because the task of a researcher is to interpret raw text data in order to apply codes, and these interpretations may vary according to who the researcher is. Interrater reliability was determined by choosing random passages from the interview transcripts and from the classroom observation transcripts. A fellow researcher, who is familiar with literacy related research, read through the selection. I used sample pieces of transcripts and the code list to explain to the rater the origin and meaning of the codes using concrete examples from the texts. The rater and I proceeded to independently code one random transcript passage with the

goal of attaining a 90% interrater reliability. If the percentage was not at a 90% minimum, codes were discussed and the coding process was repeated with another random transcript passage. Once the interrater reliability of 90% was achieved, the process was repeated with the classroom observation transcript set and the survey. It was crucial for the trustworthiness of the research to continually inspect the data to make sure that the codes reflected information provided by the study respondents.

Once codes were applied to all data, I created a matrix for each participant listing all data sources. In the matrix I marked the corresponding codes as well as frequencies in which the codes appeared. At this point of my research, I had all the data reduced, analyzed, and organized into codes within the overarching categories. I actively looked for discrepancies and contradictory data because in qualitative research, a negative case allows the researcher to reexamine the data and the analytical process. The goal was then to try and find the answer to why the data were contradictory, which lead to even richer explanation and description. An additional way of organizing data for clear interpretation was to consider the codes based on their frequency of occurrences.

Once the data were reduced, analyzed, summarized, and coded in an organized and clear manner, I identified themes that allowed me to address the research questions. The themes differed in the amount of supporting evidence as well as in the range of dispersement across the variety of data sources. From the matrices I was able to derive a description of each participant's definition of communicative competence and their preferred instructional approach. I was also able to draw conclusions by comparing the participants and address my research questions. Following the organization of the

themes, collapsed codes were expanded to utilize the data language in communicating the answers to research the question using a thematic descriptive narrative.

CHAPTER FOUR

Findings

Analysis of the data showed similarities as well as differences in the two teachers. The findings of the study are described following the categories laid out by the research questions: communicative competence, the curriculum, teaching methodology and the context. Within these categories accounts of similarities as well as differences between the teachers are described and followed by illustrations from the data.

Teachers' Definitions of Communicative Competence

The underlining assumption of the current study was the fact that both teachers of English to speakers of other languages teach their students to become competent speakers of the English language. The understanding of what each teacher believed a competent speaker needs to master and what the teachers believed communicative competence should encompass helped to define what the goal for each teacher.

Both Nancy and Hanka had a very similar understanding of the kinds of knowledge that help a speaker to become communicatively competent. The main categories of this knowledge were linguistic features defined as grammar related knowledge and abilities that help a communicative speaker function in life. The linguistic features included knowing the rules of language, mastering correct grammar, and having a sound vocabulary base with the ability to explain ideas even if the ideal word was missing from the active vocabulary bank. Both Hanka and Nancy agreed that without understanding the language structure (the rules) meaningful communication was not possible. Grammatical knowledge was highly valued high by both teachers. Hanka explained that if she wanted her students to use standard English, grammar was an important category for them to master. Nancy connected the grammatical knowledge

she helped her students develop with their functioning in other classes and in society. Nancy felt that a rich vocabulary was important for the speakers' ability to describe words. She explained that even if the vocabulary phase is still being built, the student should have the ability to search for and maybe talk around the word in order to offer the intended meaning. Hanka's view on vocabulary use was related to eloquence in speech production and overall fluency. She stated that a competent speaker should not make longer pauses, think about words, or make faces while struggling to think of a particular word. Both teachers understood the need for a rich vocabulary. The difference was that Nancy looked at communicative competence as developmental while Hanka looked at it as the final point.

The abilities that help a communicative speaker function in life were an ability to assess a situation correctly and choose appropriate language to fit it, a skill to lead conversations effortlessly, an understanding of a culture associated with the target language, and the ability to perform independently in language. Hanka compared communicative competence to computer software when she said that it helped the speaker to process information they were about to say and make it fit exactly the moment, the situation, and to get the intent across. Nancy regarded her students as successful when she observed them able to take words they had learned and apply them in new situations correctly. With both teachers, the ability to read a situation correctly led to effortless conversation where the roles of the speaker and the listener were fulfilled with ease. In terms of the cultural knowledge, Hanka's belief was that cultural knowledge is directly related to fluent speech when she said, "An ideal [way of speaking] is a natural way of speaking and you can be only natural by being familiar

with the culture, especially [if you are] someone who has shared a culture with the people who speak the language" (Hanka, interview, 11/16/2009). Nancy's belief about cultural knowledge is strongly connected to the ability of her students to function in the American society. She said, "I have to help these kids to acculturate to the way of life here in the US otherwise […] they're never gonna [sic] be successful. It's always gonna [sic] stay in the way. So a part of the job is - we teach English but we also teach American culture" (Nancy, interview, 10/9/2009). Last, both teachers agreed that by the time their students graduated from high school, they all had developed sufficient theoretical understanding of the English language as well as practical use of the language and were able to perform independently without the teacher's help.

Nancy and Hanka both spoke about characteristics that to them were signs of a competent speaker that fit into both categories. These characteristics were passing an English language test and the ability to convey information. Hanka suggested that a competent speaker is able to share information with another speaker and get the intended message across. Nancy used the words *meaning making* when she described a similar process.

Both teachers were referring to final tests the students needed to pass in order to graduate from high school. Nancy explained that her students needed to pass multiple tests from other content area subjects. For her as an English language teacher that meant getting her students as ready as possible for these tests linguistically and helping them showcase and apply language skills independently during the final high school tests as well as later in life. Hanka's situation and testing were similar. The only difference was that her students had to pass several oral and written exams for content areas but she

was not responsible for any of those exams since they were in the students' native language. However, the similarity to Nancy's attitude was in a final state written and oral exam directly related to Hanka's English language class and taken by students in English.

There were also differences in the accounts of what each teacher thought communicative competence should encompass. Nancy included knowledge of figurative language and the ability to switch between different registers of language. She stressed the point that figurative language such as idioms and jokes was the most difficult linguistic feature of the English language. Therefore, mastering this feature was the ultimate achievement for a speaker with high level of communicative competence. According to Nancy jokes are the last thing students will understand as they are developing their language skills. Becoming comfortable with figures of speech or making comparisons with a simile or a metaphor signified that the speaker showcased advanced stages of communicative competence.

Nancy believed that communicative competence also includes the ability to switch between the different registers of language depending on the situation in which the speaker is positioned. An example she used was the ability to differentiate between conversational and academic English. Knowledge of mere conversational English did not constitute communicative competence of a speaker for Nancy because he or she might fail in conversation that required content specific vocabulary or the understanding of content specific information. If a student was able to chat with a friend, that did not mean that the same student could comprehend specific academic content and still participate in a meaningful conversation. Nancy said:

> When I have a student conversationally almost fluent, academically he is not fluent. So we have different levels or different stations of fluency and that's something you hear from the teachers all the time, "well, he can talk to me in English" but it doesn't mean he's fluent. So there is a difference. […] Are you gonna [*sic*] be able to communicate [US] history ideas to me where I can make meaning and you can make meaning from what is presented? (Nancy, interview, 10/9/2009)

In a summary statement, Nancy's definition of communicative competence means to be able to communicate on any topic and in any situation using appropriate vocabulary and expressions matched to the situation and the role the speaker assumes in a given conversation.

Hanka's definition of communicative competence that differed slightly from Nancy's accounts and leaned more towards expressing the importance of a native-speaker like smooth language production and comprehension, without any visible struggles to express one's ideas. Her immediate tongue in cheek answer to the question asking her to describe characteristics of someone who is fluent in a language was "a native speaker." She did elaborate on the characteristics and in comparison with Nancy, Hanka focused more on the natural appearance of speech production and reaction in communication:

> They [communicatively competent speakers] speak naturally. They don't make longer pauses; they don't think about words; they don't make faces. They can express their ideas or relay information very easily: naturally is the word I want to use. […] It is important to be fluent first of all, independent, meaning that a

person can independently, fluently, and automatically react. (Hanka, interview, 11/16/2009)

Hanka's appreciation of the native-like natural speech production appeared frequently during the interview. Although she never openly stated that behaving in the target language just like a native speaker is one of the goals she has for her students, she often referred to characteristics of a native speaker. She also referred to the importance of being immersed in a country where English is spoken to take advantage of interacting with native speakers who to Hanka represent ideal language role models. Interestingly enough, Nancy referred to herself as the ideal language model for her students, when she said: "I wish it could be me, the person they emulate when they speak their English" (Nancy, interview, 10/9/2009). Hanka on the other hand, did articulate that her greatest disadvantage in being a teacher of English to speakers of other languages was the fact that she herself was not a native-speaker. She felt that not being born to speak English from an early age placed her in the same boat as her students. She considered herself just as much an English language learner as her students, except the teacher title meant that she spent more time learning the English language than the students she taught. In a summary statement, Hanka's personal definition of communicative competence involved many references to characteristics representing an ideal native speaker, who is able to use correct grammar and showcase appropriate reactions in conversations based on a current situation.

What to Teach?

The personal accounts of teachers and observation of them teaching revealed three separate areas related to what they considered important to teach to their students

to achieve communicative competence. They were English language and linguistics specific content, content related to literacy skills, and content encompassing social and cultural norms.

Content Related to English Language and Linguistics

In their interviews Nancy and Hanka stressed the importance of teaching grammar, English language vocabulary, and the importance of knowing the rules of language. Both showcased these topics during their instruction as well. They both included figurative language in their classes, even though Hanka did not consider the figurative language as an important part of her definition of communicative competence. Nancy and Hanka both suggested that if students became familiar with the structure of English language, they created a foundation that served as a base for further language development. Once the basic language patterns were mastered, it became easier to build on those familiar concepts. Each teacher included grammar related practices in their instruction and clearly promoted students' understanding of the theory of the English language.

Nancy's lessons always began with Bell Work. Bell Work was designed as independent practice for students following right after the school bell rang to announce the beginning of the class. A sentence stripped of punctuation, capitalization, and any other markings was projected onto the board. Each day of the week was devoted to students' practicing a different grammatical concept on the same sentence. Mondays were all about parts of speech. Tuesdays were devoted to parts of sentences. On Wednesdays, the students identified the type of the sentence(s), Thursday and Friday were dedicated to punctuation and capitalization. Students were allowed to use their

notes and materials with an overview of the theory and examples. After the class had some time to work on the assignment independently, the teacher walked through the analysis checking whether students understood a concept. Nancy's reason for including grammar on a regular basis was the fact that students had to pass an English test in order to graduate from high school. This test featured multiple choice answers as well as writing two essays. She felt that without a solid grammar and vocabulary base, the test was unpassable.

Hanka's grammar activities in class consisted of following the course book practice activities. She followed a routine of explaining the rules for new grammar construction, drawing students' attention to how a particular construction was formed and then allowing students to practice creating their own sentences using the new grammar concept. The grammar concept was practiced both in context and out of context, in speaking and in writing. Hanka's reason for spending a lot of time teaching grammar was very similar to Nancy's. She believed she had to be demanding about the grammatical knowledge the students learned because the tests the students needed to pass in order to graduate from high school were built around using standard and correct English.

Figurative language was also a part of the English language related content that both teachers taught. In Nancy's classroom, the figurative language to which she drew students' attention stemmed from her natural speech and comments she made. For example, when she finished the Bell Work analysis with the class one day in the Fall semester, the following exchange took place:

Nancy: We also had to look at the other criteria, right? Such as does it start with a capital letter? We're killing two birds with one stone … have you ever heard the expression?

Students: No

Nancy: It means we're doing two things at once. Can you tell me an example of a situation that killing two birds with one stone fits? (Field notes, 10/22/2009)

For Nancy the fact that she naturally used the figurative language was a disadvantage resulting from her status of a native speaker. Nancy explained in her interview:

> I tend to talk in figurative language, it's a part of how I was raised as a speaker, so I have to be very conscious of what I say to my students because I may be talking and there is no comprehension of what's being said. [Students] are at such a literal stage that when I say something in the figurative sense, they take it literally and then we have major problems coming back to comprehension. (Nancy, interview, 10/9/2009)

As a teacher, she felt that she must compensate for her status as a native speaker, someone who spoke English language all her life, by thinking consciously about what she said, and whether she could be understood by her students. Instead of simplifying her English, though, she used her utterances as teachable moments and helped the students to understand what she was saying.

In Hanka's classroom, she spent time on the figurative language as a part of the unit of a textbook she followed. An example from her classroom:

Hanka: Ok, let's move to the next one [activity in book].

Hanka: Do you know what idioms mean?

Students (answer positively in Slovak).

Hanka: OK, let's read idioms, then look at the picture and explain what they mean. Student 1, read the first one.

Student 1: Tip of an iceberg.

Hanka: Can anyone explain [it] in English?

A student attempts to explain the idiom as the teacher supports and helps with vocabulary. (Field notes, 11/16/2009)

While it is clear when looking at Nancy's and Hanka's class vignettes that in Hanka's classroom, the figurative language did not come from natural conversation. Hanka believed it was equally important for the students to understand figurative language as a sign of being communicatively competent. In her own admission, her own English language skills did not allow for natural utterances of figurative language as it was the case with Nancy. Hence Hanka relied on the textbook to help her with the figurative language. She admitted that she often had to learn what a metaphoric expression meant before the lesson, especially when it was the first time she has heard such a statement. In each case, the teachers had to adjust their native or non-native English language proficiency in order to make figurative language a part of the content included in the classroom

Content Related to Literacy Skills

In this area, there were again many similarities between the teachers. Working with text and extracting factual information as well as interpreting the text was the main focus in both classrooms. The texts both teachers used consisted primarily of narratives,

which in Nancy's class included using a novel. The main reason for using narratives was to develop students' comprehension skills such as finding the main idea or finding supportive text evidence, reinforcing correct grammar patterns in language, developing vocabulary building and recognition skills, and practicing their lower and higher order thinking skills when locating information in a text, and evaluating the storyline or making decisions about characters.

In Nancy's class, the focus was on working with a literary text during both semesters that I visited. In the fall semester, when I began my observations, the class had just finished reading a short story and spent considerable time analyzing the text. One literacy skill that students practiced was learning how to interpret information from the text. For example, students were asked to find information about the main character from the perspective of the other characters in the story. This information was not easy to locate within the story. Students had to use their higher thinking skills to analyze, evaluate, assume, and interpret information while using the English language as the tool for thinking and communication. Practice in finding literal meaning in text was another skill. Students were asked to find text evidence to support their claims about the main character. Nancy made constant comparisons and references to other content areas where other teachers might be asking the students to showcase the skills she had them practice. The following vignette illustrates such an occasion:

Nancy to group A: […] remember to find the words from the story about 6 things [six character traits].

Students in the group: We know.

Nancy to group B: Yes, if you choose to write about what she saw.

Nancy to a student: Good…now if that's a quote from the story, what do you need?

Student writes quotation marks.

Nancy: Good.

Student: Mrs. Rain, do we write sentences on this?

Nancy: Yes, we quote text evidence. Do you hear that from your English teacher? Text evidence?

Nancy: OK, Student 5 says she doesn't love her husband…can we put it there?

Students as group are discussing whether she did or did not love him.

Teacher: OK, tell me the words from the story that say that.

Student reads the words.

Teacher: Yes, OK, great. (Field notes, 10/5/2009)

In Nancy's classroom there were frequent references to other content areas. She explained that she supports her students doing well in other classes where the teachers are expecting them to read and write in English along with the native speakers in the class. By drawing attention to the skills she taught them and labeling these skills, (e.g. text evidence, character analysis, interpretation) she built a strong literacy foundation for her students. With labeling the skills and concepts in English that students practiced, she helps those students who might already be familiar with the skill in their native language, but need to transfer that native language literacy skill to English. In the spring semester, Nancy had students use a longer work, a book from the library, and spent considerable time reading through it in a manner of literature circles.

In Hanka's classroom, the literacy skills were centered around practicing comprehension of spoken and written English. Like Nancy, Hanka had her students read short stories in the textbook. Although she was guided by the activities that followed in the textbook, I observed a similar account of practicing finding text evidence in Hanka's class.

Hanka:	In our books we have a story about a ghost buster. You can see a picture of a ghost buster, he's a retired man, 79 years old. Page 99, open your books. If you look at the picture, how can you describe the atmosphere in the picture?
Student A:	It's black and white.
Student B:	I feel scared.
Hanka:	Describe Alvin, what is he wearing? How [*sic*] does he look like?
Student C:	He's wearing glasses.
Student D:	Long black coat.
Hanka:	Let's get some information about him. Read the text and answer these questions (points to the board).
[…]	
Hanka:	This vicar, Alvin, does he believe [in ghosts] or not?
Students shouting:	Yes.
Hanka:	Yes? How do you know? Can you find it in text?

Student C reads from text: He met thousands of ghosts. (Field notes, 11/16/2009)

In Hanka's classroom the focus was on demonstrating whether the students understood the vocabulary and the sentence structures in the story. By asking her students to point and find the exact wording, she made sure that they were not merely guessing answers to her questions.

Although finding factual information in text is classified as a basic or lower thinking skill, both teachers considered it important for their students to be able to extract literal factual information from the text to support comprehension of texts written in English. Hanka also practiced text interpretation in class as Nancy did. Hanka asked discussion questions of her students that required them to analyze, evaluate, relate to their own lives, and ultimately write their own versions of the stories, fostering their higher thinking skills in working with a text.

Content Related to Social and Cultural Norms

This area of curriculum resulted in different accounts from the teachers about what they considered important to teach. Conversely, when asked about what was the least important concept to teach, the teachers felt very similarly. In the online survey, the teachers ranked concepts they considered important to teach. Nancy marked the following concepts as the most important: culture, discourse (knowing what to say based on current situation), and communication. She marked as the least important: native-like accent, writing, and reading. Hanka marked that the most important concepts were speaking skill, discourse (knowing what to say based on current situation), and grammar. Her choices of least important items were native-like accent, culture, and

reading. Moreover, both teachers felt strongly about not considering native-like accent as an important part of the curriculum. Both teachers expressed clear disinterest in helping their student sound native-like. There was a difference, however, in the reasoning each teacher offered. For Hanka, the accent was not important because she, not a native-speaker herself, could not be a native-like language role model to her students. For Nancy, the accent was not important, because she considered it a part of the cultural heritage students carried with them and she wanted the students to preserve that heritage.

Both teachers felt that it was important for them to teach students to be able to produce meaningful language utterances appropriate for a given situation. In her classroom, Nancy focused more on teaching appropriate social norms and behaviors because sometimes her students came with misshapen ideas of what American life was like. She felt that she had to become an expert on behaviors appropriate for the different ethnic groups represented in her classroom in order to understand the students' intentions. The most frequent occurrence of including social norms and behaviors in her curriculum was whenever she would correct a student addressing her in an informal or rude manner.

Although Nancy marked culture as the most important concept to teach, there was no evidence of her teaching about culture during either the fall or spring observations. In her interview, she promoted her classroom as a multicultural environment where students understood not only their own culture and the American culture but also the cultures of the other students in the class. She encouraged her

students to ask questions about other students and made the classroom an environment of trust and tolerance. She offered an example in her interview:

> We celebrate culture with them [students in class]. Lot of it is religious, too. I have several Muslim students in class. A lot of my Catholic Hispanic students don't understand that. So we talk about "this is why this student wears a head scarf," or "is not eating a long period of time" because this is their cultural and religious view and they have to understand that. (Nancy, interview, 10/9/2009)

Nancy did not feel that she needed to spend time on cultural traditions that were part of the mainstream American culture because she knew her students could acquire such information outside of the class or from their peers. She said: "I don't dedicate units to holidays. I used to at elementary and middle school, but in high school we don't have time for that. She considered it far more important to become an expert on the cultures represented in her classroom because it allows her to tailor her instruction much better to meet the students' needs, to become "a little expert on all the cultures and how kids learn" (Nancy, interview, 10/9/2009).

Hanka, shared the ethnic background, native language, and culture with all the students in all the classes she taught. There were no situations in her class that would result from cultural miscommunication, which eliminated any teachable moments about social behavior, unlike in Nancy's class. Hanka also ranked culture as the least important concept to teach. She explained in her interview:

> Culture is kind of related to the accent. Students have questions about culture in their final exams, such as, describe culture in an English speaking country. Teaching about culture is important but it's not a part of the high school

> curriculum. The books are English [British], they are based on a particular culture [British], so students pick up on the cultural information regardless. (Hanka, interview, 11/16/2009)

Hanka really preferred that the students explore opportunities to travel and learn about the culture first hand by visiting an English speaking country and then sharing their experience with the rest of the class. I asked Hanka about her beliefs about knowledge of the cultural backgrounds her students come from. Her answers confirmed that she regarded her class as very monolingual and very monocultural:

> All my students are from the same country. But I think the background is important, especially the culture they come from. Language is definitely related to it [culture] but I don't have any experience with this question. Our students come from very similar backgrounds and the school policy and rules try to minimize any social differences there might be among students, for example, we have strict outfit codes. The school does not allow students to wear brand names in clothing because we do not want to encourage any visible social differences. (Hanka, interview, 11/16/2009)

Unlike in Nancy's classroom where the discussion about differences in dress code or appearances was encouraged, in Hanka's school, the movement was towards making the students feel more alike in a social and cultural sense.

Both classrooms include examples of instruction that focused on types of language used in a specific situation that could be described as social knowledge. The task required the students to think about the situation for which they were choosing appropriate language, the relationship they had with the recipient of the information,

and the context of the situation in which the conversation occurred. In both classrooms this practice dealt with a written response to a text and with presenting information gathered from a text. In Nancy's classroom, one of the writing assignments came with the instructions to *Write a letter about what you learned addressed to the mayor of the city*. The students were encouraged to think about the type of language and vocabulary used in addressing a formal entity. In Nancy's class in addition to scheduled tasks built around the practice of socially appropriate language, there were several occasions when students interrupted, or addressed the teacher too informally. Nancy dealt with the students each time by addressing the behavior as part of class and explaining why it was inappropriate. It seemed obvious that this was not a single incident, because the student who had been singled out always followed up with an apology to the teacher.

In Hanka's classroom, she also included tasks that asked the students to focus on the language used in a particular situation. One of the tasks was to compare a formal letter and an informal letter written by a hotel guest who forgot his pants in a hotel room and was hoping that the hotel manager could locate and return them. The students were instructed to practice writing with a formal and an informal answer that a hotel manager might send back. Their task was to focus on the linguistic differences in each letter, as well as the formatting, and to apply the learned information to an authentic task.

How to Teach?

There were four major themes that emerged during data analysis. They were the teacher's role, student tasks, materials, and classroom organization. While the categories for the themes fit the descriptions of both teachers, the actual accounts of

instructional processes varied. The methodology and general flow of the class was very different in each context.

Teacher's Role and Teacher Practices

Nancy and Hanka both expressed that their role was to prepare their students for what came next. Whether it was a successful language exam and subsequent graduation from high school or successful life after school when the teachers, were no longer needed by the students, this information was expressed in the interview by both Hanka and Nancy. Both teachers stated that they were building language foundations for the students in hopes of the students becoming independent. Nancy said:

> After they leave school […] I want them to know that they can do this [be independent]. […] I wouldn't ask them to do the things I ask them to do if I didn't think they could do it. I set my expectations extremely high because if I don't than there is no struggling to reach it and with no struggling there's no learning. When they walk out of my classroom, I want them to think back to what we did in my linguistics class and think "look I can do this here and make the connection that I've done this [the class work] for purpose." […] My goal for them is to be gone from the linguistics class in two or three years so they can be in a regular classroom and not need me to hold their hand. (Nancy, interview, 10/9/2009)

Nancy saw herself as a guide, a mentor, an expert on American culture, and at times as a mother, friend, nurse, and confidante. She admitted that she often felt as if she spent more time with the students than their parents would, since the students spend eight hours a day at school. She expressed love for all of her students, even the ones that

exhibited inappropriate behavior from time to time. At times during her instruction, there were interactions between her and her students that proved how affectionate she was towards her students and the students returned the feeling. Nancy felt that much of the students' learning was influenced by the students' socioeconomic background or cultural background and she was aware of the differences in her learners and this information influenced how she structured her class.

One of her answers on the survey suggested that she did not assign homework to students, unless the class time ran out and they needed to finish a task because it would be worked with the next day. I asked her to elaborate on the no homework policy. She explained:

> My guys have homework in all their other classes and a part of my self-inflicted responsibility is to make sure that they are successful outside of my classroom. So in order for that to take place sometimes I have to sacrifice from my class […] to give them time to take care of the business they need to take care of. One of the classes they need to pass in order to graduate from high school [is math] and I know that math assigns homework every night and for our students who are still linguistically challenged, it takes them a long time to read the questions and to get through those math problems. (Nancy, interview, 10/9/2009)

Another explanation was unique to the American teacher when compared with the Slovak teacher:

> Nancy: Most of my kids, all of my male students and some of my female students, have jobs outside the school. They have to work in order to take care of their family, they have responsibilities and

so I just feel that I don't wanna [*sic*] add to that burden. But I do assign homework on occasions and then of course, it never gets done. […]

Researcher: So in the cases when you do assign homework, what is the main reason?

Nancy: Just to finish what we don't in class. And that happens a lot. If you don't use the time we have in class efficiently, than that's the logical consequence. You don't use your time wisely here, then you have to take care of it in your own time. (Nancy, interview, 10/9/2009)

While Nancy did not want to burden the students with unnecessary homework, she did insist they learn to work more efficiently by allowing them to see the consequences of not working hard in class. The only homework assignments were to finish reading the assigned chapters of a novel so that the students could work with what they read during the next class.

In Slovakia, Hanka was equally expressive about what her role as the teacher was. She maintained the same belief as Nancy about playing an important part in the students' life, not only as their teacher, but also as someone who is a significant contributor to how students will remember their high school years. In essence, both Nancy and Hanka felt that, as teachers, they were the second most important person in their students' lives, right after the students' families. Hanka felt that her situation was very favorable with her students because English "is a wanted" subject, in a sense that students prefer it over other subjects. During our interview, although Hanka was very

focused on her role as an English language teacher, she expressed confusion when I would ask her questions that were about her as a teacher in general:

> Researcher: What do you want your students to remember long after they leave the school and why?
>
> Hanka: How is this related to English language?
>
> Researcher: You can tell me about English language related concepts you would like the students to remember, or any other things. (Hanka, interview, 11/16/2009)

She opened up later in the interview and shared with me that she is very conscious about being perceived well by her students as someone who taught them well and taught them meaningful knowledge. Her observations of students, similar to Nancy's, go beyond the basic teacher – student relationship, when she said:

> High school is a bridge between their middle school and college education, this is the time for them to develop, to grow into adulthood. We get them as scared fourteen year olds and in four years, we have interesting personalities here. The friendships they develop, the relationships with teachers, the role models they find, that all influences their identity. […] I don't want them to say "my English teacher was a complete loony bin… [laughs] ...who was making us work hard." If I could succeed in giving them a solid foundation for them to build on later on, that would be my satisfaction. For them to say, my teacher really taught me something valuable. (Hanka, interview, 11/16/2009)

Hanka was not concerned with the students' socio-economic background or whether they had any afterschool responsibilities that would prevent them from getting ready for

class. It is, in general, highly unusual for a teenager in Slovakia to work during the regular academic year. According to Hanka, the students all go to the mall after school to hang out and she did not perceive differences in their after school responsibilities. A similar example with the homework showed that Hanka had a very different attitude and viewpoint on the assigned homework. She said:

> I assign homework for two reasons. One is related to profession, the other not as much. When we are behind with the curriculum and need to speed up what happens in class and the grammar is very difficult, I let them do the easier things by themselves, so we wouldn't have to do them during class time – that's the unprofessional reason. The professional reason is related to the fact that the more students get to practice the language, even if it's just work on a simple practice activity in a textbook, it improves their language. Homework is a crucial part of the curriculum and instruction. The textbooks we use are designed to be student centered and the student books that go with them are designed for homework, they contain the answer keys. Homework helps them to develop especially writing and speaking skills. But they don't check their work often, neither do their parents. (Hanka, interview, 11/16/2009)

There are a number of differences in Hanka's account compared with Nancy's. First, Hanka viewed assigning homework to finish when they run out of class time as an unprofessional reason for homework. She felt that it somehow might suggest that she, the teacher, failed to organize her instruction effectively. In comparison with Nancy, who listed the same reason as the only reason why she assigned homework, Hanka's perspective was focused on evaluating herself as the teacher. Nancy's perspective was

geared towards evaluating the students' performance during the class. The second reason for Hanka assigning the homework reflected her primary role as a language teacher. She offered multiple opportunities for her students to practice the English language outside of the classroom, even if they went back to speaking their native language at home. This intention was an effort to create an artificial environment of English language for the students outside the classroom. Hanka frequently assigned homework such as written CLOZE type grammar activities, rewriting an ending to a story, drafting a written letter in a particular style, learning vocabulary lists, reading short texts and answering questions. The majority of these homework assignments came from the textbook and they were always checked at the beginning of the class. If a student did finish the homework assignment, it counted negatively towards the final grade.

Classroom Organization and Student Tasks

Although the current research study did not involve students as the population that was examined, observing student tasks as they were assigned and laid out by the teachers helped to interpret each teacher's teaching methods. The instructional approach was reflected in the tasks the students were asked to complete for each class and for each teacher, as well the variety of student groupings each teacher used to accomplish tasks.

Both teachers worked in two different types of classrooms as far as the student desk arrangement goes. The typical arrangement in Nancy's classes in the two different schools is showcased in Figure 2 and in Figure 3.

Figure 2

Typical seating arrangement in Nancy's class, school A.

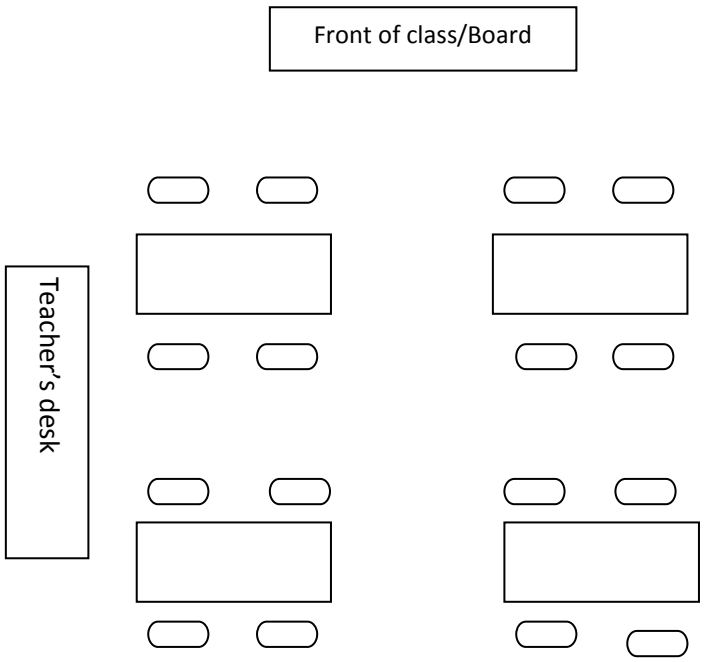
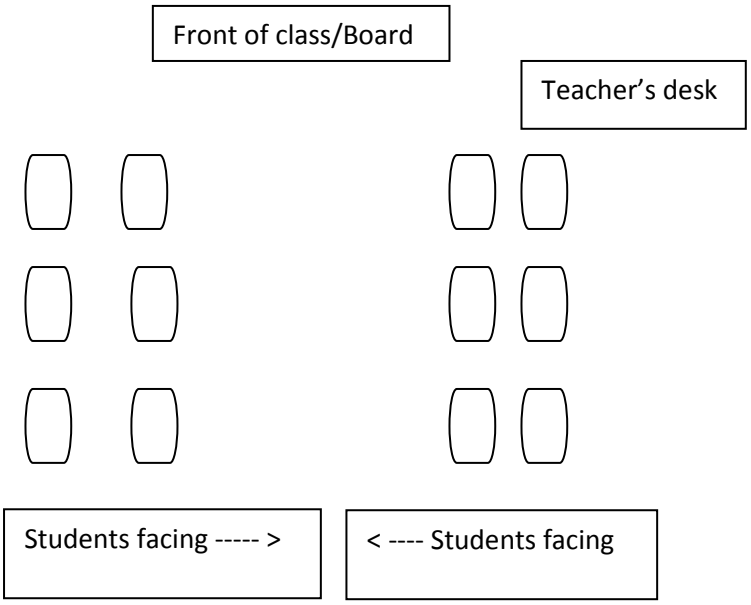


Figure 3

Typical seating arrangement in Nancy's class, school B.



In school A, the students were seated by a minimum of two people and maximum of four people around large desks and in school B, the students each had their own chair attached to a small desk. Nancy often took advantage of the movable chairs in school B and instead of the chairs being in rows and facing each other; she would group the chairs into clusters of four. She preferred this arrangement during the literature circle instruction.

The classroom arrangement often reflected the task assigned to students. For example, the Bell Work was always designed as independent practice first and then Nancy teaching to the whole class. All classes began with this organization because the Bell Work was a lead in into all classes. When students were asked to work with the text, Nancy would ask the students to form groups. Most of the group formations were based on friendships that students had outside the class. Nancy did not seem to assign students to specific groups:

Nancy: This is how you do Literature Circles.

[Nancy goes over shows an instructions handout projected on board]

Nancy: You will work in groups of 4-6 people. You can choose your group but think carefully who you want to be with. Your grade will depend on it. Tomorrow you will sit in your group, everyone will have a role in your group. We will read, and you will make two column notes. Choose people who will be responsible. (Field notes, 2/1/2010, 9am)

Instead of assigning students to specific groups, she handed the responsibility of a good group choice to the students. Nancy was mindful of the students' English language

proficiency. In her class, she had a mix of students who were at different stages of attending the high school and of living in the United States. She was very aware of the fact that some students' English language comprehension and production skills were limited. She made sure the weak students got to work with more proficient students. A following classroom vignette was a frequent situation that rose with grouping struggling students:

Nancy: If you two want to work together, we can get these guys work as four….so we have one group of 2 and one group of four but I think it will work.

Nancy to Student 1: Do you understand what to do?

[Nancy uses her limited Spanish to ask a question]

Student 1 answers in Spanish.

Nancy: Ask Student 2, he can help you explain. (Field notes, 10/5/2009, 1pm)

Sometimes, the students suggested that the task was too difficult for their language skills but Nancy solved their worries by restating the instructions and the students usually understood that the task was only moderately challenging. Often the students seemed to be only testing the teacher and her willingness to simplify their work. Nancy always reacted as an expert. She could tell if a student was sincerely confused or just testing her.

Student in a group: We need someone who speaks English… yo no hablo Inglés. Someone who can help writing.

Nancy: So why do you think you need someone who speaks English? Remember you are reading from the passage.

Nancy repeated instruction to the group. (Field notes, 10/5/2009, 2:29 PM) A large portion of the classroom instruction depended on students working in groups and carrying out the tasks as teammates. Often the groups were formed based on the common language the students shared.

In Hanka's classrooms, the layout of the chairs and tables is represented by Figure 4 and Figure 5. Hanka taught in one school building but she commuted to a different classroom for every class. She did not have a classroom of her own. During the course of the observations, I followed her to four different classrooms that differed in size and table layout in two ways depending on the actual room size. There was a large classroom layout and a small classroom layout.

Figure 4

Large classroom layout in Hanka's school

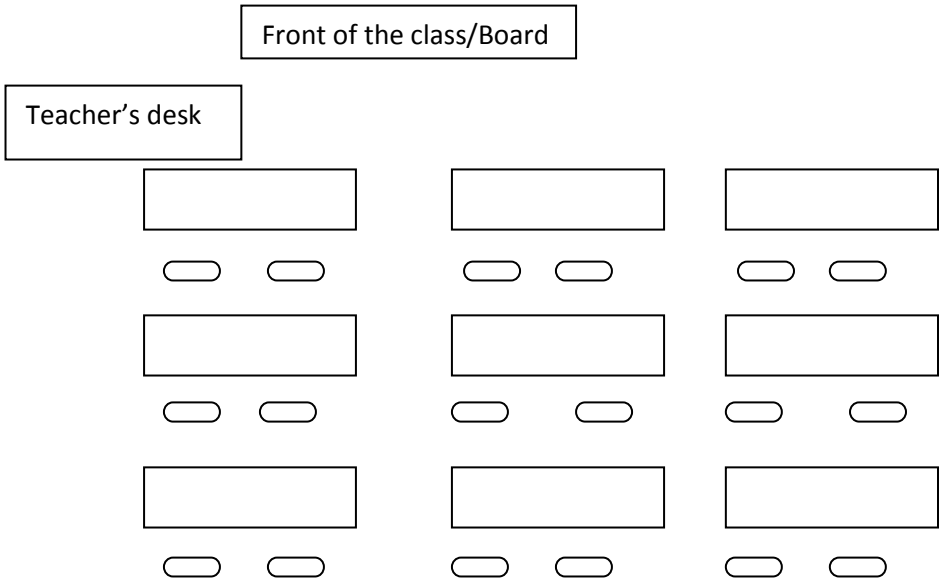
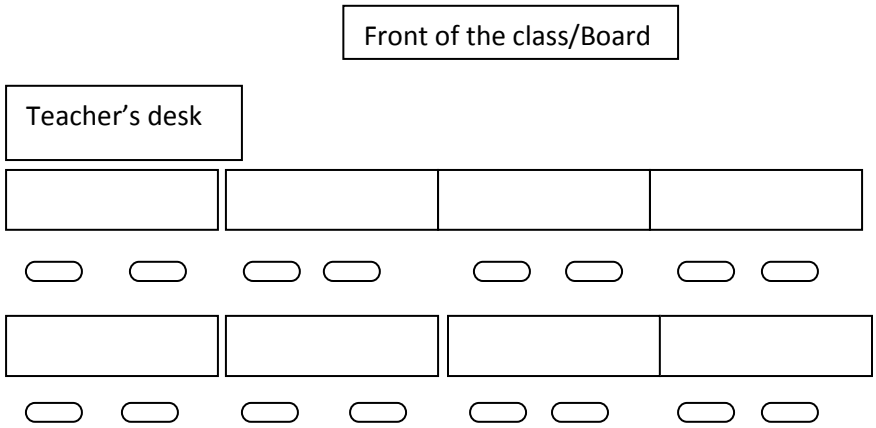


Figure 5

Small classroom layout in Hanka's school



Although the number of students is approximately the same in each of the classes Hanka taught, from twelve to eighteen people (one half of a regular size class), the room size determined her ability to vary groupings. While in the large classroom layout, the students used the front half of the classroom, sitting in rows all facing front. In the small layout classroom, there was virtually no walking room around the desks. This layout gave the impression of being crammed into a tiny space because the front of the class was one wall, while the backs of the students' chairs in the second row touched the opposing wall. The teacher's desk touched the window wall, and the other side of the row of desks was approximately four feet from the entrance door wall.

Hanka did her best to take advantage of this classroom layout. Most of the tasks the students were asked to complete during the class came from the textbook. Following is a vignette that describes a frequent type of task the students were asked to complete and the group assignment.

Hanka: Open your books.

Hanka: The first headline reads: Lively Tom, 69, skates for Tesco.

Hanka: According to this headline, what kind of job does Tom do? In groups, think about what kind of job does Tom do?

Teacher assigns three different headlines from the articles from a textbook to three different groups. The students in groups are asked to predict what the job is based on the article headlin*e.* (Field notes, 1/11/2010, 9:45am)

Another example from Hanka's classroom showcasing the jigsaw grouping:

Hanka: OK, now create mixed groups of 3.

Hanka: Mix around. Group 1,2,3. Stand up and find 2 other people who read the other two articles… So that in a group everybody read a different one. (Field notes, 1/13/2010, 11:09am)

Hanka considered group work to be the most beneficial way of organizing her class for the work students need to do. She often assigned pair work and group work through random choices. She believed that students needed as much practice as possible in using the English language with an actual audience for their language skills to improve. Unfortunately, with fifteen students assigned to her for a forty-five minute class, she could not serve as the audience or partner in conversation for every student. She explained what she needed to do instead:

I tend to focus on any activity that requires them to speak English, using oral language as much as possible. Very quick practice activities, short task, [e.g.] discuss the task in groups, share with the rest of the class. I ask them to role play dialogues, to find out what their partner has to say about the task, practice 3rd

> person sentences […] I include writing as a part of group work, I include dialogues, asking and answering questions, finding information. (Hanka, interview, 11/16/2010)

Hanka strived to recreate the need to use the English language as much as possible during the class, and she made sure that each student talked during the forty-five minute time class time. Most of the tasks the students were assigned in Hanka's class compared to Nancy's class, were fast paced CLOZE type activities such as grammar drills, oral turn taking in reading and responding, or creating sentences based on templates. On average the students spent about 3-4 minutes on one activity before they moved to another one. Hanka also assigned tasks that asked the students to think about how the topic, vocabulary, and information related to their own lives, and often they were asked to draw on their personal experience when answering a question.

A common feature of the tasks students were assigned in each class was the fact that cooperation was a major factor as opposed to competition. However, I did observe the students changing the information presentation into a competition themselves, without the teacher encouragement. In Nancy's class, for example, the students had to do a character analysis of a main character from a novel by describing what the character saw, felt, heard, and so on. The task for the students was to transfer the literal information from the story onto a metaphoric outline of a body of the character such as where the eyes were and were the fingers were. The students were to write what the character saw and what the character felt, and so on. The students created the body outlines by drawing around a classmate on a large piece of paper. The groups competed on whose paper person would be the most beautiful one by spending more of their work

time on decorating the character than working on the text evidence. In Hanka's class, she did a quick vocabulary review by writing expressions on the board. She asked the students to study them and after a few minutes she erased them. She asked the students to come up one by one and write the expressions they remembered on the board. The activity turned into a spontaneous boys vs. girls competition with loud cheers from the rest of the class.

It was apparent that in each classroom the methodology each teacher chose had to combine the requirements set by the state, the teacher's personality and what Nancy and Hanka felt their role was. Each teacher aimed to maximize the English language exposure the students received by either varying the set up of the classroom as much as possible or using student grouping to allow for active learning despite the time constraints and to the number of students. Although the classroom layouts were very different for each teacher, Hanka and Nancy made the best of their situation. The fact that the students were enjoying the classes was demonstrated by active learning, positive attitude about learning from the students, and the fact that both teachers felt respected and good about most of the classes after they were done teaching.

Differences Attributed to Context

Nancy and Hanka taught in two different sociocultural contexts. Nancy was teaching students who came to the United States from multiple countries and cultures. They lived in the USA and functioned in a society outside the class where English was spoken as the main language. Hanka taught in Slovakia and her students all spoke Slovak. After the school, Hanka's students returned to an environment where English was not the main language. The fact that the teaching of English was carried out in such

different contexts had an influence on what was happening in the classroom. The most prominent differences related to context were curricular demands, teachers' attitudes towards students' native language, and the motivation students in each country had for studying English.

Curriculum

Nancy was not following a textbook and she was not bound by an end of the semester/year/graduation exam for her linguistics class unless she designed one to check students' progress and learning. Nancy was in charge of developing her own curriculum, which meant she could spend as long as it was needed on one concept. She stated:

> Me, not having a curriculum, I can take 6 weeks on something until they learn it. If my students need six weeks to do elements of a short story then I can take six weeks and not feel bad about missing out on anything else. Not being bound to an end of instruction exam where all these things have to be covered before you take the test because they will be in the test […] I don't really give a lot of tests. They [students] are tested everywhere else. They don't need to be tested by me. I'll give a midterm test, a semester test…and then I'll give an end of the year test which is write me a letter and in the letter you have to have these things. (Nancy, interview, 10/9/2009)

Hanka mostly followed a textbook and was guided by a strict state mandated curriculum which planned out how much of the book she needed to cover every class. Hanka was a chair of the district branch of the English language teacher board. One role of the board is to prepare the curriculum for every secondary school level class that ties in with the

textbook used for the class. The board is also in charge of choosing and approving textbooks to be used in all the English language classes. The board is regulated by a strict English language curriculum framework developed by the Slovak Ministry of Education that affects the choices of textbooks as well as density of the curriculum for Hanka's classes. Although being on the board that helps to plan out the curriculum may seem like she ultimately has the power to make decisions about how to teach, she is not satisfied with the curriculum, especially the forced fast pace and drill-like demands on students. She said:

> But I can't really afford to spend too much time on explaining grammar in English, which takes longer, because my curriculum is pushing me. I can't stop and spend three class periods on one grammar issue in English until they get it, to use a variety of time consuming approaches. The stress caused by time is huge. […] I would really like to be in charge of the literature and textbooks we teach from. Right now, I am accommodating the general requirements and fulfilling the [government] norms by using current textbooks, but it's suppressing my creativity. (Hanka, interview, 11/16/2009)

The one positive feature Hanka saw in preparing her teaching plan was the team work of the whole board. The nine teachers on the board meet bi-monthly to plan out the instruction and curriculum by months, weeks, and days as well as discussing what went well and what did not work.

Students' Native Language

Another theme that was different with each teacher was related to the students' native language and its use in class by the students and by the teachers. Nancy's and Hanka's attitude and practice related to students' native language differed.

Students' native language use by the teachers. Nancy represented the native English language speaker in her class. She also learned some Spanish and considered herself a limited speaker. This ability allowed her to share the language with some students in her class who came from Spanish speaking countries, but not with all the students in her classroom. I very often observed her using Spanish during the class to help the Spanish students figure out a word:

> Nancy: Yes…we'll do a post mortem (writes post mortem on board).
> Have you ever taken a post-test? Do you know what post-test is?
> Post is a prefix. (underlines on board).
> Do you see something in "mortem" that you recognize? Mort?
> Muerto? Como se dice en espanol? Muerto?
> Mortem means death…..so post mortem means after you die.
> You need to start looking for things in your own language that
> you recognize…Pre-civil war, post-civil war, before and after.
> (Field notes, 10/5/2009, 1:20pm)

The phrase *como se dice* was a frequent one that Nancy used when asking students to translate vocabulary for her into Spanish. She explained that it was a strategy for her to check whether students understood a word. She said:

> I have students that have great big holes in their education because there are other issues. So if I can help them in any little way shape or form, by using my very limited knowledge of Spanish, then that kind of makes that connection, plus then it puts me in their learning shoes. And I make many mistakes, most of them not on purpose, […] I make a mistake they see it's ok to make a mistake because, you know, the teacher does it all the time. So it kind of suits several purposes. (Nancy, interview, 10/9/2009).

I asked Nancy if she worried that she could not offer the same instructional guidance to the other students in her classroom and who spoke languages other than Spanish. She answered that she was aware that she is helping only one portion of the class, while the other half needed to figure what to do and how to do it based on their limited English or discussions with peers. Nancy then made the following statement which corresponded with Hanka's take on the native language use, "It's very much a disadvantage to speak to them in their native language because then it doesn't force them to use the English, and that's the ultimate goal here" (Nancy, interview, 10/9/2009).

In Hanka's classroom, her use of Slovak language was also common. Since she shared the same language with the whole class, it was very easy for her to switch back and forth. She admitted she felt guilty about using Slovak because to her it was a shortcut to get her point across. Following is an example of such English – Slovak interaction:

Hanka: OK, now we are going to practice questions. Student Book p.96. Exercise 3. What would you do if …?
podmienkova spojka "if", co musi byt za if?

(translated in field notes: conditional conjunction “if”, what follows after “if”)

Waiting for students to answer.

Hanka: minuly cas. Nezalezi, ci je na zaciatku, alebo na konci, vzdy musi byt minuly cas. (translated in field notes: past tense. It doesn’t matter if it’s at the beginning or at the end [of a sentence], it always has to be past tense).

Students read questions in the student book and the whole class is figuring out the answer. The questions and answers exercise serve to practice the "if I …, I would…." conditional phrase. (Field notes, 1/15/2010, 10:23am).

Hanka explained that she often assessed the time she had for covering a certain topic and depending on whether she anticipated the students have comprehension issues or not, she would choose Slovak or English. She elaborated on the issue in her interview:

> Maybe it would be more effective if I tried harder and explained everything in English. It would also force the students to think more in English. But because of the common language we share, and especially, when I see that their focus is gone because the content is too difficult for them to grasp in English, I switch to Slovak, and they come back, and begin listening again. But I can’t really afford to spend too much time on explaining grammar in English, which takes longer, because my curriculum is pushing me. (Hanka, interview, 11/16/2009)

It was interesting to see that both Hanka and Nancy related their use of the students’ native language to their own performance as teachers.

Students' native language use by the students. Both teachers were aware of the fact that allowing the students to use their native language meant that they were taking away from their practice of English. Yet, both teachers tolerated the students' use of their native language for another reason. In Nancy's classroom, the most common types of groups that the students chose were common language groups. During the class observations both in the fall and spring semesters, I heard Spanish, Korean, and English being spoken in the classroom. Nancy believed that students benefited from using their native language during class to some extent because it helped them to think about a task. She explained:

> I think students need to use their native language to comfortably discuss what they're learning. Learning is a very social environment. And if students cannot discuss comfortably and easily what they're learning it's very difficult for the retention. Because the clarification has to be there. Am I understanding what this teacher is saying? Is this what she's saying? I think this is it, what do you think? And so – because my students, the majority of them are just emerging speakers, it's hard for them to ask those questions, and to provide that clarification in English. They need to be able to use their language. (Nancy, interview, 10/9/2009)

Nancy also believed that students could serve as mentors to their less proficient friends and often a helper was assigned to a student whose comprehension in English was very low.

Hanka believed that students who used the Slovak language during her class were wasting their opportunity to use English in a supervised environment. She shared with me in her interview:

> I try to minimalize their use of Slovak language during the class time. But pair work or group work is an issue, they switch to Slovak. When they can't wait to comment or just have remarks about anything. I can't really do anything but remind them "please in English." Their task is in English, and what they produce is in English, but they discuss the task in Slovak. The stronger students try to use only English, but I think they all try. (Hanka, 11/16/2009)

Hanka did sound reconciled with the fact that the students switched to discussing the tasks in Slovak. From her description, it seemed that the switch to the native language occurred because Slovak was the common language and it was the thinking language the students were used to speaking during tasks discussions.

Students' Motivation

The last context related findings were associated with the difference the teachers perceived in their students' motivation for learning the English language. Nancy saw her students' motivation linked to their life as productive citizens contributing to the society:

> If they're there because they have to learn the language because they have to travel to the United States to – for a job. Then they need to have the discourse and the conversation and the language of that – whatever it is that they need to be working with. So it depends on – what the purpose of them being there is. So that part – but I think at the high school level, the students have come with an

> agenda, they have come with a purpose. Often their purpose is to, you know, to learn enough English and to get a job here, some of them will go on to college, most of them will not. (Nancy, interview, 10/9/2009)

Nancy perceived different motivation levels among her students. She stated that the students who had peers with the same native language in the classroom often did not seem as motivated to develop their English skills because they knew they could always resort to their native language. The reluctance to use English in class was increased if the students returned to a community after school where their native language was the most common language used.

In Hanka's school, the students began their enrollment in her English class by choice. The students had to choose two different foreign languages to study and English seemed to be a popular choice. Hanka felt that this fact made her situation more favorable with the students because they wanted to study English. It was a desired subject. She also explained that students often found motivation for studying the English language in the goals they had for life, such as college, travel, or job opportunities outside Slovakia. She shared that her students were very conscious of the English language they encountered outside the school community. She told me anecdotes about her students constantly bringing examples of wrong English translation or use into the classroom to discuss with her. That initiative that students took searching for the English language use outside the classroom community was both a sign of their motivation and contribution to their motivation.

Another motivation Hanka shared that did not come up with Nancy was related to grades. She said:

> Grades are a strong motivation for students … it's true. Many students here at the high school are either pressured by the parents or are self-motivating for better grades. (Hanka, interview, 1/16/2010)

The grammar school Hanka taught at served as a pre-college preparatory school and grades mattered to students or their parents.

Although the students' perceived motivation for learning English was different in each context, the common foundation for both teachers' was the shared interest of their students in English as the one language they planned to use in their future life.

Summary

The findings of the study revealed that the two teachers teaching in two different sociocultural contexts had very similar beliefs about the communicative competence concept. They both agreed that a competent speaker needs to have adequate linguistic, cultural, and strategic knowledge. They both included the concepts they addressed in their definition in their classroom curriculum and in their instructional approaches. The teachers' primary focus, however, was the linguistic concepts and concepts related to the theory of language, while the other concepts were represented less in each of the teacher's classrooms. There were several differences found between the teachers that were attributed to the different context, mainly the curricular demands placed on each teacher, the attitude towards the students' native language use in class, and the motivation the teachers perceived in their English language learners.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion

This research study examined two teachers teaching English to speakers of other languages in two different sociocultural instructional contexts. The purpose of the study was to determine teachers' definitions of what makes an English language learner communicatively competent in the English language, teachers' beliefs about what knowledge they consider important to teach in order to achieve the communicative competence for their students, and what role the different sociocultural context, i.e. the setting, plays. The study was grounded in several research questions. How do teachers of English to speakers of other languages teaching in different sociocultural contexts define what content is necessary to teach English language learners in order to achieve communicative competence? How do teachers of English to speakers of other languages teaching in different sociocultural contexts define what methodology is necessary to teach English language learners in order to achieve communicative competence? What role does the setting play? What methods does each teacher employ? Is there a difference in the teachers on this definition and how they teach? If so what are the differences? If not, why not?

Summary of the Methodology

A qualitative design of a comparative case study was used as the method to examine the two cases represented by two teachers. One of the teachers was an American citizen teaching English to speakers of other languages in the USA and the other teacher was a Slovak citizen, teaching English to speakers of Slovak language in Slovakia. Data were collected from several data sources in each country. Data sources included individual semi-structured interviews, class observations with field notes

during both fall school term and spring school term, short clarifying post observation interviews, and online demographic and short concept surveys. During the interviews each teacher answered questions about their personal understanding of communicative competence and related concepts, teaching methodology and activities, views of learners' needs, and assessment practices. The purpose of the class observations was to discern what the teachers do in their classrooms to help their students improve their English language skills. The post observation informal interviews were designed to immediately clarify any inconsistencies in observation notes regarding the class observations. The survey served the purpose of the collection of demographic information about the personal history of each participant and basic information about the teachers' classroom practices and routines, materials, and learning activities used during instruction. All data were transcribed and, if needed, translated into English.

Data were analyzed using qualitative analysis tools that aimed for data reduction and organization for comparison. The first step was to create overarching categories that stemmed from the research questions and formed a departure point for codes that were developed next. The code list became the main tool for data reduction and analysis. It was applied to interviews, to classroom observations, as well as to the surveys. Once codes were applied to all data, a matrix was created for each participant listing all the data sources. In the matrix the researcher marked the corresponding codes and the codes that fit together were summarized for further data reduction. Special attention was paid to discrepancies in data and to data that did not fit the code sheet and codes were adjusted as considered necessary. Subsequently, data already coded was re-inspected.

Once the coding and the matrices were finished, I identified themes that allowed me to address the research questions.

Discussion of the Findings

The Communicative Competence Model

The teachers' definitions of communicative competence supported the four interactive subcategories of the communicative model and confirmed that the two teachers who teach English to speakers of other language coming from two different sociocultural backgrounds with different educational backgrounds have very similar ideas on what a competent speaker needs to master. Studies founded in sociocultural perspectives on language learning (c.f. Gee, 2008; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1991) emphasize that social and cultural knowledge is as important for successful communication in a new language as the linguistic knowledge, regardless of the environmental context in which the learning occurs. The confirmation of the model via the teachers' definitions of communicative competence helps to support the findings of research studies that claim that ELLs need knowledge beyond basic grammar and lexis in order to be able to communicate meaningfully (Berns, 1990; Sauvignon, 1997; Widdowson, 1978). The confirmation of the model also adds to the knowledge in the field by defining the representation of the communicative competence in the content the teachers choose to teach and the instructional methodology they choose to implement while influenced by two different sociocultural contexts.

The study revealed that despite the different sociocultural contexts, the teachers' definitions of the communicative competence were very similar. Nancy and Hanka's focus on grammatical knowledge and the importance of the knowledge of the rules of

language was prevalent in their explanation of what a competent speaker needs to master. The grammatical knowledge was not, however, a stand alone quality for either teacher. A speaker of English language who is communicatively competent knows how to utilize the grammatical knowledge to best benefit him or her in helping to get the message across, convey information, and meaningfully participate in situations that require making meaning.

Considering the communicative competence model introduced in Chapter 2, as a combination of linguistic, social, cultural and strategic sub competences, both teachers came very close to defining communicative competence as it was represented by the model. The linguistic competence in the model fits with Hanka's and Nancy's description of grammatical knowledge and rich vocabulary base. The social competence in the model fits with the teachers' description of the ability to read situations correctly, to react appropriately in communication and to choose a correct language register to fit the situation. The cultural competence in the model corresponds with Hanka and Nancy's statements about teaching grammar along with the culture. In the ESL context, the cultural knowledge came from the students' participation in the cultural world by being immersed in the target language environment. In the EFL context, the culture came from the authentic materials such as textbooks written from the perspective of a particular culture. The strategic competence in the model was represented in the teachers' statement about competent speakers being able to function independently, to be able to compensate for lack of vocabulary, or to use negotiation skills in communication.

Although the teachers conceptually agreed on what the communicative competence model represents when analyzed in parts and when deconstructed, there was a difference in the teachers' definition in the way they each saw the concept as a whole. Nancy regarded communicative competence as knowledge that is developmental, meaning, one can be communicatively competent while still developing their language skills. Hanka viewed communicative competence as the final achievement. For Nancy, a communicative competent speaker could demonstrate their ability while learning to participate in conversations on a variety of topics, in a variety of social situations, and with conversation partners with whom the speaker has a variety of degrees of relationships. For Hanka, a communicatively competent speaker achieved communicative competence when he or she spoke with a ease like a native speaker. Although Hanka's definition does focus on the qualities of a native speaker, it is the ease of speech production and the natural fluent communication that she admired, not the particular accent or the sense of being a native speaker. Interestingly enough, Nancy, who is a native speaker, did not compare communicative competence mastery openly to a native speaker but did consider herself a good language model. Nancy also wished the students would emulate only vocabulary and the manner of speaking while keeping their accents to remain faithful to their cultural heritage.

The teachers' definitions partially support the research movement that abandons the native speaker as an idealized point of reference for language learning (Knuttson, 2006; Kramsch 1998; Wiley, 2005). Hanka's references to her insecurities about her English language proficiency and not being a native speaker were reflected in her hopes that her students look for other sources of language models through their travels into

English speaking countries. Her responses correspond with findings of a study by Li (1998) who included deficiency in English proficiency and in strategic and sociolinguistic competence as the top reasons why teachers in EFL setting were resentful towards communicative competence. The need for a native speaker language model is less apparent in a context where there are multiple models of communicatively competent speakers from which the ELLs can learn. In a context where the teacher serves as the only model of the language and she considers herself to still be a learner, the need to resemble the speech production of a native speaker is more apparent.

The Communicative Competence Model Applied to Content of Instruction

The communicative competence model has proven to be applicable also to the content each teacher considered important to teach in order for their students to become communicatively competent. The teachers' theoretical understandings of the skills and knowledge a competent speaker needs were translated into the curricular decisions they both made. The English language classroom consisted of conscious focus on some concepts, such as grammar and figurative language, and unintentional focus on some concepts such as cultural heritage and social norms.

The conscious focus for both teachers during their instruction was on the grammatical knowledge and the knowledge of the rules of language. The justification for grammar inclusion came from both teachers as they agreed on defining their role in the classroom as language foundation builders. The teachers believed that by giving their students strong basics of grammatical knowledge and showing them how theoretical thinking applies to language structures (e.g. ability to identify parts of speech in a sentence or creating varied sentences based on a new grammar structure) they were

equipping their students with linguistic knowledge valuable to a life-long learner. Both teachers were preparing the students for a life after their high school represented by their passing of the English language tests that were structured around using correct grammar. This reasoning gave further good reasons for the inclusion of teaching grammatical concepts.

The cultural competence was reflected differently in each teacher's curriculum. Both teachers agreed that high school curriculum for English as a new language class does not provide opportunities to teach about culture that goes with the target language and both teachers claimed they did not spend time teaching culture. The classroom observations revealed, however, that culture was embedded in the content with which the teachers worked. When Nancy focused on the concept of character analysis and asked her students to discuss a female character of the story situated in the 1920s, many of the comments the students made were about comparing women in the American society today with the fictional historical character. The cultural implications were not the intent the teacher was planning. Rather, they resulted from the choice of topic for discussion. Cultural references in Hanka's classroom were embedded in the textbook she used to teach the language skills. It was published in Britain and contained ample references to British culture. Again, it was not the teacher's intention to bring culture into the classroom but she was aware of the cultural bias in the textbooks and knew students would pick up on the cultural knowledge.

Social competence was a concept that was more obvious in Nancy's classroom as a result of some students' misconceptions of appropriate and courteous behavior. This situation was due to misconceptions about the American culture the students

learned in popular media in their home countries or associations with their home culture that differs from the American concepts of cultural and social order. Social competence, however, is also represented by a hidden curriculum because both of the teachers, while teaching linguistic concepts, taught the conventions for using the linguistic concepts. These included the role of participants in a given interaction, the meaning of social status, and various culture-specific norms embedded in behavior patterns, norms, beliefs, and values of a particular culture (Alptekin, 2002). For the ELLs to be more aware of the social and cultural references that are part of the communicative competence, teachers should bring the students' conscious attention to ways of using language correctly in a given situation.

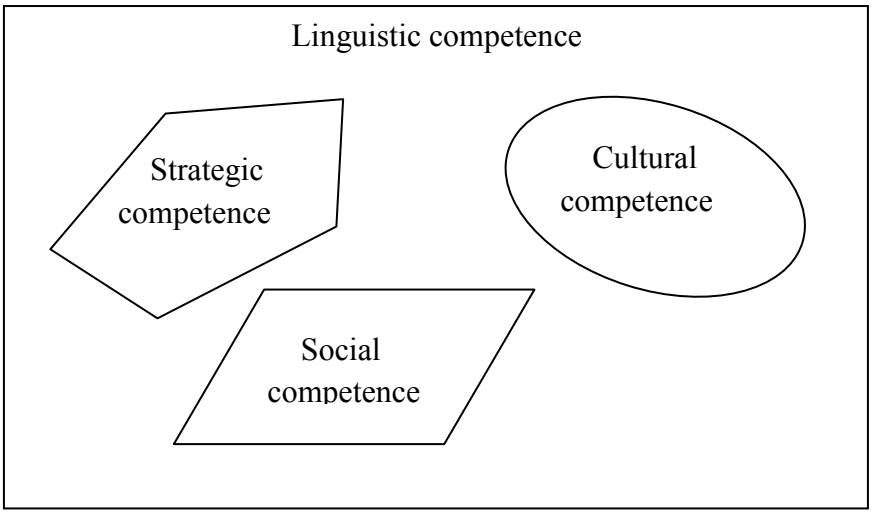
Strategic competence is the skills that teachers teach without realizing they are teaching them. Based on the classroom observations of both teachers it seemed clear that their students participated in ample situations where they practiced strategic competence on a daily basis. Since this competence is activated when the linguistic resources failed and the students struggled to expressed their ideas, it was a frequent occurrence in each class. Interestingly enough, it was not used just by the students, but both of the teachers demonstrated the use of strategic competence in their speech as well. Dornyei and Thurrell's (1991) list of strategies that speakers can use to avoid communication breakdown (i.e. paraphrasing, approximation, non-linguistic means such as gestures, miming, acting concepts out, and the use of invented words) were all present in both classrooms but their presence was a result of the teachers' focus on the concepts related to linguistic competence. Strategic competence is the most underestimated

competence as a concept to be taught, possibly because ELLs can transfer their strategic competence knowledge from their L1.

The communicative competence model shifted after it was applied to the content that teachers considered important to teach. The three competencies – linguistic, social and cultural - were no longer evenly represented since each competence did not receive the same amount of attention. The model, as it represents the content taught, is showed in Figure 6. The main focus in curriculum was on linguistic competence. The teachers considered grammatical knowledge to be the most important one. The other competences were attached as by-products to the linguistic competence. While both teachers were aware of the existence of cultural, social, and linguistic competences, they did not focus on teaching them overtly but hoped the students would acquire these competences as by-products of the linguistic curriculum from the interactions in the classroom and/or outside of it, from the materials used in the classroom, or from transferring knowledge and skills from L1.

Figure 6

The Communicative competence model applied to content taught



The Communicative Competence Model Applied to Teaching Methodology

In their instructional approach, each teacher allowed ample opportunities for the students to interact with other students as part of the language learning process. The communicative competence model applied to instruction returned to its original form as described in Figure 1 on page 23. Communication was the main vessel for learning new information. Communication was present in a variety of forms in each teacher's classroom including communication with the teacher and with students and communication intended for the classroom or resulting from behavioral issues that needed to be resolved. The teachers favored interaction among small numbers of students in order to maximize the amount of time and opportunity each student had to practice and learn to negotiate meaning. Both teachers believed that students can learn from each other even if both the students struggle with the English language. By being directed to communicate in English, the students were developing their linguistic competence. The students practiced correct reactions and assessments of situations as part of developing social competence. They learned to read non-verbal conversational clues. They learned to anticipate reactions to their utterances. They learned appropriate meaning negotiation skills such as asking for clarification, restating information, and helping the listener to get the intended message. These skills represented social competence and allowed students to quickly assess a situation and make their speech production fit the purpose of the conversation. The teachers did not feel that they needed to be the only correct language models for the students because much of communicative competence depended on skills other than the correct language skill. According to Gee (2008), even a speaker with limited language proficiency can be

understood if the speaker utilizes his or her non-linguistic skills rooted in the ability to assess the current situation in communication.

With the practice of the strategic competence, both teachers, with best intentions to correct the students or offer help as soon as they saw a breakdown in communication, on occasions prohibited the students from experiencing any communication breakdown. The teachers also prohibited students from engaging in active practice of strategic competence because they did not allow them to figure out a way to compensate by using a strategy available through strategic competence.

Neither of the two teachers subscribed to a specific teaching approach such as the Communicative Language Teaching or Audio-Lingual Method. Rather, each teacher used a mixed repertoire of methods that fit the immediate goal for each lesson, combined with the perceived students' needs at that particular time. Nancy's teaching style fit with the multiple roles she defined for herself as a teacher. She took into consideration students' personal and language struggles when assigning work after school. The frequent practices in her class were encouraging students' teamwork, whole class or group discussions in English or in the students' native language, cooperative activities, scaffolded reading responses to stories and narratives, collecting information from the internet, and independent practice. Nancy used think alouds, modeling the behavior she expected of the students, guiding their work with a variety of examples, clear instructions and frequent rephrasing of the instructions or questions.

In Hanka's class, the instruction matched her primary role. She held the same belief as Nancy about being someone who was a significant contributor to how students would remember their high school years. Hanka felt that her situation was very

favorable with her students because of the status the English class held among the students. Hanka was strongly directed and bound by a textbook planned out to be covered in one academic year. Her typical role in the classroom thus reflected her as the leader of textbook inspired practice. Despite the textbook limitations, Hanka's instruction was just as interactive as Nancy's, with students as active learners who participated in pair and group discussions, in short fast paced grammatical drills, in reading responses to narratives in the textbook and drafts of connected texts, and in creating language that mimicked language used in real life situations. Unlike Nancy's instruction which had a very relaxed feeling, Hanka's classroom seemed more of a rigid routine relying on the textbook providing the best way to practice the language. Hanka expressed that, on occasion, she traded the book in for other materials she worked on with her students to maintain their motivation and interest. The common feature for each teacher was the fact that they each observed their student needs when deciding on how to teach a particular lesson. Nancy and Hanka were both limited in physically changing their classroom layout. Instead they varied groupings of students and included whole class, group or pair work to break up the pace and to offer as much interaction with peers as possible supporting the ideas of mediated learning set in social interactions with the environment (Bruner, 1996; Vygotsky, 1976).

Comparing Sociocultural Context Influences

The data analysis revealed a number of influences the sociocultural setting had on each teachers' decisions about her curricular content and instructional methodology. Nancy and Hanka taught in two different sociocultural contexts and each teacher represented a different sociocultural stance a teacher might have towards the cultural

and ethnic background of the students and the target language. Nancy, as a native speaker of English, did not share the target language with most of her class except in cases when she would use her limited Spanish to reach out to Spanish speaking students who had no or limited comprehension skills in English. Nancy did not share the culture with her students either. Her class was a multicultural, multilingual, multinational, and multiethnic class. Hanka, as a non-native speaker of English, shared her native language Slovak with all the students in her class. Although her students were multilingual and spoke more than one language (e.g. Hungarian, German, or French) because they either came from bilingual backgrounds or they studied several foreign languages simultaneously, they all shared the same native language. In this sense, Hanka's class was monocultural, monoethnic, and monolingual.

The most obvious difference related to setting was the set-up of the curriculum. Nancy was not following a textbook and she was not bound by an end of the semester/year/graduation exam for her linguistics class unless she designed one to check students' progress and learning. Nancy was in charge of developing her own curriculum, which meant she could spend as long as she saw fit on one concept. Hanka, on the other hand, was mostly following a textbook and was guided by a strict state mandated curriculum which directed how much of the book she needed to cover during each class. The strict curriculum dictated the fast pace and drill-like demands on students. Her curriculum was geared towards an English language exam that had the standards set by the European Council Education Framework.

While the freedom to choose one's curriculum might be perceived as a positive and ideal teaching position for a teacher, it also comes with great responsibility to

assess correctly the needs of the ELLs and develop instruction that reflects and responds to those needs. ELL's needs for learning English vary from learning about language knowledge such as grammar and vocabulary in general, to grammar and vocabulary specified by the learner's particular field of interest, such as learning for a test or specific profession. The needs can also stem from wanting to learn about a new cultural identity connected with the new language, or they can be oriented towards rediscovering one's own culture through learning about a new one. Individual learners' needs can range from the simple desire to be able to understand lyrics to a song to wanting to incorporate the new language into a future career and learn about methodology of teaching that language (c.f.Hinkel, 2006; Kramsch, 1998; Lantolf & Thorne, 2007; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Saville-Troike, 2006). While Nancy was very happy with no time constraints placed on her and she was at liberty to take as many days/weeks as she saw the need for the students to understand a concept, she did miss a textbook that would help her structure a class from time to time. Her decisions on what to teach were related to other content area teachers' requests of skills that the ELLs were in need of developing. Conversely, while Hanka felt frustrated with the tight curriculum and a prescribed textbook that she had to cover, sometimes she felt she needed to rely on the textbook to provide her with ideas and support of her lack of target language related cultural expressions or figurative language.

Another area in which the setting played a role was the use of the students' native language during class by the students and by the teachers. Hanka admitted to switching to Slovak when teaching because it was a shortcut for her that saved her time when explaining challenging grammatical concepts or talking about theoretical knowledge. She was not happy about the language switch but she felt she had no other choice if she wanted to keep

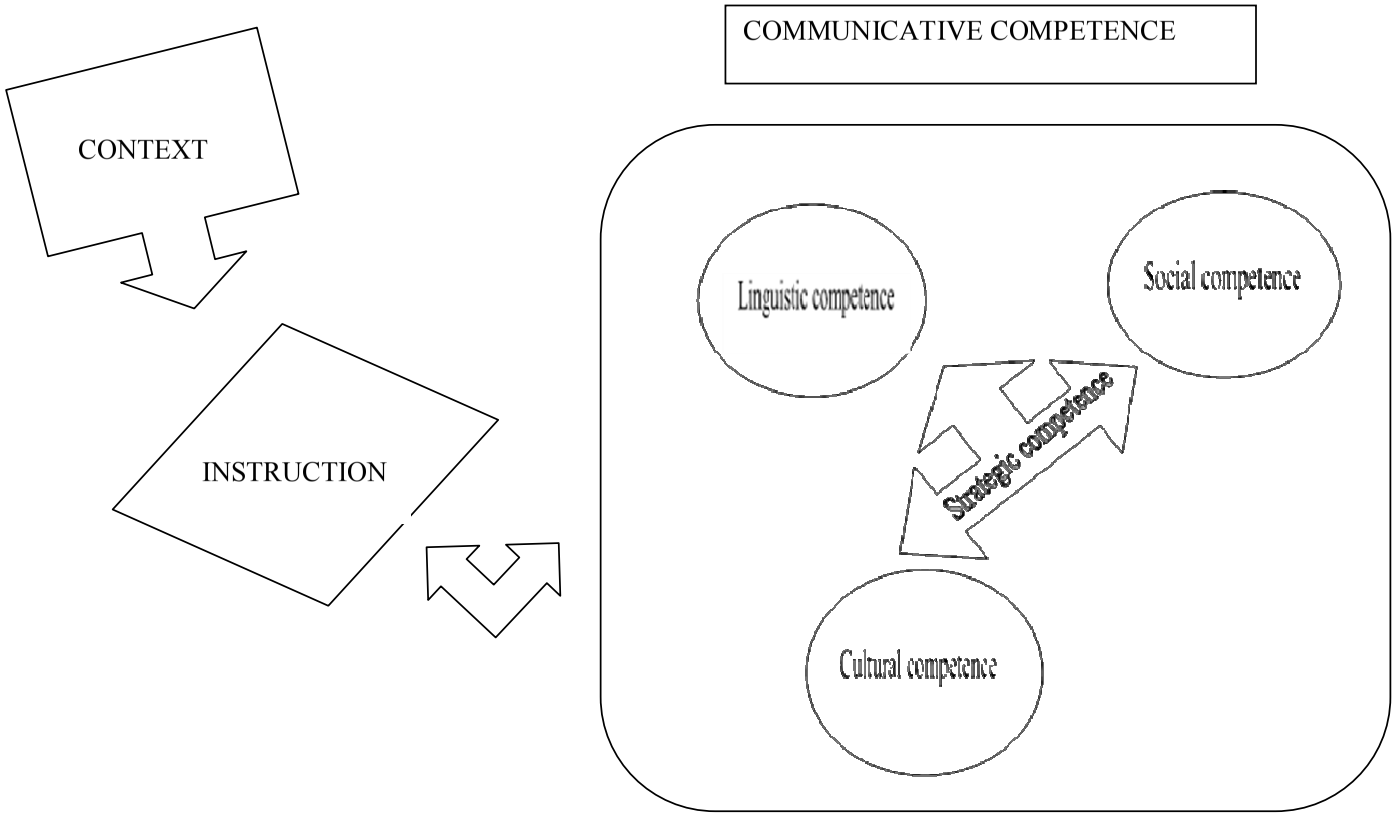
up with the curriculum plan. As far as the native language use by students, Hanka was against it but felt helpless. Students often broke out into natural friendship based groups to work on tasks and used Slovak as the thinking and the negotiation language while reporting the discussion results in English. Hanka viewed her students using their native language as a block to their English language skills practice and development. Her views are supported by the research (Ellis, 1994; Sano, 1984; Shamin, 1996) which states that if the students do not feel the need to use the target language, the goal of communicative competence is not achievable.

In Nancy's class, the teacher used her limited Spanish language knowledge to help students who spoke Spanish and had very limited comprehension skill. She hoped that these students who came into an English speaking country recently would acquire comprehension skills and other English language skills by participating in all the activities while using their native language and by exposure to English in the environment. Her students often broke out into groups based on friendships and also based on a common language during group work. The conversations related to tasks in groups that included all Spanish or all Korean students were in the students own language, while the conversations in any mixed groups were in English. Information presentation was mostly in English. On occasions, a student would infuse his or her speech with scarce Spanish words. Nancy did not see the use of students' native language as a negative influence because she believed in transfer of their thinking skills in their native language into the English language and eventually becoming confident in using English only. She was, however, aware of the fact that by reverting to their native language, students missed out on valuable communication practice in English.

The communicative competence model at this stage was redesigned to include the sociocultural context in which the instruction occurs because some of the influences on the decisions teachers make about the concepts they need to teach and the teaching methodology they need to employ resulted from the contextual demands represented by the state or district requirements. These requirement however, provide only the framework, as it was for the two teachers represented in the study. The final decisions about what to teach and how to teach were made by each teacher and combined the requirements with the teachers' definitions of communicative competence and their evaluation of what sub-competence was the most important. Figure 7 represents the new communicative competence model that includes the context and its influence on the instructional approaches each teacher chose to implement. The instructional approach within the classroom helped to achieve the instructional goal each teacher set forth for themselves in the form of communicative competence for their students. The concept of communicative competence and its understanding by the students was reflected back to the instructional approach and vice versa. Although the context was the main directive for each teacher via the curriculum demands, the motivation the students had for learning the language, or the students' preference for resorting to their native language use, the ultimate instruction in the classroom reflected the goals set by each teacher.

Figure 7

Communicative competence model situated in context



Implications of the Study

The implications of this study are significant for the field of English language teaching as well as pre-service teacher preparation. Regardless of the sociocultural context in which the language instruction occurs, the current study found that the goal the teachers have for their students are very similar. Educators need to be working with preservice teachers to provide them with training that includes an appropriate balance of content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and keen intuition for correctly assessing students from a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds in order to discover their language needs. Pre-service ELL teacher preparation is different from preparing teachers in any other content area because the teachers need to learn not only the conceptual knowledge and pedagogical approaches, but they also need to become conscious users and role models of English language use. English is not only the main communication tool and the common language in the classroom but also the objective to be mastered in the form of the communicative competence skills.

Content knowledge, in addition to reading and literacy skills in the native language, should also include theories of second language learning and acquisition as equally important. Many of the ELL students' native languages differ greatly from the structure of the English language. Preservice teachers equipped with theoretical knowledge about how students' learn or acquire the linguistic, social, cultural, and strategic competences, can make informed decisions about what works best for a particular child. The pre-service teacher will have to make decisions about their students' use of native language and they should be knowledgeable of the benefits and risks involved.

Knowledge about speech production, cognitive processes and behaviors involved in communication allows the preservice teachers to pick up on the strong and the weak areas in their students' communicative competence skills. Teacher preparation should include forms of assessment that provide information not only about the linguistic accuracy of the ELLs performance but also about their sociocultural knowledge and strategic knowledge. Pre-service teachers should be prepared to deal with students with native languages with which they are not familiar and be prepared to not depend on language as the only means of communication with such students. In-field supervised practical assignments that involve working with diverse ELLs would provide the pre-service teachers with firsthand experience. The classroom diversity varies from one school district to another. The requirements placed on teachers also vary by the district and differentiating in the curricular goals, the types of tasks, as well as expected outcomes in students' performance will most likely be necessary. All students suffer when the teacher lacks the skills, knowledge, and the time required to work effectively with the diversity of educational needs in the classroom. While building their skills through active participation in laboratory schools, the pre-service teachers can begin implementing their lesson plans and testing their instruction skills with diverse learners.

Regardless of the context, ESL or EFL, the goals teachers have for their ELLs are similar and grouped around the concept of communicative competence, as the current study showed. Preparation of English language teachers therefore, should include not only general references to language improvement when discussing students' learning, but also specific knowledge of concepts and skills that lead towards the

linguistic, cultural, social, and strategic competence development. Even if the teachers lean towards focusing on the grammatical knowledge, they should still be skilled in instructional approaches that lead towards all the other competences and be aware of the minimal non-linguistic information and skills students need for successful communication.

Pre-service teachers would benefit from participating in analyses of lesson plans, practices of lesson planning and lesson demonstrations. They will learn to recognize and implement instructional approaches that lead to the acquisition of all four sub-competences of the communicative competence. Pre-service teachers in both EFL and ESL settings need to learn to implement the best teaching methods that provide opportunities for students to fully develop their communicative competence skills. Pedagogical knowledge that includes learning about instructional approaches, authentic language teaching materials, situational language, and ways to shape the students cultural knowledge while helping them learn more about their own culture and heritage at the same time should be included as a part of teacher education.

Compared to preparing teachers in many other content areas, pre-service English language teachers should be engaged in training activities that help them become conscious about their own English language skills. As native speakers, using the English language daily, frequently, and without much conscious effort, the teachers need to be provided with tools to reflect on how much literal and how much figurative or non-standard language they use. Since the teacher serves as the main language role model for the students, a thorough knowledge of one's own language performance and the ability to consciously adjust one's speech should be acquired and practiced. The

idea of a communicatively competent speaker is achievable in any context. It is not tied to an environment that is rich in target language exposure. Teachers who are native English language speakers teaching in the ESL setting must compensate for their native-like fluency. However, simplifying or editing down their language is not beneficial to the students. Being conscious of the language they use, especially figurative language and cultural references to expose their students to an unsimplified exposure to a native-like model of the language with scaffolded comprehension is a better choice. Teachers, who are non-native speakers teaching in an EFL setting, must also compensate for the lack of a target language rich environment and recreate such environment in their classrooms by providing other language models for the students besides the teacher's speech. These compensations may be in the form of authentic materials or interactions about topics that simulate real life language use. Hence, the pedagogical knowledge offered by educators preparing future teachers should include strategies the teachers can use to self-evaluate their own performance in English and to switch from being a native language speaker to becoming a conscious language speaker who is able to help build the comprehension of students by either guiding the students towards comprehension, or using conscious decisions to adjust the language they use with the students.

Teaching students to express confusion, to ask for help, to ask for clarification, to let the teacher know that they do not understand the language are helpful skills that assist in navigating the classroom speech, especially when the teacher is unable to tell if a student understood the English utterance or not. Novice teachers often rely too much on their own communication skills when getting messages across to their students and tend to forget to include practice of the communication skills for the students. Rather

than trying too hard to guess the amount of language comprehended by the students or asking the highly redundant *do you understand* question that never yields the answer the teacher needs, it is far more helpful to implement strategic competence knowledge from the beginning for the students to use and signal to the teacher that a communication and comprehension breakdown occurred.

It is important for teachers to realize that their role in the classroom is to guide students' practice in the English language and to let the students be active learners who learn by trying. Often, the teachers insist on clear and correct communication and overcorrect the students. This erroneous assumption of building correct English grammar foundations by offering the students the correct form of language eliminates the students' experience of linguistic equilibrium which activates the strategic knowledge. The teachers' need for correction and constant supply of correct language model prevents the students from figuring how to get the message across and develop their strategic competence. It is more beneficial for communicative competence development when the correction is in the form of conversational correction that simulates a real life situation. Offering feedback to a speaker in the form of aided conversational correction allows the speaker to think about and utilize strategies to compensate for lack of linguistic, social or cultural knowledge. Teachers should not be too hasty to offer correct language under all circumstances, but rather be aware of alternative correction and feedback approaches.

Future Research

During the course of the study, there were several questions that suggested directions for future research. One of the areas dealt with the native and non-native

speaker status of the teacher and the accommodations the teachers feel they need to make to their language, if any, when speaking to ELLs in their classrooms. The current study suggested that the native speaker felt the need to edit down her language while the non-native speaker suggested her language was not adequate for her students' needs but was using it fluently and successfully nonetheless. Research examining the speech patterns of the teachers that are either non native or native speakers in two sociocultural contexts teaching English would yield answers to how much of the teachers' speech is adjusted when addressing the ELL students in their classroom and whether it influences the instruction and comprehension of the students in any way.

Another area dealt with the students and their native language use in the classroom. There is research that examines some questions of native language use in an ELT environment and the transfer of skills from L1 to L2 (c.f. Gelderen, Schoonen, Stoel, Glopper, & Hulstijn, 2007; Jiménez, García, & Pearson, 1996 ; Kottler, Kottler, & Street, 2008; Sweet & Snow, 2003). Most of the research is situated in either ESL or EFL context without comparing the impact of native language use in the two sociocultural contexts. While the two settings where the current study took place are very different in terms of how much exposure to the target language students get outside the classroom, it was the supervised exposure to English language in the classroom that mattered. The study suggested that in the EFL setting the use of the native language was seen as a negative, in the form of refusal to acknowledge the functionality of English in relaying information, such as an explanation of a grammar rule. In the ESL setting, the use of the native language was seen as a positive sign that students were working on transferring their literacy skills from their native language to the English language. It is also

recommended for the teacher to encourage the use of native language in students in an ESL setting for them to become bilingual (Miller & Endo, 2004) and to preserve their cultural heritage and identity (Bosher, 1994). The difference in these opinions is an area worth examining. What triggers the feeling of guilt from allowing the students use their native language and the feeling of satisfaction from the same student behavior in another sociocultural context?

Limitations

It is important to examine the limitations of the current study that placed certain restrictions on the research process. One such limitation was the length of classroom observations. The limited time in the classroom might have impacted the results of observing the instructional practices taking place in each teacher's classroom. Because the time devoted to each teacher observation was a total of one month of classes for each teacher, it did not provide optimal dispersal of observed classes, rather, the observations were carried out in clustered groups. This arrangement prevented more random data collection, because it was not possible to observe a greater variety of instructional approaches, since the classes followed one another and were related through the units, topics, or activities the teachers planned. Future research should plan out the data collection throughout the whole semester instead of start time period to prevent single topics or single units too close connected to one another and thus providing an inaccurate portrait of the teacher's instructional approach.

Another limitation is also related to the classroom observations. With each teacher I observed only a particular part of the semester and this restriction might have influenced the comparison of both teachers. A more complete picture of each teacher's

instructional approach in teaching English would be achieved if a more longitudinal design of the observations is implemented, one that would place the researcher into the classroom for the whole semester instead of examining a random portion of the semester.

A third limitation is related to the incomplete picture on instructional approaches and setting influences because it only involved the teachers' perspectives but disregarded the students' take on how they feel about learning English in a particular setting. This presents an opportunity for a continuation of this current study by including students' perspectives as learners of the English language. Further research in this area is suggested, especially a more exact examination of how much of language development is attributed to interactions of students with other students in the classroom, and how much direct interaction with the teacher serving as the primary language model is necessary for an ELL to continue developing their English language.

Summary

In conclusion, the teachers who teach English to speakers of other languages in different sociocultural context are influenced in the way in which they organize their instruction by the requirements placed on them by their respective school districts. However, it is each teacher's personal belief of what constitutes a communicatively competent speaker that ultimately provides the structure for the instruction and the curriculum. While the native language relations and motivation ELLs have for learning the language and their exposure to English outside the classroom differs in an ESL and EFL context, it is the teacher's attitude; belief, knowledge, and teaching skill that allow

the English language learners develop to their maximum potential in a classroom setting.

There are many other areas that open up for further research stemming from the current study and its focus on defining communicative competence, content, instruction methodology, and the sociocultural context in which the instruction occurs. The research comparing ESL and EFL environments is scarce and mostly resorts to examining students' motivation or a particular instructional approach. The current study in its design did not presuppose differences that historically and conceptually mark the ESL and EFL environment as very different in their core. Instead the focus was shifted to the teachers in these environments. Instead of looking at the environment first and developing the standards for instruction based on what happens outside of the classroom, the current study maintained the focus on what the teachers think should be taught, what they decide and implement in the classroom with minimal influences from the outside environment.

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APPENDIX A

Semi-structured Interview Questions

S = Slovak teacher only

A= US teacher only

Unmarked = both

1. General Language Related Concepts

- Why did you decide to become a teacher of English to speakers of other languages?
- Do you consider English a hard language to learn? Why?
- Do you consider English a hard language to teach? Why?
- (S) Do you use English outside of the class? Describe 1-2 examples.
- (S) How would you describe your own knowledge of English?
    - Probe: Are there any areas of English language that you think you need to improve in? If yes, why?
- Would you say you have a particular accent?
    - Probe: How do you know that?
- Do you consider yourself a good teacher of English to speakers of other languages?
    - Probe: Explain why or why not.

2. Context Related Concepts

- Please talk to me about English as a second language teaching (ESL) and English as a foreign language teaching (EFL). Do you think they are similar or different?

    - Probe: How about ESL/EFL learning? Do you think learning is similar or different?
- Describe your idea of perfect conditions for teaching English to speakers of other languages, what would the description be?
    - Probe: If your situation is different, what do you do to compensate for the conditions that are not favorable?
- (A) What advantages/disadvantages do you see in teaching English in a country where English is the official language spoken? Explain.
    - If you taught English to speakers of other languages in a country where English is not spoken, would you change anything about how you teach the English language? Would you have any concerns related to teaching English? Explain.
    - Probe: (A-if native speaker) What advantage/disadvantage do you have as a native-speaker of English in teaching English to speakers of other languages? Explain.
- (S) What advantages/disadvantages do you see in teaching English in a country where English is not spoken? Explain.
    - If you taught English to speakers of other languages in Britain or US, would you change anything about how you teach the English language? Would you have any concerns related to teaching English? Explain.
    - (S) What advantage/disadvantage do you have as a non native-speaker of English in teaching English to speakers of other languages? Explain.

3. **English language learners**

- Please describe who is an English language learner.
    - Probe: Tell me a little about your students in the classes.
    - Probe: Do you allow students to use their native language in class? Why or why not? If yes, in what situations? For what purpose?
    - (S) Probe: Why do you think your students learn English?
    - (A) Probe: What do you think your students want to be able to do with their knowledge of English?
    - When you encounter your students using slang and variations of English different from the standard form, what do you do?
    - (S) Which version of English language do your students prefer and why?
    - (S) Which version do you teach? Why?
    - (S) Are your students exposed to any other versions? How do you know?
- How different or similar are the classes of students you meet with during one day in terms of students' background?
    - Probe: What makes them different or similar?
    - Probe: How does it influence they way you teach a particular group?
- Do you think that in order to be an effective English language teacher you need to have knowledge about the background your students come from?
    - Probe: If not, why not?
    - Probe: If yes, what kind of knowledge would you like to have?

4. **Teaching/Learning Goals**

- What are your goals for your student?

    - Probe: What do you want your students to remember long after they leave the school and why?
    - Probe: How important is it to you that your students sound like native speakers of English?
    - Probe: How did you decide these were important goals?
- Talk to me about teaching grammar.
    - Probe: How important is it for your students to be accurate in English? Explain why?

5. Strategies/Methodology

- What role models do you have in teaching?
- What methodology and activities do you employ?
    - Probe: What methods and activities to develop language skills do you find the most useful? Why?
    - Probe: What specific language development techniques do you believe the students enjoy most? Why?
    - Probe: What specific language development techniques do you believe are beneficial but not popular with students?
    - Probe: How did you learn about all these methods
- Do you differentiate the instruction for your students? Based on what?
- Do you incorporate outside of classroom sources of English your students find in your instruction? If yes, how?
- Are there any sources of English language (spoken or written) that you consider deteriorating for your Ells' language development? Explain why.

- In survey, q.31 you list the following homework activities. Tell me more about the kinds of homework you assign.
    - Probe: What sources do you expect your students to use for the homework activities?

6. Concepts and Definitions

- In the survey, q. 14, you ranked the items as follows…
    - Probe: Why do you think these are important? What are the best ways to teach them?
    - Probe: Why do you not consider these important? What are the best ways to teach them?
    - Probe: I noticed that you ranked culture in the top/bottom half. What cultural information do you consider important for your students to know that's connected to the English language? How do you go about teaching it?
- How would you describe someone who is fluent in the new learned language?
    - Probe: What skills, behaviors do they have, exhibit?
- We know that your goal for your students is to be competent speakers of English. How do you describe someone who is communicatively competent?
    - Probe: What areas of knowledge of English do they need to have?
    - Probe: What skills or behaviors do they need to have?
    - Probe: Is there any knowledge or skill a competent speaker should have that is not language related?

- Based on the two previous answers, how would you define communicative competence?
- What do you think is the difference between fluency and communicative competence?

7. Materials and Resources

- In the survey, q 15, you checked the following materials that you use on a regular basis. Tell me more about how and why you use the materials you checked.
- In the survey, q 23, you checked the following technology you use during instruction. Tell me more about how and why you use it.
- What materials/information do you use to make decisions about what needs to be taught?
    - Probe: What curricular guidelines do you use?
- Do you have the opportunity to cooperate with other teachers for planning or instruction?
    - Describe an example when you worked with another teacher.
- In survey, q. 32 and 33 you list the following sources for spoken and written English language that you consider useful. Tell me more about each.

8. Assessment/Evaluation

- Do you evaluate what levels your students are on as far as their language knowledge goes at the beginning of the school year?
    - Probe: Why or why not? If yes, how?
- How do you know your students are progressing?

    - Probe: How do you define students' progress in language learning?
    - Probe: How do you check your students' progress?
    - Probe: How do you check your student' understanding of the new language?
    - Probe: At the end of the term, how do you check your students' learning?
    - Probe: How do you check to see if students learned what you hoped for them to learn?
- In the survey, q 33 and 34 you list the following assessments. Which one do you consider appropriate for which skills?
    - Probe: Do you consider any of them more appropriate for certain language skills then others?
    - Probe: Why or why not?
    - Probe: If yes, which assessment is best for what skill and useless for other?
- What are your criteria for a successfully taught class?
    - Probe: What needs to happen?
- What are your favorite things about teaching English to English language learners?
- What frustrations do you have?

APPENDIX B

Survey of Classroom Practices, Events and Materials Used.

(S) = Slovak participant only

(A) = American participant only

Unmarked = Both

(Part 1) Background information

1. (S) How did you learn English?
2. (S) How old were you when you began learning it?
3. What other languages do you speak?
4. How many total years have you been teaching?
5. How many total years have you been teaching English to English language learners?
6. What is the average size of your class?
7. Please choose the word that best describe your class

   Optional

   Mandatory
8. What grade level do you teach currently? If more than one concurrently, chose all you teach right now.

   9, 10, 11, 12
9. How many years have you taught a specific grade level?

   (List)
10. What degrees do you hold, and what did you major in?

    BA/BS:

MA/MS/MEd:

Ph.D./Ed.D.:

Other:

11. (A) Initial Certification:

12. (A) Additional Certification:

13. Please describe any specialized professional development that you have participated in

(Part 2) Concepts

14. Please rank the following concepts related to teaching English in order of importance to

you as a teacher of English to speakers of other languages. Assign 10 to the least important item and 1 to the most important.

grammar, vocabulary, speaking, listening, reading, writing, communication, culture, discourse knowledge (knowing what to say based on current situation), native-like accent.

(Part 3) English language materials

15. What materials do you use for English language instruction in your classroom? Check all

that apply.

English only course book (American English version)

English only course book (British English version)

English only course book (not sure which English version)

English plus students' native tongue course book

Real life texts (for example: maps, brochures, fliers)

Comic books or cartoons

Internet

Newspapers

Word processors

English to English dictionary

English to Students' native tongue dictionary

Thesaurus

Journals or notebooks

Novels

Poetry

Songs

Joke/ riddle or other humorous text

Graphic Novels

Video clips

Audio clips of spoken speech

(Table) Games (for example Scrabble)

Computer software program (for example Encarta)

Practice language tests (for example TOEFL)

Other (please list):

16. If you checked any of the following published materials, please indicate which ones they are by listing their title, author(s) and publisher. If there are more than one, list all you've used in the last year:

Course Book

Novel

Computer program

Practice Language Test

17. Are any of the materials available for students' independent access during class time?

Yes No

18. If yes, which materials are available for students' independent access during class time? Check all that apply.

English only course book (American English version)

English only course book (British English version)

English only course book (not sure which English version)

English plus students' native tongue course book

Real life texts (for example: maps, brochures, fliers)

Comic books or cartoons

Internet

Newspapers

Word processors

English to English dictionary

English to Students' native tongue dictionary

Thesaurus

Journals or notebooks

Novels

Poetry

Songs

Joke/ riddle or other humorous text

Graphic Novels

Video clips

Audio clips of spoken speech

(Table) Games (for example Scrabble)

Computer software program (for example Encarta)

Practice language tests (for example TOEFL)

Other (please list):

19. Which of the materials are available for students to take home?

English only course book (American English version)

English only course book (British English version)

English only course book (not sure which English version)

English plus students' native tongue course book

Real life texts (for example: maps, brochures, fliers)

Comic books or cartoons

Internet

Newspapers

Word processors

English to English dictionary

English to Students' native tongue dictionary

Thesaurus

Journals or notebooks

Novels

Poetry

Songs

Joke/ riddle or other humorous text

Graphic Novels

Video clips

Audio clips of spoken speech

(Table) Games (for example Scrabble)

Computer software program (for example Encarta)

Practice language tests (for example TOEFL)

Other (please list):

20. How do students have access to the books/materials that are available for independent access?

They check them out of the classroom library

They sit in the classroom library to read them

They bring them from the school library

Other (please list):

21. Where are the materials located? (Check all that apply)

Classroom library

Book boxes

Each student keeps what they are reading/viewing with them

Other (please specify):

22. How do you determine which materials are useful ?

I find out what my students are interested in before choosing what is available.

I use the language proficiency levels of students to determine materials that will be available.

I follow recommendations in curricular materials.

I find materials that go with the topics they are studying.

I use materials that I find interesting.

Other (please specify):

23. What technology is available to you to use during class? (Check all that apply)

TV

VHS player

DVD player

Computer

Computer with internet connection

Laptop

Data projector,

Overhead projector

CD player

Cassette player

Digital photographic camera

Digital camera that records movies

VHS camera that records movies

Microphone

Other type of audio recorder

Other:

None available

24. What school resources do you use for planning and/or instruction?

Library

Books

Reference materials

Audio tapes or CDs

DVDs or Videos

Other:

25. What personal resources do you use for planning and/or instruction?

List:

(Part 4) Language learning related events and practices

26. What's the best description the arrangement of your classroom.

I teach in the same general classroom, groups of students come to me.

I teach in specialized language lab and groups of students come to me.

I teach every class in different classroom, I follow groups of students to their room.

Other (describe):

27. Estimate the number of minutes you spend on each of these aspects of English language

Language skills

Vocabulary

Grammar

Spelling

Pronunciation

Fluency in reading

Fluency in speaking

Reading Comprehension

Listening Comprehension

Writing

Culture related concepts

Way of life

Typical food

Nation's History

Holidays

Tradition

Sights and Attractions

Language varieties

Gestures

Art

Reading the "Classics" in literature

Visual Art

Music

Poetry

28. Are there any other aspects of English language that you teach to speakers of other languages? If so, please list them and specify the number of minutes per week you spend on each aspect.

29. List any language development routines that occur in every class (for example vocabulary quizzes, dialogues in pairs, read alouds, grammar drills). For each routine, please indicate why you are doing that routine (what you are hoping the students learn from participating in the routine/activity).

30. List any language development activities that you use on a regular basis weekly or monthly. For each such activity please indicate why is it a regular activity (what do you hope the students learn from participating in the activity).

31. What homework activities do you usually assign? Please list.

32. List all the sources of spoken English language that your students are exposed to inside or outside the classroom that you consider useful for their language development.

33. List all the sources of written English language that your students are exposed to inside or outside the class that you consider useful for their language development.

(Part 5) Assessment

34. Please check which of the following assessments you use in your classroom.

State annual assessments

Standardized tests

Observation/Anecdotal notes

Conferencing with Students

Self-assessment

Rubrics

Dictation

Other (please specify)

35. For the assessments that you chose in previous question, please indicate how you use the

results of each particular assessment.

State annual assessments

Standardized tests

Observation/Anecdotal notes

Conferencing with Students

Self-assessment

Rubrics

Dictation

Other (please specify)

APPENDIX C

Main Code List

Table 3

List of codes used in data analysis.

Category	**Code**	**Sub-codes level 1**	**Sub-codes level 2**	**Definition/Example**
What to teach (Curriculum)	Social and cultural norms	Socially appropriate behavior		Choosing appropriate vocabulary, expressions and behavior based on situation
		Cultural similarities and differences		Understanding how similar and different the students' home culture and the culture of the target language are
	Literacy	Reading	Word analysis	Decoding, morphemic and structural analysis
			Research skill	Focusing on parts of texts, using variety of materials to gather information, paraphrasing, taking notes
			Literal meaning of text	Extracting literal factual information from text
			Interpretation of text	Creating a response to text by interpretation, analysis, synthesis, evaluation, applying to a new situation or experience
			Listening to text	Students are listening to a text that is either a recording or read by the teacher
			Comprehension skill	Learning a skill such as finding main idea
			Literary devices	Learning similes, metaphors, personification, allusions, etc.)
			Literary elements	Understanding literary elements such as setting, plot, conflict, characters, etc.)
		Writing	Writing process	Teaching any part of the writing process (pre-writing, drafting,

Category	Code	Sub-codes level 1	Sub-codes level 2	Definition/Example
				editing, revising, publishing)
			Writing form	Focusing on structure of a particular form of text/e.g. writing a character analysis
		Speaking	Pronunciation	Physiological properties of forming a particular sound , phonetics
		Vocabulary building		Teaching/Learning new words
	Linguistics	Language basics		Teaching simple English to beginners
		Communication		Teaching written and oral communication in English
		Theory of Language	Grammar	Teaching grammatical structure of language (parts of speech, morphology, syntax, punctuation)
			Phonetic transcription	Teaching phonetic transcription symbols/e.g. the symbol for "schwa" is "ə"
		Figurative language		Teaching idioms, metaphors, culturally nuanced phrases, slang, etc.
	Content area			References to teacher assisting with or asking about content area tasks/e.g. help to find answers in a history book
	Study skills			References to learning to remember information or vocabulary from text, strategies for learning, how to learn better.
	Least important to teach	Accent		Accent considered as the least important aspect of English to be taught
How to teach (Instruction)	Assessment	Beginning of semester		Assessment methods used at the beginning of semester/academic year
		End of the year/semester		Assessment methods used at the end of the semester/year

Category	Code	Sub-codes level 1	Sub-codes level 2	Definition/Example
		Continuous assessment		Assessment methods the teacher uses on a regular basis
		Conferencing		Individual meeting with a students about their performance in class
		Oral examination		Teacher listens to a student's oral language production
	Teacher practices	Giving clear directions		Teacher gives explicit and easy to follow directions
		Giving confusing directions		Teacher's directions for a task are hard to follow, confusing
		Tells purpose of the lesson or agenda (plan)		Teacher informs students about the purpose or agenda for the lesson
		Leading textbook activities		Teacher leads practice based on activities from a textbook.
		Provides choice		Teacher provides more that one choice on how, when, what to use in order to finish a task or activity, or gives multiple choices of activities, etc.
		Reading aloud		Teacher reads text out loud to students
		Checking for understanding		Ways the teacher checks if concept, directions or vocabulary item were understood
		Directs students to use English		Teacher stops students' communication in native language and asks for English to be used.
		Assists to student with use of word		Teacher offers another, more suitable word to student to use.
		Corrects student's pronunciation		Teacher corrects a mispronounced word or helps to finish a word that a student is having trouble pronouncing

Category	Code	Sub-codes level 1	Sub-codes level 2	Definition/Example
		Indirect correction		Teacher asks questions or repeats what the student said with different intonation, etc. instead of directly correcting the student./e.g S: I goed to the store. T: You "goed" to the store?
		References to real life or students' lives		Teacher uses TV shows, movies, etc. as reference points for explaining a concept, or connects to examples from students' lives
		Language comparison		Teacher compares linguistic aspects of English (grammar or vocabulary) to students' native language or language other than English.
		Modeling		Teacher demonstrates strategy, task, procedure, behavior, pronunciation, etc.
		Tell/give information		Teacher provides information and explanation to students such as in a lecture
		Recitation		Teacher asks questions for which she already has the answers in her mind
		Discussion		Teacher asks open ended questions, encourages students to talk to each other (leads the discussion)
		Coaching/scaffolding		Teacher works with individuals or small groups helping with a task in a way of breaking the task down, giving hints, guiding by questions, etc.
		Listening/watching		Teacher observes individual or groups of students and listens to them.

Category	Code	Sub-codes level 1	Sub-codes level 2	Definition/Example
		Collaboration on tasks		Teacher encourages students to work together on tasks/projects/activities.
		Rephrases questions or directions		Teacher rephrases questions or statements for better understanding.
		Literature circles		Teacher uses literature circles to work with a novel, learning the language
		Hands on activities		Teacher uses hands on activities to teach a concept
		Translates into students' native language		Teacher switches from using English to using the students' native language
		Solicits translation from students into their native language		Teacher explicitly asks the students to translate from English to their native language.
		Uses English non-academic purposes		Using English language to strike a conversation with students not related to what is going on in the class at the moment/chit chat
		Thinking aloud		Teacher models his or her thinking aloud
		Feedback to answers - positive		Teacher reacts to an answer in a positive way, even if the answer is incorrect
		Feedback to answers - negative		Teacher reacts to an answer in a negative way, focusing on the parts of answer that were wrong. Ignoring any positive aspects.
		Expresses expectations positive		Teacher tells students that she has positive expectations of their learning outcome or behavior
		Expresses expectations negative		Teacher tells students that she has negative expectations of their learning outcome or behavior

Category	Code	Sub-codes level 1	Sub-codes level 2	Definition/Example
		Assigns Homework to practice English		Teacher assigns HW for students to practice grammar, vocabulary or other language related concept
		Assign Homework to finish assignment		Teacher assigns HW when an assignment does not get finished before the end of class
		Differentiation		Adjusting the difficulty level for students to match their English language proficiency
		Matching curriculum to grade		Matching the curriculum to students' grade level and English proficiency
		Same demands on all students		Same demands on all students in one class, the opposite of differentiation, no accommodations.
	Class organization	Whole group		All students in class focus on one speaker (teacher or student)
		Small groups		Small groups non descript
			Pairs	Students work in pairs
			Random	Students randomly divided into small groups
			Student selected	Students chose their group partners
			Ability or achievement	Teacher forms groups based on students' ability or achievement
			Language based	Students form groups based on shared native language
		Assigned helper		Teacher asks a more fluent student to assist a less fluent student with an assignment
		Individual work		Students working individually on assignments in class
		Class size related to instruction		Teacher refers to instructional decisions she makes based on number of students in class.
	Student tasks	Reading independently		Students read on their own

Category	Code	Sub-codes level 1	Sub-codes level 2	Definition/Example
		Choral reading		The whole class reads out loud
		Silent reading		The whole class reads silently.
		Oral reading-turn taking		Students take turns reading out loud as implied or directed by teacher
		Orally responding		Orally answering questions or responding to statements
		Oral turn taking		Students take turns orally responding/e.g. orally creating conditional sentences from a CLOZE type activity
		Written turn taking		Students take turns writing on a blackboard
		Listening to teacher		Listening as teacher reads or talks.
		Listening to peers		Students listening to peers present information (acting as audience)
		Writing connected text		Writing at least one paragraph
		Writing short response		One word or short sentence responses/e.g. filling out a worksheet or a test or writing in notebook
		Writing on the board		A student is asked to write a response on the board.
		Practicing grammar and pronunciation via role play or made up dialogue		Students in pairs or small groups create a short conversation in which they are asked to incorporate a specific grammatical concept or vocabulary
		Presentation of information	Oral	Students talk about information they gathered or learned.
			Written	Students create a written product that assists them in presenting information/e.g. drawing on a chart paper
			Drama/reader's theatre	Oral presentation in form of drama

Category	Code	Sub-codes level 1	Sub-codes level 2	Definition/Example
			To the teacher only	Information is presented to the teacher while the rest of the class is engaged in a different activity
		Text analysis		Students work with text independently/e.g. looking up examples
		Homework assignments		Assignments that are assigned to be done outside of the regular class time
		Independent practice		Independent practice of previously taught skill, strategy, or content
		Competitive assignment		Students are asked to solve a task or do an activity as fast as possible/e.g. Teacher says "who will be first wins"
	Materials	Journals		Students keep vocabulary or note journals
		Textbooks		Textbooks used in class to teach English
		Novels		Students read different novels during the semester
		Translators		Electronic pocket translators that translate between English and students' native language
		CD/tape player		CD/tape player used for audio playback
		Dictionaries		Paper dictionaries that translate between English and students' native language
		Environmental print		Print found randomly on objects or outside of school
		Real life texts		Real life texts/e.g. atlas, driver's manual
		Computers	Students	Students have access to computers for tasks related to class
			Teacher only	Teacher uses computer for instruction/e.g. showing a PowerPoint
		Internet	Students	Students use internet as

Category	Code	Sub-codes level 1	Sub-codes level 2	Definition/Example
				a resource for task completion
			Teacher only	Teacher uses internet for instruction/e.g. showing a website to students
Communicative Competence	How is communicative competence defined	Independence	Language Use	Students is proficient enough to communicate without teacher's assistance
			Ability to function	Students are able to carry out tasks, solve problems without teacher's help
		Grammar knowledge		Knowledge of structure and rules of language use
		Self-confidence		Becoming confident in life and in language use
		General ability		General reference to language skills performed well/ e.g. Great writing skill as the ultimate proof of language command
		Expressing ideas		A competent speaker can easily express his or her ideas, offer information.
		Figurative language		Knowledge of figurative language/e.g. idioms, metaphors, jokes
		Fluency		Fluent language production without hesitation general
			Academic fluency	Fluent language production in content area
			Conversational fluency	Fluent language production in non-content area specific conversation
		Meaningful Interaction		Mutual understanding of participants in communication
		Level of difficulty		Language related aspects that are the most difficult to learn and if learned suggest a communicative competent speaker
		Non-verbal communication		Other clues that a competent speaker

Category	Code	Sub-codes level 1	Sub-codes level 2	Definition/Example
				notices in order to make meaning in language
		Involves thinking processes		Students master thinking processes involved in creating a grammatically correct, meaningful and logical t utterance in English
		Reacting in communication		Grammatically correct and automatic reaction to an utterance (spoken or written)
		Knowledge of culture		References to the importance of knowledge of the cultural background and environment.
		Knowledge of the speaker and social norms		References to the importance of social behavior or the personality of the speaker.
		Knowledge of the situation in which the communication happens		References to importance of being able to convey meaning in specific situations/e.g. pretending to be a policemen questioning a witness
		Vocabulary	Applying new vocabulary	Students are able to use and apply new vocabulary
			Rich vocabulary	Students demonstrate rich vocabulary
			Content specific vocabulary	Students master content area specific vocabulary
			explaining	Student is able to explain a word/e.g. talk around a word when not known
		Maintaining own culture		Being competent while maintaining own cultural background
		Comprehension		Understanding what is said/read
		Passing a test		Students who pass test are considered competent
		Expectations placed on students' performance		What other teachers or general others expect of the students to be able to

Category	Code	Sub-codes level 1	Sub-codes level 2	Definition/Example
				do related to performance
		Minimal language proficiency		References to a minimal acceptable language proficiency for a speaker to pass a class
Context	School	Class characteristics		References to characteristics of a class/e.g. set up, mandatory, etc.
		Graduation requirements		What the students need to do in order to graduate high school
		Class size		Number of students in class at a particular time.
		Accommodations for students		Accommodations offered or students whose language proficiency is lower
	Sociocultural factors	Context of the Students	Students use their native language – related to class	Students use their native language during class time to figure out a task, or word, to give advice to peers, etc.
			Students use their native language – unrelated to class	Students use their native language to chit chat, off the class topic, or for disruptive purpose
			Language and cultural diversity	Students in a particular class represent multiple languages, ethnicities and cultures
			Monolingual and mono cultural class	Students in a class share the same language and culture
			Unique language and unique culture	A student does not share her/his language or culture with any other student in the same class
			Different language proficiency levels	Students in one class have different levels of English proficiency
			Motivation	Teacher's beliefs about why students learn English
			Non-standard language use	Instances when students use non-standard or inappropriate language during instruction/ e.g.

Category	Code	Sub-codes level 1	Sub-codes level 2	Definition/Example
				text message language "u" instead of "you"
			Previous exposure to English	References to students exposure to English language prior to current high school
			Previous education	References to students general education prior to current high school
		Context of the teacher	Teacher as a non-native speaker of English advantage	Teacher's native language is not English
			Teacher as a non-native speaker of English disadvantage	Teacher's native language is not English
			Teacher as a native speaker of English advantage	Teacher's native language is English.
			Teacher as a native speaker of English disadvantage	Teacher's native language is English.
			Teacher shares language with all the students	Teacher and students have the same native language
			Teacher shares language with a majority of the class	Teacher speaks the native language of some of the students/e.g. teacher speaks Spanish in addition to her native English
			Teacher does not speak the students native language at all	Teacher does not speak or understand the students' native language/e.g. Korean
			Beliefs about self	What the teacher believes her role is while teaching the students English
		Teacher's wishes	Sheltered instruction	Sheltered instruction as preferred teaching structure
			Home support	Teacher believes that linguistic and moral support coming from the students' home environment would

Category	Code	Sub-codes level 1	Sub-codes level 2	Definition/Example
				improve their learning.
			Different length of class (time)	Teacher believes the current time allocated to class period is not appropriate.
			Own classroom	Teacher does not want to commute from classroom to classroom for every class.
			Change in curriculum	Teacher wishes for less rigorous or demanding curriculum
			books	Teacher is not happy with the textbooks
			money	Teacher is not happy with the lack of funds to buy class related materials
			testing	Teacher believes students should not be tested when they are not ready.
			Teacher = model	Teacher is the only language role model for students
			Positive feedback	Teacher gets positive feedback from students about the lesson
			Students engaged	Students are engaged in lesson
			Students get it	Students successfully understand a concept the lesson focuses on
		Context of the outside of school environment	People	People other than the teacher that influence student's language and communicative competence development
			Media	Media such as TV, movies, music videos, Internet, video games that influence student's language and communicative competence development
			Print	Print students encounter outside of the classroom that influences student's language and communicative

Category	Code	Sub-codes level 1	Sub-codes level 2	Definition/Example
				competence development/e.g magazines, environmental print, print on apparel
			Incorporated into Instruction by teacher	Instances when the outside of classroom influences are incorporated into instruction/e.g. teacher uses a TV show not watched in class as a reference point
			Incorporated into class by students	Instances when the outside of classroom influences are brought up by the students during class
			Immersion	References to English language being used in a wide community outside of classroom setting