

Cím: Deculturation of Language in the Speech of Hungarian Truck Drivers

Jelige: The Trucker the Better

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Theoretical background.....	3
2.1 Culture	4
2.2 Language and culture	5
2.3 Culture learning.....	6
2.4 Intercultural communication	7
2.5 English as Lingua Franca	9
2.6 Summary	11
3. Research design and method	12
3.1 Participants	13
3.2 Instrument.....	13
3.3 Procedures	14
4. Results	14
4.1 The language and cultural skills of truck drivers	15
4.2 Situations/People truck drivers most frequently encounter.....	17
4.3 Foreign language skills.....	19
5. Discussion	23
5.1 The lack of cultural items in the speech of Hungarian truck drivers	23
5.2 Intercultural communication without culture	24
5.3 A lingua franca without an underlying culture.....	25
6. Conclusion.....	28
7. References	30
8. Appendices	32
8.1 Appendix A - Interview Questions.....	32
8.2 Appendix B - Suggested Interview Questions	33

Deculturation of Language in the Speech of Hungarian Truck Drivers

1. Introduction

For many researchers it is evident that languages and cultures are connected and inseparable in many ways and they coordinate and/or may guide the lives of every individual (Whorf, 1940; Sapir, 1949; Kramsch, 1998). However, these comments about the intertwined nature of language and culture were created in an era when globalism, mass migration and the possibility to work with foreign people were not present in everyday life to the extent that they are now. The scope of this work is an area of business and language use that incorporate globalism, travelling and the daily encounters with foreign people. This work's interest is the language use of Hungarian truck drivers who regularly travel abroad.

The paper is based on an empirical research project that was carried out during the summer of 2012 with the participation of 12 Hungarian truck drivers. The work was created on the foundations of three research questions and all three of these are further divided into two sub-questions. The questions are as follows:

1. What skills do Hungarian truck drivers possess related to foreign languages and cultures?
 - a. Is the foreign language knowledge of Hungarian truck drivers sufficient for carrying out their daily goals?
 - b. Are there areas in the daily routine of Hungarian truck drivers for which these skills are insufficient?
2. What kind of people/situations do Hungarian truck drivers encounter during their work?
 - a. How do Hungarian truck drivers prepare themselves to be able to communicate efficiently with the people they encounter?
 - b. Despite the efforts of Hungarian truck drivers are there people with whom they cannot successfully communicate?
3. What is the foreign language of work of Hungarian truck drivers like?

- a. Where was the working language of Hungarian truck drivers acquired and/or learned?
- b. What foreign language needs do Hungarian truck drivers have in their daily work routine?

This paper is based on an initial assumption that the truck driver's language of work and the cultural backgrounds of that given language are separate from each other, and from the native languages of the participants, based on the collected samples of languages. It is important that all the statements regarding the lack of culture in certain utterances only refer to the language samples collected. Therefore, this work does not question the academically and socially accepted connections between L1 and its culture (C1) or the connection among the speaker of any given language and their culture. All references made from this point on about the connection of language and culture examine the language samples that were collected from the interviewed truck drivers and these statements are only valid about these samples.

This work wishes to provide sufficient examples to observe whether language and culture are fully separable in such cases where the language of work acts as a lingua franca between the speakers. In practice it means that the very special lingua franca that provides understanding for the duration of the interaction among the parties should be free from most cultural traits in order for misunderstandings to be avoided. Also, it might mean that for a basic level of understanding in a lingua franca, very little or no intercultural knowledge would suffice. As opposed to the initial appearance of pidgins, in these situations both parties are equal, thus they both try to establish a neutral ground on which conversation and mutual understanding are provided (Török, 2000). That is why that even though the research questions are very loosely connected to one another, they actually unite in one question. That is whether cultural knowledge and language proficiency are related in lingua francas where at least one of the speakers is a non-native speaker of the language and this paper aims at questioning this idea both on theoretical as well as empirical grounds. Although creoles and pidgins are in some ways examples for a similar phenomenon, it will be discussed how the case of truck drivers is more similar to the English as Lingua Franca (from now on abbreviated as ELF) described by Jenkins (2006). The example of ELF will only be used to exemplify how a contact language like this works, since it might not always be the case that the drivers use English.

The relationship between the initial assumption and the research questions was created following a logical structure. The first question investigates the relationship between

linguistic and cultural knowledge and wishes to observe if these are decisive at all, and if so, whether these are related and sufficient for truck drivers to be able to carry out their daily activities. It also questions whether linguistic knowledge or linguistic utterances are created on the basis of the target culture, i.e. whether truck drivers address the speakers of different cultures differently apart from the obvious difference in the selection of the language. Question no. 2 observes what kind of people truck drivers encounter in order to prove that their job is indeed one that requires constant interaction with speakers of other languages and cultures. This question also explores the kind of situations truck drivers get into and the linguistic challenges they face. The final question wishes to reveal the nature of the truck drivers' language by analyzing whether simplifications or certain accommodations in speech are made and if these are made on the basis of the listener's culture. The paper is based on the initial idea that lingua francas have arisen in order to facilitate mutual understanding and thus they should not contain elements that are undecipherable for at least one of the participants in the given conversation.

In order to provide the background of this qualitative pilot study, the literature review addresses the necessary notions and ideas to gain a better understanding of what lies behind the questions. This part is followed by the methods section and the results and discussion part. Finally, the conclusion summarizes the aims and findings of the paper.

2. Theoretical background

To question whether the working language of the truck drivers are void of any cultural traits, the following areas need to be addressed: the concept of culture, the relationship of language and culture, culture learning, the operation of intercultural communication, and finally the concept of ELF. The first three areas need to be investigated as this paper intends to question their rightfulness or at least wishes to challenge the scholarly accepted definitions. Intercultural communication is important in this work as communication mostly takes place among speakers of different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Last but not least, ELF is essential to exemplify how a certain contact language works, but it will be shown that English is not the most common lingua franca for truck drivers. However, theories for other mediating languages, such as German are not elaborated and detailed enough for the purposes of this work and that is why English will be looked at as an example. Finally, at the end of the literature review, there is a summary that sums up what was investigated, what was found and why the selected literature items were consulted.

2.1 Culture

Defining culture might have been one of the most difficult ventures researchers have undertaken. Over its course of being investigated, numerous definitions have arisen and this review will address some of the most prominent and academically accepted definitions. The investigation of culture is relevant to this study as after discovering what culture is, the language and the language use of truck drivers will be observed to see whether these contain culture, cultural elements or culture-related items.

To gain an understanding of where the definition "culture" stands now, a number of aspects will be investigated. Firstly, culture is most often described as objects or tangible "things" that are created by men. This point of view is supported by Sir E.B. Taylor (quoted in Sardar, 1997) as follows: "Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs and other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (p.4). The only "problem" with this definition is that it further widens the idea of culture, as morals and customs are also mentioned, which in their nature are "products" but they are products in an intangible sense, which means that the definition here needs to be further extended.

Another aspect to define culture is one that includes intangible products, as well. Although the list of already existing definitions is endless, some of them should be mentioned here. According to Banks and McGee (1989) what is vital in a given culture is not the products but how people interpret them. To illustrate this, a look should be taken at the Easter Bunny, which according to many is a cultural product. It is not really important whether this animal is male or female, what kind of clothes it wears, etc. but what really important is how people perceive it in their cognitive system, what values are attached to that usually white fluffy being and how that contrasts to other beings and forms in the given culture. Hofstede (1984) claims the same as, "Culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one category of people from another" (p.51). Lederach (1995) further strengthens this idea by adding that, "Culture is the shared knowledge and schemes created by a set of people for perceiving, interpreting, expressing, and responding to the social realities around them" (p.9). As the final example here, Linton (1945) suggested the very same, "A culture is a configuration of learned behaviours and results of behaviour whose component elements are shared and transmitted by the members of a particular society" (p.32).

To sum up the canonical meanings of culture, it refers to certain tangible objects, values and other forms of behavior that are shared and transmitted by a certain group of people/societies. The utterances will be investigated later to find out whether they contain elements from the above mentioned list. If there are traits of culture in the utterances, then there might be certain connections between culture and language. If there are no examples for cultural elements in the given language samples then it may be concluded that the investigated samples of language do not contain cultural references.

2.2 Language and culture

The ultimate aim of this work is to investigate whether language and culture are connected. To be able to observe this statement, it is important to look at why it is claimed that language and culture are connected.

Firstly, all people have their own idiolects and communicative competences that might account for the differences among people and cultures. According to Whorf (1940) "...the background linguistic system (in other words the grammar of each language) is not merely a reproducing instrument for voicing ideas but rather itself is the shaper of ideas, the program and guide for the individual's mental activity, for his analysis of impressions, for his synthesis of his mental stock of trade"(p.212-214). This statement that people and societies perceive the world differently according to their language differences is further strengthened by Sapir (1949) who claimed that, "No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached to it."(p.162). Finally, the debate of linguistic determinism reached its turning point with the support of the weak version of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis by Kramsch (1998) saying that, "language does not constrain what we can think, but it tends to influence what we routinely do think" (p.14). All these examples show that world perception may partly be attributed to language use, and as the language skills of two people are different, so are the two world perceptions of the same two people and ultimately so are two cultures as everything is created differently in the human mind due to linguistic and socially induced differences.

From this point of view this research project has to investigate whether the collected language samples contain inherently cultural elements that are the results of either the speaker's or the listener's person or culture. The utterances of the truck drivers in the project will be observed to prove that they do not vary according to speaking partners from different nations. Should there be a variation depending on the other speaker's nation, it would mean

that there is a cultural accommodation on the truck drivers' side, which would mean that language choice is dependent on the culture of the addressed person. On the basis of this work further generalization cannot be made, but it might become a starting point for further quantitative research to prove that the findings are true for a larger sample, too.

2.3 Culture learning

This work does not argue that the interviewed truck drivers have not learnt anything about the cultures/countries they pass through in their daily routine. What this work does argue for is that truck drivers only notice or give preference to universal "elements" of culture that they require for successful daily operation. These are "elements" that they can apply in different cultural situations, "items" that are not culture-specific, since they can be utilized in a number of different situations in a number of different countries.

The process of learning a second culture is called acculturation. It often involves the steps that are experienced by many, they are the following: honeymoon period, culture shock, initial adjustment, depression and then finally, acceptance and integration (Levine & Edelman, 1993; Rhinesmith, 1975). The importance of these stages lies in their nature, namely that they are thought to be generic, thus they could be used to describe the stages of acculturation of any given traveler, worker or any student learning L2 (Enyedi, 2000). Enyedi also points out that individual differences vary by learners, thus the timing of these steps is unpredictable, even though these steps provide a generic approach to any kind of culture learning as they usually occur in the same order regardless of individual differences. This means that levels follow each other in a strictly linear order, thus skipping levels is not possible. What also follows as a logical consequence is that the existence of a higher stage predicts or even demands the existence of lower stages. Also, as Ryffel (1997) points out, these steps can often be very difficult to make as learning a culture requires conscious effort and is often accompanied by difficulties and even setbacks and pain. On the other hand, it would not be sufficient to describe what steps truck drivers undergo as people tend to have their own individual background to learning, to becoming acquainted with a new culture and to the world itself. These are often referred to as idio-cultures, analogous to idiolects that refer to individual language use.

In a nutshell, culture learning is a conscious effort that requires patience, keen observation and constant modification or adjustment on the participant's side. Also, should it be true that truck drivers modify their language in order to accommodate to the listener's culture, the interview samples should contain instances where there are culturally and/or

linguistically re-occurring sentences that are culture-specific. The culture-specific features would be due to the fact that according to the sources above each culture has to be learnt differently and these elements should not transcend cultural boundaries. On the other hand, should the samples be the same for all nations and cultures, it would mean that there is no distinction among cultures for truck drivers, and thus language remains unaffected.

2.4 Intercultural communication

Intercultural communication is vital to be discussed here for a number of reasons. Firstly, the interviewed truck drivers are all Hungarian and as they tend to communicate daily with foreign people from different linguistic and cultural origins, they must rely on certain skills or skill sets. Secondly, they need to reduce the number of culturally induced differences in order to avoid misunderstanding and/or offending their foreign partners. This is done with the help of different competences. Finally, it needs to be investigated what other studies have found in order to make the samples collected from the drivers comparable to certain benchmarks set by other researchers.

Dell Hymes (1971) is associated with the coinage of the term communicative competence. He claimed that "the ability to speak does not only involve knowing the grammatical rules of a language but also knowing what to say to whom in what circumstances and how to say it" (p.37). Although communicative competence, as described above, is explained in a somewhat simplified fashion, it rhymes with Canale and Swain's (1980) model which has four main components: linguistic competence (what to say), sociolinguistic competence (to whom), discourse competence (in what circumstances) and strategic competence (how to say it). Linguistic competence incorporates the ability to use proper grammar and to select the right word and combine it correctly with other grammatical categories. Sociolinguistic competence takes into account the receiver, as speech is modified to make it understandable and inoffensive to the listener and it also includes the relationship of the speaker and listener (e.g. the question of politeness). Discourse competence considers the whole situation where certain words and structures are uttered, while strategic competence offers a solution when the speaker is unable to verbalize his/her thoughts in an appropriate and understandable manner. Although all these explanations are very superficial and simplified, these definitions and examples suffice for the purposes of this theoretical background.

In order to show that the definitions of these notions change and become altered to fit the current trends of research and teaching, only linguistic competence is discussed here as an

example. In van Ek's model (1986) this component is described as "the ability to produce and interpret meaningful utterances which are formed in accordance with the rules of the language concerned and bear their conventional meaning... that meaning which native speakers would normally attach to an utterance when used in isolation" (p.39). This means that there is a basic level for communication where all words, structures and forms retain their lexical meaning and where meaning is not derived from the context or the situation where it is uttered. Byram (1997) further simplifies this definition by claiming that linguistic competence is the ability to apply the rules of the standard language in order to create sentences. This in some ways agrees with the Chomskyan idea of perfect grammatical sentences and ideal speakers.

The importance of this feature is that truck drivers cannot be made aware of all the possible combinations of language during their training, nor can they be taught all the possible combinations of certain languages. What can be done is to introduce them to certain sets of sentences which mean (nearly) the same in all situations, sentences that can be used in a variety of situations. In practice, it means that should someone attempt to create a dictionary or language course (book) for truck drivers, it would be essential to teach language or linguistic building blocks that always have the same meaning in all situations. This would lead to less misunderstanding as sentences will be given one-to-one equivalences in all situations. On the other hand, the pre-set language bits will be applicable in more than one situation, thus a certain bit of language would cover more areas, thus making learning much faster and more efficient. In addition, the elements of communicative competence are the ones that allow for linguistic changes in order to facilitate understanding. This also means that there are some mistakes that are tolerable and do not hinder understanding and if this is so, then there might be a language level where understanding is almost guaranteed among the speakers.

The relevance of communicative competence in connection with this work is that language samples should be observed as to what linguistic solutions they contain, what kind of "simplifications" are applied by the drivers. This is done in order to find out whether these elements are due to the cultural background of either the listener or the speaker. Should the samples include solutions where a background culture-related knowledge is used, that would mean that Hungarian truck drivers use simplifications consciously based on culture. Although it would be highly desirable that the drivers told their experiences as they happened, the case is most probably that there are underlying unconscious features of thinking that happen unnoticed. This is one of this work's limitations, this work can only account for the collected language samples and cannot test what really happens during an intercultural encounter. In

such situations, the truck drivers are likely to perform unconsciously according to their sociocultural upbringing. Fortunately, some of the drivers were able to account for these situations (see Figure 4).

Using the communicative competence described above, the speaker is able to interact within his/her own culture without committing too many mistakes (although lack of pragmatic and/or sociocultural competence could still cause numerous problems). Another kind of competence is intercultural communicative competence (abbreviated and referred to hereafter as ICC), which in Fantini's view "is the complex of abilities needed to perform effectively and appropriately when interacting with others who are linguistically and culturally different from oneself" (2005, p.1). With the help of ICC the speaker is able to successfully negotiate and interact in another culture, too. This requires other types of knowledge, such as language skills and cultural knowledge about the other speaker's country in order to facilitate understanding and not to hinder it for instance by crossing boundaries, breaking taboos or by wrongly applying pragmatic knowledge. According to Byram (1997), for efficient interaction between the parties the right attitudes (e.g. openness, respect, ability to relativize and "decentre" oneself), certain knowledge (of self and other, and of the interaction itself) and diverse skills are needed.

What can be said is that there must be a basic communicative competence, complemented by another layer of competence, ICC. As mentioned above, the linguistic solutions and choices made by the truck drivers should be observed to see whether there are culture-specific solutions in order to prove that language and culture are not related in the case of *lingua francas*.

2.5 English as Lingua Franca

As it has been shown above, people use different sets of language and they perceive things differently due to a number of reasons. These individual differences are described by Dörnyei (2005) in the following way, "individual differences (IDs) are characteristics or traits in respect of which individuals may be shown to differ from each other" (p.1). Besides these differences in characteristics, people have very different sets of communicative competences and on top of that even more different types of intercultural competence. If it is accepted that it is also the case with knowledge about the L2 or FL they are learning, it means that differences become even larger. Often in these cases the individual's L2 knowledge should be referred to as interlanguage, an 'endless' continuum between L1 and L2, where the beginning step is somewhere around/below elementary level and the end is a near-native

status (although most people never progress as far as a native speaker does, thus the term 'endless').

Also, it has long been accepted that the English no longer have authority over the English language since most of communication takes place between non-native speakers of English who do not use English as part of mediating their own culture, but use it for the sake of transferring information. This is put by Jenkins (2006) in the following way, "the lingua franca Englishes of the expanding circle are learnt and used in communication contexts where NSs are not the target interlocutors, and therefore where they do not have the right to regard themselves as the reference point against which correctness is judged." (p.139). Graddol (1997) mentioned the same ideas as Jenkins nearly a decade earlier, saying that the future of English is in the hand of non-native speakers and they will decide how it should be changed to meet the needs of communication. These changes predict the disappearance of certain linguistic features that are not "necessary" to successful and efficient communication and play superfluous roles, such as the third person singular morpheme ("s") or the "s" of the plural in instances where it is already expressed by the number, for instance *two dog. All these mean that English or in the long run ELF might reflect interlanguages much more than it does at the moment.

In addition, a common feature occurs frequently in ELF and that is the idea of negotiating actively and adjusting. Török (2000) argues that the success of communication between speakers can be illustrated by a Venn-diagram. One of the circles includes the knowledge and comprehensible signs of Speaker A, and another includes those of Speaker B. Communication is only possible in sections where the two circles intersect, thus the need for finding "common denominators" is constant. This is true for language, too. If one of the speakers is at a lower level than the other one, both speakers have to approximate a common level, where understanding is possible for both communicating partners.

The role of ELF is particularly important for truck drivers as predictably many of them do not speak all the languages of the foreign countries they travel to and thus need an efficient means of communication. ELF can meet their needs; however, it is also possible that they will use another language instead, for instance simplified German or French. In that case, it would be crucial to investigate whether these changes and simplifications also happen in those languages.

The importance of ELF in this work is accounted for by the fact that in order to avoid misunderstanding, all participants in the given conversation should use items the other partner can understand. This means that such language will be void of collocations, idioms and

proverbs. All these are features where language and culture are intertwined and it is exactly what this work is trying to investigate: the mediating language of truck drivers does not contain cultural elements. Furthermore, some cultural elements are not always as visible as the above-mentioned items. For example, in this ELF-like language due to its special, analytic, building block-like features, a past tense might be referred to as "**I drive yesterday*", as the verb and the adverb together emphasize that the action was in the past. In this instance, instead of using the irregular past, which might provide a possibility of misunderstanding due to its rarity in the given language, the speaker prefers to use an analytic structure. This example is the result of a simplification that follows neither an English tradition, nor a Hungarian tradition.

2.6 Summary

In the previous sections, a number of notions have been addressed that are relevant to the scope of this work. These parts of the literature review are essential to this work as the findings of these literary sources should be strengthened or questioned to successfully prove that the collected speech samples of the interviewed Hungarian truck drivers are void of cultural elements when they converse with foreign people.

Firstly, it should be verified whether the interview samples taken do not contain any kind of reference to culture whether these be items or relations among people in the given culture. Secondly, this kind of mediating language should not contain Hungarian or foreign cultural traits or even discourse structure as these elements are also highly dependent on culture (Kaplan, 1966). Also, their language should be free of any grammatical markers that are not necessary to a basic level of understanding and should be void of superfluous lexical items, too. Thirdly, not only should their language be free of any specifically Hungarian cultural items (including politeness features, too, etc.), their language should not reflect any visible cultural connotations at all. In practice, it means that there should not be any kind of cultural accommodation towards the other speaker. Finally, although it is predictable that their language features certain traits or attributes of ELF, namely certain simplifications, these simplifications should not be culture-based either.

In a nutshell, the language or the samples of language should be free of any kind of cultural references whether they be tangible or intangible. Should any of these criterion fail to be matched, it would mean that the language use of truck drivers feature specifically Hungarian items. In practice, the refutation of the literature review means that any given sample from any Hungarian truck driver should not trace back to the Hungarian culture or

origin. That is, if any sample is taken from the speech of the interviewed Hungarian truck drivers, their cultural origin should not be traceable. Needless to say, it only applies to the recorded (written) samples as pronunciation traits are very strong features of people and might tell a lot about the person's origin, education or the culture s/he belongs to.

3. Research design and method

As mentioned above, the initial assumption of this work is that in the foreign language use of Hungarian truck drivers language and cultural knowledge are not only separable but they are not related at all. Since it is a qualitative pilot study, it does not have a hypothesis, but only wishes to investigate whether the initial assumption can be verified in the limited samples among the interviewed participants. The three research questions are as follows:

1. What skills do Hungarian truck drivers possess related to foreign languages and cultures?
 - a. Is the foreign language knowledge of Hungarian truck drivers sufficient for carrying out their daily goals?
 - b. Are there areas in the daily routine of Hungarian truck drivers for which these skills are insufficient?
2. What kind of people/situations do Hungarian truck drivers encounter during their work?
 - a. How do Hungarian truck drivers prepare themselves to be able to communicate efficiently with the people they encounter?
 - b. Despite the efforts of Hungarian truck drivers are there people with whom they cannot successfully communicate?
3. What is the foreign language of work of Hungarian truck drivers like?
 - a. Where was the working language of Hungarian truck drivers acquired and/or learned?
 - b. What foreign language needs do Hungarian truck drivers have in their daily work routine?

These research areas (numbered) will be addressed separately, one after the other in the very same order in the Discussion section. For the research to be duplicable, all the features, including the participants, the research instrument and the procedure are described in the following sub-sections.

3.1 Participants

The study is based on a qualitative research, 12 truck drivers were interviewed on four different occasions during the summer of 2012 (N=12). They were all males with an average age of approximately 55 (averaging 54.83, ranging from 39 to 68). They have all completed the 8 years of primary education in Hungary and most of them have received some kind of secondary education, but not all of them have taken the school leaving exam. On average they have spent 18.49 years as a truck driver, although values vary from 1 month to 34 years, thus it is better to calculate the duration spent as a truck driver in months (221.91 on average). The sampling was convenience based and the only criterion for belonging to the sample was that the drivers all belong to the very same truck company, thus no data were expelled from the sample. Some interviews were conducted at the company's headquarters, while some of them were done while travelling along with the truck drivers in their own trucks as they were less nervous in their own habitual environment.

Figure 1 shows the age of the truck drivers and the amount of time they have spent as truck drivers, both using years as a unit. During the interview process for the purposes of anonymity truck drivers were coded with the letters of the alphabet and their order shows the order of the interviews, too (A being interviewed first, B was second, etc.).

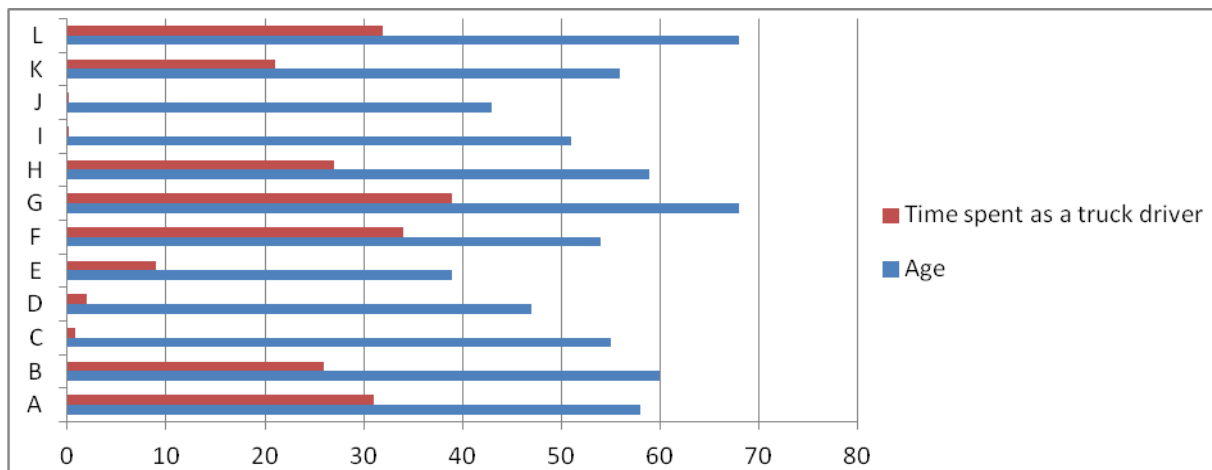


Figure 1: The time spent as a truck driver and the age of the participants in the study

3.2 Instrument

The instrument used for data gathering was a qualitative interview format, containing 29 questions using the vu-form in questioning, later modified to the tu-form in order to accommodate to the usual greeting and questioning style of the drivers (for an English translation of the questions, see Appendix A). The interviews were conducted in Hungarian.

The instrument was piloted before the interviews with both the HR department of the company and with a truck driver. After that the change in the style was applied and as there are no female drivers at the company whom the researcher could interview the question about the sex of the participant was deleted, etc. The interview questions were listed in the order of a natural conversation and they were based on the researcher's initial assumptions about the life of a truck driver (which proved to be only partially right).

3.3 Procedures

All the interviews were conducted in Hungarian on altogether four different occasions during the summer of 2012 at either the company's headquarters or while travelling with truck drivers in their daily work. All the participants were required to sign a research agreement which informed them about the aims of the study, the researcher and his aims with the research data and the results and finally they were asked to decide if they agreed to their interviews being recorded and if they would like to receive further feedback about the research. Only 2 participants agreed that their voice could be recorded; in the other cases detailed interview notes (including whole sentences) were taken by the researcher. A regular interview lasted about 20-25 minutes and the detailed data were carefully noted down. As mentioned above the drivers have been encoded into letters with the alphabetical order matching the order of the interviews.

After the interviews had been conducted the data were entered into Microsoft Excel which allowed for classification and systematic comparison. Also, it revealed the questions which are not suitable and/or do not relate to the daily life of the truck drivers. The suitable interview questions are to be found in Appendix B, which contains the questions that bear at least a 50% question-answer ratio, although originally all the questions were asked.

4. Results

As mentioned in the Introduction, this paper is centered around three research questions, each of them containing two further sub-questions closely related to the main question. These questions are:

1. What skills do Hungarian truck drivers possess related to foreign languages and cultures?
 - a. Is the foreign language knowledge of Hungarian truck drivers sufficient for carrying out their daily goals?

- b. Are there areas in the daily routine of Hungarian truck drivers for which these skills are insufficient?
2. What kind of people/situations do Hungarian truck drivers encounter during their work?
 - a. How do Hungarian truck drivers prepare themselves to be able to communicate efficiently with the people they encounter?
 - b. Despite the efforts of Hungarian truck drivers are there people with whom they cannot successfully communicate?
3. What is the foreign language of work of Hungarian truck drivers like?
 - a. Where was the working language of Hungarian truck drivers acquired and/or learned?
 - b. What foreign language needs do Hungarian truck drivers have in their daily work routine?

The results are detailed in the same order throughout the Results and Discussion parts and all of the main questions are discussed along with their sub-topics.

4.1 The language and cultural skills of truck drivers

Rating the language skills of different language users/speakers has a long-standing tradition in the EFL world, which resulted in the CEFR, a framework that details each language level according to skills or tasks the given speaker can perform in the target language. Truck drivers define their language skills very similarly, most of them described their language skills as sufficient for the tasks they want/need to achieve. Figure 2 details the answers of each truck driver in connection with the number of years spent as a truck driver.

TRUCK DRIVER	FOR HOW MANY YEARS	LANGUAGE KNOWLEDGE
A	31	Russian: intermediate, German and Italian: basic knowledge
B	26	Can greet/thank in Slavic languages, English, Russian, French, Spanish, Italian and Swedish
C	0,75	"little" German
D	2	Only the necessary knowledge
E	9	Understands English more than other languages
F	34	What is necessary for work
G	39	Spent his childhood in Austrian area
H	27	German and Italian: everything necessary for shipping
I	0,083333333	Russian (passive), German: "with arms and legs"
J	0,083333333	"Just a little" in English, learnt Russian earlier
K	21	"Can make himself understood in German" and "can read some

		words" in English
L	32	German-Italian: intermediate, studied Russian for 7 years

Figure 2: The language knowledge of each participant in connection with the years they have spent as truck drivers

As the results show, their description of their language skills is based on their intuition and whether the amount of knowledge they currently possess is sufficient to carry out their daily routines. As no language test was carried out to define what for instance the categories "intermediate" and "understand" mean, it is assumed that these categories indeed suffice for their daily activities.

Other questions in the interview (no. 12, 23, 27, etc.) aimed at finding out if the drivers are satisfied with the language knowledge they have and what kind of people they get in touch with during their daily operations. 3 of them answered that they do not really talk to anyone during their journeys apart from collecting/delivering the goods, 2 of them answered that they only communicate if the other person is also Hungarian and another 3 of them answered that they only talk to people they can understand. The answers show that given that the other person is Hungarian or they can understand each other 'well', truck drivers do not face the possibility of encountering disappointments or dissatisfaction in connection with their language level.

The final question in this topic area was whether there are situations in which their current language knowledge is insufficient and in connection with this, how they solve and/or prepare for these situations in the future. According to the drivers, they mostly stop and might get out of the truck due to the break they are required to make every 4.5 hours. During this stop they sometimes shop by pointing at the required goods (6 drivers). According to them they are not required to perform 'difficult' language tasks (9 drivers), only 2 of them had some misunderstanding both with the French (one when dealing with a flat tire and the other one at the shipment site). When asked about disappointments or failures due to communication/language breakdown none of them could give an example; nor could any of them detail a scene in which they failed to communicate with another person or failed to achieve a desired outcome.

As all the results show it is not relevant to ask what language skills they possess since they rate their language skills according to its relevance to their daily routine and do not measure their knowledge against one another or against external measurement systems, such as the CEFR. Also, it is unclear for them what linguistic or communication breakdown means as they try again, sometimes even unconsciously, until the desired goal is achieved and then they claim the whole performance as successful.

More importantly, the results show that truck drivers are not aware of any cultural differences that would influence their language use, as they only rate their language knowledge on the basis of language proficiency, regardless of the host nation's culture. This also means that cultural and linguistic knowledge and/or proficiency are unrelated notions for them and thus they are irrelevant for the interviewed truck drivers in their daily work routines.

4.2 Situations/People truck drivers most frequently encounter

The situations in which truck drivers are required to use a foreign language or any language at all are very limited. 3 of the drivers claimed that they regularly encounter the police or customs officers although they also suggested that these occasions are not frequent since these "routine checks" are only performed at random. They also added that they do not expect or prepare for such situations as the task of a truck driver is to carry the goods according to the rules (highway code etc.) and if they do so, there is no reason why they should be stopped. The most frequent occasions when they are required to speak a foreign language include being stopped by a police/customs officer, loading goods and asking for directions. None of the interviewees could give an example of when they had failed to perform these tasks.

The drivers were unable to point out difficulties they have encountered, although 2 of them mentioned that as they had not been stopped by the police before, they are expecting it to happen soon "according to the rule of big numbers". On the other hand, when asked for their preparation for journeys abroad (questions no. 26 and 27), 4 of them mentioned that they buy the required amount of food, 3 claimed that they check the customs and routes of the country and only 2 of them claimed that they pack a dictionary for the journey, too. In comparison to common belief, truck drivers normally neither know nor are interested in the goods they carry as long as they appear on the CMR (travel warrant), which they can hand over to the official asking for it. All the situations mentioned by the truck drivers are collected and grouped in Figure 3. In each case some sample sentences are shown, too. These situations are not ranked or grouped according to the frequency with which they are encountered.

MAIN AREA	SITUATIONS	EXAMPLE SENTENCES
Directions	Asking for / checking directions	- Where is the gas station? - Where can I buy a highway pass? - Where is the 'ring'?
Loading	- Checking the goods - Loading	- What are the goods? - Where can I load?

	• Overweight • Packing • Introduction	• How much does it weigh? • Is it fragile? • I am a truck driver from... [company].
Life on the road	• Necessary goods • Actions to do • Problems to be solved • Meeting 'colleagues from other companies'	• Where can I buy food? • Where can I take a shower? • Where can I rest? • I have a flat tire, can you help me?
Optional areas: stopped by officers	• The police • Customs	• Can I check the tachograph? • Where is the CMR?

Figure 3: Most frequent situations in the life of a truck driver grouped according to the main areas they encounter

The results show that the actual situations/challenges a regular truck driver faces on a regular delivery can be predicted and prepared for, although all drives are different in the actual occurrences. What can be seen from the results is that for the interviewed participants the actual language use and the utterance are not related at all to the host country's culture nor to the listener's own culture. This means that for the selected participants the situations and utterances are not country/speaker dependent, which in turn leads to the idea that for the drivers these are also culture-independent. Finally, the example sentences include the English translation of the desired Hungarian sentences. In reality, the questions are much more simplified. For instance, the polite way of saying "I have a flat tire, can you help me?" results in "tire, problem" and the action of pointing at the flat tire. These two words, "tire" and "problem" and the appropriate gesture towards the gear and the modified prosody with which the words are uttered results in the desired action. It means that certain sociolinguistic and pragmatic features can be substituted with the utterance of certain words with a given prosody accompanied by a universally accepted body language.

4.3 Foreign language skills

As some examples show, the interviewed drivers have a very analytical approach to language knowledge, i.e. they look at the outcome/results of certain utterances as the sum of all the parts. According to Mey (1993) this rules out the possibility of pragmatic knowledge as the analytical analysis of words and linguistic structures do not take into consideration the socially accepted language forms and functions. The following situation exemplifies this approach (told by A):

Some time ago... approximately 10 years ago, a very rich man decided that the funeral of his brother should be done in Germany and not in Hungary as the family was originally from Germany. Thus, he arranged for all the flowers and equipment and the coffin, too to be delivered by one of the company's trucks. The driver of this truck was a very young truck driver, just after having finished the 'four-handed' wheel training (the initial induction period supervised by a mentor) and although he had the CMR ready he forgot to look up the word 'coffin' and when the German police officer stopped him he did not know how to respond to the question "What are the goods?". He only spoke little German but knew the word 'container' and also assumed that if there is somebody dead in the 'container', then the goods he is delivering can be nothing else but a *'"Tot (German for dead) container". Of course, the police person opened up the trunk of the truck and nearly arrested the driver for killing the man.

This also exemplifies the phenomenon that the given truck driver looked at language as the sum of building blocks where any combination is acceptable and understandable by his conversation partners. However, the next example shows it in even greater depth. In this conversation Driver D is answering question no. 24/a in German as he claimed this is his 'stronger' language, a language in which he is capable of performing the necessary actions (see Figure 3).

Interviewer: How would you say very politely that after you paid the bill at the gas station, the teller forgot to give you a bill? How would you signal the problem and ask for a bill very politely?

D: ... Mmm... (approximately 2 minutes thinking)... Ticket problem, bitte.

Interviewer: Okay, thank you. Can you try to be a bit more polite?

D: Of course... (1 minute passing)... Ticket problem, bitte... bitte...

The building block-effect or this analytical approach prevails in this situation, as not only does the truck driver use 'bitte' as a word for asking for something, he is aware of the fact that 'bitte' also means 'please' in German, thus if he asks for something politely, then the

required utterance is 'bitte, bitte'. This shows that he is using a content word to perform pragmatic action, as well as normal actions in the target language, too.

So far, two examples have been given of simplification/strategic competence for conveying the desired message, in the former example it was an analytical lexical approach while in the latter one a pragmatic solution was applied. The next example by Driver B shows a syntactic solution:

Interviewer: How would you say in English "I do not speak English"?

B: *No speak English.

It shows once again that the driver is aware of the meanings of the separate words, where no means a negation, speak means talk and English is the language. However, despite all this knowledge he does not use the right negative (do not).

The final example here is the phonological simplification (although it has been present in all the other examples, as well). For this type, two examples are shown, one in German and the other in English, both for situation 24/e:

B: *Schuldi'bitte...

D: Mo-ment, please.

In the former example, B does not pronounce the whole word for "Entschuldigung" but omits the first part of the word and 'swallows' the ending in order to be able to clip it with the following word 'bitte'. This not only shows the incorrect pronunciation on the driver's part but supposes that he regularly hears these two words joined together in fast speech, thus he assumes that due to the contraction they are one word. D exhibits Hungarian intonation and pronunciation, too, which assumes that the pronunciation of individual words or expressions might not matter as long as the intent of the speaker is clear. Furthermore, his Hungarian pronunciation pattern makes it clear for the other person that s/he is dealing with a foreigner, who might require more help, and more redundant features, such as an increased amount of body language. Naturally, it can also happen that his Hungarian background will evoke undesired emotions and reactions towards himself, but in an ideal case, the other person will

help him by being cooperative in even more ways (Grice, 1975). Thus, although at first it seems to be a disadvantage on the truck driver's part that he exhibits foreign traits in his speech, it might be useful for him later. Either way, the message will be communicated that the given listener faces a foreigner who requires help and thus it does not matter whether the actual pronunciation of the driver is incorrect or "sounds funny". On the other hand, as the actual place of transaction does not matter -whether it be in Germany or Italy - it might happen that the truck driver's accent will not be noticed at all, and thereby he will be handled just like a German customer would be. Finally, pronunciation traits are very difficult to mask, especially if the truck driver is unaware of their existence in his speech. Because of its unalterable nature, it cannot be compared to other language areas, such as using wrong register or wrong pragmatic knowledge, because pronunciation above a certain age is almost impossible to be mastered at a native level. On the other hand, the lexical features of a language can be learnt in theory at any given level of age, see the Critical Period Hypothesis (Birdsong, 1999).

When truck drivers were asked where and how they have acquired foreign languages there seemed to be an agreement that language skills simply "stick to somebody", and they are acquired through "living through/experiencing the situation", thus the situation provides a hands-on approach to learning new phrases or new building blocks. This type of learning is called tactile learning (Lightbrown and Spada, 1993) and as the drivers all agreed that learning happens the most easily, the fastest and the most efficiently this way, it seems to be their preferred mode of learning or "learning style" (Dörnyei and Cohen, 2002, p. 9). Although Littlewood (1984) suggests that learners develop differently, it seems that the necessary items and the profession of the individuals play an important role in the process.

When drivers face communication breakdown or feel that "something is not working well", they apply different strategies to overcome these difficulties and strive for mutual

understanding. Half of them (6 drivers) try conveying the message once again and if this fails, they try to use different words, then comes intense gesturing and the final case is normally drawing (see Figure 4 - Question 17). The other six drivers did not respond to the question, claiming that they are unable to recall any situations where communication broke down.

TRUCK DRIVER	IF THE OTHER PERSON DOES NOT UNDERSTAND ME, I...
A	Make gestures, describe
B	Make gestures
C	
D	Show it, use my arms
E	Repeat it again, make other gestures, "dance"
F	Show it, mime it, "dance"
G	
H	Make gestures
I	
J	
K	
L	

Figure 4: Strategic methods applied by Hungarian truck drivers to convey the desired message

In a nutshell, they exhibit most of the features of ELF (Graddol, 1997; Jenkins 2006), they simplify the languages they apply in order to meet their needs and goals, although their choice as mentioned above is not restricted to the use of English. Also, as they build their sentences/utterances from already existing language blocks, if someone considered building a corpus/making a dictionary for the drivers, it would be a practical idea to include only expressions and some ready-made sentences they could use in everyday speech rather than teaching them complex sentences. This would not allow for free linguistic variation and freedom in their speech, which they require if they are unsure about/do not know the correct/right way of saying the sentences they need. Much so, many drivers (9) believe that the language of their job is German and not English, which means that the features of ELF could be used to describe other languages than English, too.

Finally, the relevance of linguistic knowledge to this work is that the simplifications or the solutions offered by the truck drivers' strategic competence do not take into account the

target language or the target culture and not even Hungarian culture. The examples could have been uttered by any given truck driver and his/her_country of origin would be almost impossible to decipher solely based on the linguistic sample provided here. The participants in this work were all males, but it might be assumed that the same happens in the case of female truck drivers, too, thus the inclusion of "her" above. Also, the utterances lack most parts of the communicative competence, they do not contain sociolinguistic information, as the listener seems not to play a role in the creation of the sentence. Also, discourse competence is negated as they would use these given utterances regardless of the target culture or the socially accepted norms of the host culture.

5. Discussion

This work is intended to answer three research questions that are inter-related in order to investigate whether the foreign language of truck drivers includes any kind of specific cultural elements. The following parts will detail the research questions in the very same order they were raised (see Introduction or Research design and method).

5.1 The lack of cultural items in the speech of Hungarian truck drivers

First of all, it has been investigated what culture is (see Literature Review). It has been concluded that culture includes tangible items, learned and/or socially transmitted behavior patterns shared by members of a community. Tangible items do not occur in the speech of truck drivers, only those items that are used daily by them to be able to carry out their everyday tasks and deliveries. These items, such as the CMR and the tachograph, are used by all members of the truck companies all over Europe and the world for administrative purposes, thus they can hardly be referred to as culture/country-specific items. These items are required by international law and that is why these are frequent items in the speech of truck drivers.

In addition, socially induced behavior patterns cannot be observed in the speech samples. This is due to a number of reasons. Firstly, all contact languages i.e. lingua francas should be as void of cultural items as possible, in order to facilitate mutual understanding among the speakers. Should it contain these cultural references, it might cause problems in understanding each other, which hinders understanding, slows down communication and makes it ineffective. That is why lingua francas seem to resemble common features among all people, it is used for mediating messages in a context, that is either only shared by one of the participants or by neither speaker. It strives for mutual understanding by being void of specific thought patterns, idioms or proverbs. As it was described above, when people deal with speakers of other cultures, certain skills are required and one of these is the ability to de-center, to see the situation from another angle, and to be emphatic towards the other and the whole situation. This results in the ability to adopt a common way of thinking, an intercultural skill, that is neither speaker's own way of thinking, thereby being "culture-less". This statement is made as the researcher is unsure whether these items are "culture-less" or "culture-neutral", i.e. they do not hinder understanding among cultures and/or they show what all cultures have in common. Either way, the resulting language is linguistically unmarked, that is, it does not carry culture-specific items to foster understanding among the parties.

5.2 Intercultural communication without culture

As shown above, truck drivers encounter foreign people daily in their working routines and they face a number of predictable situations every day. It was also discussed that the exact places or locations of these happenings or events do not play a role in their intercultural communication as all these events are not culture or country-specific.

In fact, these kinds of linguistic knowledge should rather be referred to as situational knowledge, where drivers face a number of given situations or so-called challenges which they have to overcome with their existing linguistic knowledge and interpersonal skills.

Should these situations be based on countries i.e. should countries be the most important factors in these situations they would probably have mentioned their importance. It means that the particular situation the drivers are in transcend the boundaries of both cultures and countries and the most dominant features of these situations are the schematic elements of the given situation. For instance, if the example of refueling is taken, it means that the gas station, the services one might choose, the need for paying and the need for getting a bill are more important than the host country or the host culture. Ideally, it means for truck drivers that with their limited amount of language knowledge, they are still able to use the same services independent from the particular country by uttering the very same words or structures. Therefore, it is not important what the cultural background of the situation is as it is overridden by the refueling schema and the setting.

This "simplification" also has some practical consequences. It means that apart from the country's currency, in theory, no other "cultural" knowledge is necessary and with the Euro being the currency for many EU countries where truck drivers mostly travel, the number of cultural items to be learnt results in practically zero.

Due to all these reasons, the foreign language of Hungarian truck drivers will also be void of these elements and therefore it might be rightfully claimed that for successful intercultural communication within this profession, no cultural knowledge is necessary.

5.3 A lingua franca without an underlying culture

It has been shown above that communicative competence has four main areas. Should this work's hypothesis rightfully claim that the language of truck drivers and cultures are separable and not related at all, all four components have to be investigated.

Firstly, truck drivers have a very limited foreign language competence. They only "speak" or rather they are only able to communicate efficiently using one foreign language. This language is used in a variety of situations in a number of different countries to converse

with some foreign people whose origin cannot be predicted in advance of the deliveries. The very same words are used in all the situations (mostly using German as the mediating language) and these words themselves are expected to evoke the right counteraction when they are uttered. This means that this language is free from any grammatical rules as long as mutual understanding is provided for. For instance, when gas is asked for politely, it is enough to utter "benzin" or "stoff" in German and with this, there is a given speech act which the other person should understand. In such example, it does not matter that the articles of these words are "das" and "der" respectively, and it also does not matter that in German, all these nouns are written in capital letters. What is more, should the driver be really polite and add the word "bitte", meaning please in German, its place is irrelevant in the given syntactic construction. Whether it be "bitte stoff" or "stoff bitte", it does not matter as the meaning of the sentence is derived from the sum of the elements in that sentence, thus the actual case and place of the noun in the sentence does not matter. If the word order in that case is this simple and unrestricted, then it might be claimed that this language might not reflect any kind of cultural thinking underneath, thus on the lexical and syntactic level, this language is free from any cultural impression.

The second component is sociolinguistic competence. In any kind of language it is referred to most usually as the question of politeness, style and register. In this case of truck drivers, it is a category that does not play a marked role in language use. As they use nouns and in some cases body language to communicate, there is very limited place for interaction. What is more important is that truck drivers still find this kind of language sufficient for their daily operational needs and they do not find the sociolinguistic background of the listener a factor when they communicate. From this aspect, this contact language works like the tu-form in English, as everybody is addressed with the form "you", the question of politeness is not a problem. Very similarly to this, truck drivers manipulate language to make it applicable to the

highest number of situations and people possible, to limit the need of learning new lexis and adapting it constantly. This manifests in their language as omission, politeness or rather distinguished and/or marked politeness is not present in their language use. Naturally, they use the "polite" form "bitte" for adding "please" at the end or at the beginning of the sentences, but as there are no contrastive instances where it is used or not used, its distinguishing feature has no role in their language. Because of all these reasons, it can be claimed that sociolinguistic competence does not play a role in their language usage.

As it was claimed above, the question of where conversation takes place is not important either, therefore discourse competence might also be ruled out. The same style and register are used in all the situations the drivers are in, thus the place of conversation does not play a distinct role either. It only influences the purpose of communication, however, there is no background cultural knowledge that would vary in case of purchasing gas or buying necessities, such as bread and water. It is only the purpose or the main aim of the conversation that decides which words will be part of the conversation, but the discourse setting where the conversation takes place is seemingly irrelevant.

Finally, the application of strategic competence raises some questions. Although it is true that the more gaps there are in the linguistic system of the drivers, the higher importance this kind of competence gains, however, just like in the case of other competences, it does not rely on cultural knowledge either. One support for this claim is that drivers use the same utterances in the same and/or similar situations, regardless of the host country or the recipient of the message. Also, their "surviving" toolkit is not Hungarian-based either, as they only use words to carry out "complex" pragmatic tasks in order to achieve the desired outcome, thus either the Hungarian origin of these solutions are not traceable or they are not present. What seems more likely is that following the idea of Török (2000), speakers accommodate in order to meet the needs of the other person to facilitate understanding. However, it does not mean a

facilitation process towards the other person's culture as the drivers are unaware of that or as shown above do not take into account this factor. What probably happens is that both participants seem to merge towards a common "denominator", a base on which understanding can be provided for and this base happens to be one that is culturally independent and probably one that is essentially so basic that no misunderstanding can occur. That is arguably why these kinds of "languages" involve a lot of non-verbal communication, a method where most of the meaning does not come through verbal means (Pease, 1981). This is what the interviewees also said, that is that most of the conversation is supplemented by generic non-verbal communication that is understood by everyone. This can only be so, if they use universally accepted signs and gestures that are not culture-specific to any culture. Because of all these reasons, it might be claimed that by the application of strategic competence speakers strive for mutual understanding on the basis of universally accepted and decipherable forms of behavior.

As a conclusion, if it is accepted that a native speaker's competence can be described by the above mentioned four kinds of competences, then it can be claimed that due to the fact that the language of truck drivers is free from any cultural traits in all categories, their special kind of contact language is also free from any cultural attributes. Thus, the initial assumption according to which the language of truck drivers and culture are not related issues seems to be supported, it can be claimed that this special kind of lingua franca is not culture-based and therefore language and culture are not only separable but separate entities.

6. Conclusion

The initial assumption, according to which this kind of very special contact language and culture are unrelated, seemed to gain an empirical proof. The study answered the three research questions it was based on, inquiring into the language and cultural knowledge

Hungarian truck drivers possess, the situations/problems they encounter and the way they solve these linguistic challenges.

The study can only be applied as a preliminary case study on the basis of which further interviews could be conducted and on the basis of data, the initial assumption could be turned into a well-supported hypothesis. It is limited in both the number of truck drivers interviewed and in its length and the available duration. The findings of this work could only be applied to the interviewed truck drivers and no further generalization can be made.

Further research is encouraged by either conducting the same research on a larger sample with more participants and/or by further deepening the depth of the interviews in order to gain a better insight into the workings of this special lingua franca. Also, even though the application of ELF seems to satisfy the needs of the interviewed truck drivers, it should be investigated how mutual understanding can be further promoted among speakers and what cultural and/or language knowledge or skills truck drivers might find useful. This knowledge includes the ability not only to speak a given language but to be able to behave according to the target culture's norms. By being even more adaptable to certain situations and cultures, truck drivers and other people from different professions alike would be able to perform actions even more effectively.

There are two other areas where further research could prove useful. These are language teaching and language testing. In order to avoid misunderstanding, for instance, it could be investigated what vocabulary is necessary for truck drivers to be learnt and what kind of universally accepted prosodic or non-verbal elements can be taught to them. Also, as most of the words have secondary or tertiary meanings, too, it would be vital to teach the drivers vocabulary where all the words retain one kind of meaning throughout all situations and these should be accompanied by the particular non-verbal communication to avoid even the chance of possible misunderstanding. The latter area, language testing, also raises some

questions. If only words are tested, it might be useful to conduct oral exams where only words are asked. To include the necessary body language too during the language exams, there could be minor situations that agree with those mentioned in Figure 3 and testing should investigate how the problems could be solved most efficiently. Should the driver be able to solve the problems, it would mean that s/he is capable of using language to the extent it is required in their work.

Finally, the researcher wishes to express his gratitude towards the participating drivers and the company which provided time and space for the interviews. Further findings will be published in the researcher's MA thesis on yet another, related topic.

7. References

- Banks, A. J., & McGee, C. A. (1989). *Multicultural education*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Birdsong, D. (1999). *Second Language Acquisition and the Critical Period Hypothesis*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., Publishers.
- Byram, M. (1997). Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence. In *Multilingual Matters*. Clevedon.
- Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics*, 1, 1-47.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2005). *The Psychology of the Language Learner*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Dörnyei, Z., & Cohen, A. D. (2002). Focus on the language learner: Motivation, styles, and strategies. (N. Schmitt, Ed.) *An introduction to applied linguistics*, 170-190.
- Enyedi, Á. (2000). Culture Shock in the Classroom. *novELTy*, 7(1), 4-16.
- Fantini, A. E. (2005). *About Intercultural Communicative Competence: A Construct*. Brattleboro, VT: School for International Training.
- Graddol, D. (1997). *The Future of English*. UK: The British Council.
- Grice, H. P. (1975). Logic and conversation. In P. Cole, & J.L. Morgan (Eds.), *Speech Acts* (pp.41-58). New York: Academic Press.

- Hofstede, G. (1984). National cultures and corporate cultures. In L. A. Samovar, & R. E. Porter, *Communication Between Cultures*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Hymes, D. (1971). *On communicative competence*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Jenkins, J. (2006). Points of view and blind spots: ELF and SLA. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 16(2), 137-162.
- Kaplan, R. B. (1966). Cultural thought patterns in intercultural education. *Language Learning*, 1-20.
- Kramsch, C. (1998). *Language and Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lederach, J. P. (1995). *Preparing for peace: Conflict transformation across cultures*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.
- Levine, D. A. (1993). *Beyond Language - Cross Cultural Communication*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall Regents.
- Lightbrown, P., & Spada, N. (1993). *How Languages are Learned*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Linton, R. (1945). *The Cultural Background of Personality*. New York.
- Littlewood, W. (1984). *Foreign and Second Language Learning*. Great Britain: Cambridge University Press.
- Mey, J. (1993). *Pragmatics: An introduction*. U.S.A.: Oxford, UK and Cambridge, Mass.
- Pease, A. (1981). *Body Language*. North Sidney: Camel Publishing Company.
- Rhinesmith, S. H. (1975). *Bring Home the World: A Management Guide for Community Leaders of*. AMACOM: American Management Association.
- Ryffel, C. (1997). From culture teaching to culture learning. In A. Fantini, *New Ways in Teaching*. Alexandria, VA: TESOL.
- Sapir, E. (1949). Selected writings of Edward Sapir in Mandelbaum. In D. G., *Language, Culture and Personality*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Sardar, Z., & van Loon, B. (1997). *Cultural Studies for Beginners*. Cambridge: Icon Books.
- Török, G. (2000). *Kommunikációelmélet I*. Szombathely: Berzsenyi Dániel Főiskola.
- van Ek, J. (1986). *Objectives for Foreign Language Learning, Vol. 1: Scope*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- Whorf, B. (1940). Science and linguistics. In J. B. Carroll, *Language, thought and reality. Selected writings of*. Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press.

8. Appendices

8.1 Appendix A - Interview Questions

- (1) How old are you?
- (2) What is the highest level of education you have finished/attended?
- (3) How long have you been a truck driver? How long have you worked for this company?
- (4) Which European countries have you not visited before?
- (5) Do you speak any other language than Hungarian (if yes, how would you define your language skills?), or would you like to learn any?
- (6) Why did you become a truck driver?
- (7) What do people think about your job? How do they react when they learn that you are a truck driver?
- (8) If you were to introduce Hungary to another person (a tourist, another truck driver or foreign partner), what would you say about us, Hungarians?
- (9) Which countries do you usually go through? How would you describe these countries and the inhabitants?
- (10) Where are you required to stop and where else do you usually stop?
- (11) Which languages do you encounter most often in your daily work?
- (12) When you are abroad, who do you talk to? Who do you have to communicate with? Who do/would you talk in your free time or to kill time while you have to wait?
- (13) What kinds of needs/action make you stop?
- (14) I assume at customs or gas stations, etc. it is necessary to communicate. What needs did you have, what did you want to achieve besides the basic needs (e.g. filling up the car)? Can you recall any situation where you had 'complex' or 'difficult' needs?
- (15) Could you achieve this goal? Did you get the desired item/product?
- (16) Have you experienced a situation in which your efforts failed?
- (17) Did you give up or did you try again? (How did you try again?)
- (18) Later on when you faced a similar situation, could you anticipate and prepare for that situation?
- (19) When you go into a place asking for something or trying to converse, how do you address people?
- (20) In which situation are you addressed by others? How are you addressed?
- (21) If you were to talk to a foreign person, how would you address them for instance at a gas station? Or next to the road asking for help? How would you initiate conversation? How do you talk to your foreign 'colleagues'?
- (22) Starting at collecting the cargo and ending when you deliver it, what kind of people do you talk to/get in touch with?
- (23) Has there been a situation or person in your career who you have greatly misunderstood or had difficulties talking with?
- (24) What would you say in the next five situations?
 - (a) You were not given a receipt of the gas, ask for one politely
 - (b) You would like to ask for coffee
 - (c) You have delivered the goods to your partner

- (d) A foreigner asks you what your job is and what your company deals with
- (e) The police asks for your documents, but you need some time to find them in the back of the truck
- (25) If someone does not understand what you say, what do you do? (E.g. do you raise your voice, do you use gestures?)
- (26) If you know in advance where you go next, do you prepare somehow? E.g. GPS, detours, resting places, gas stations or some sentences in a foreign language
- (27) How does your company help you prepare for these journeys? Do you get all the help you need? Is there anything in this area you are dissatisfied with?
- (28) Can you recall a situation in which you were proud of communicating very efficiently with a foreigner/you were able to solve some 'more difficult' tasks using language?
- (29) How are Hungarians different from other people (for instance, volume, body language, being friendly, etc.)?
- (30) Thank you for your help!

8.2 Appendix B - Suggested Interview Questions

- (1) How old are you?
- (2) What is the highest level of education you have finished/attended?
- (3) How long have you been a truck driver? How long have you worked for this company?
- (5) Do you speak any other language than Hungarian (if yes, how would you define your language skills?), or would you like to learn any?
- (6) Why have you become a truck driver?
- (7) What do people think about your job? How do they react when they learn that you are a truck driver?
- (8) If you were to introduce Hungary to another person (a tourist, another truck driver or foreign partner), what would you say about us, Hungarians?
- (9) Which countries do you usually go through? How would you describe these countries and the inhabitants?
- (10) Where are you required to stop and where else do you usually stop?
- (11) Which languages do you encounter most often in your daily work?
- (12) When you are abroad, who do you talk to? Who do you have to communicate with? Who do/would you talk in your free time or to kill time while you have to wait?
- (23) Has there been a situation or person in your career who you have greatly misunderstood or had difficulties talking with?
- (26) If you know in advance where you go next, do you prepare somehow? E.g. GPS, detours, resting places, gas stations or some sentences in a foreign language
- (29) How are Hungarians different from other people (for instance, volume, body language, being friendly, etc.)?
- (30) Thank you for your help!