

The influence of cooperative tasks on EFL learners' intercultural communicative competence

**(A kooperatív feladatok hatása az angolt, mint idegen nyelvet tanulók
interkulturális kommunikatív kompetenciájára)**

LOL 588

Table of contents

1. Introduction	3.
2. Theoretical background.....	3.
3. Research design and methods	9.
3.1. Participants and settings.....	9.
3.2. Research tools	10.
3.2.1. Lesson observation criteria	10.
3.2.2. Interview schedules	11.
3.2.3. Group interviews	12.
3.2.4. Analysis of course books and other teaching materials	12.
4. Results and discussion.....	12.
4.1. Cooperative activities to develop ICC in class 10/C	13.
4.2. Cooperative activities to develop ICC in class 9/D	16.
4.3. Cooperative activities to develop ICC in class 9/A	20.
4.4. Results from the analysis of the course books and teaching materials.....	24.
5. Conclusion.....	26.
References	29.
Appendices	31.
Appendix 1 Research Questions	
Appendix 2/a Interview guide for teachers in English	
Appendix 2/b Interview guide for teachers in Hungarian	
Appendix 2/c Sample interviews with teachers	
Appendix 3/a Group-interview guide for students in English	
Appendix 3/b Group-interview guide for students in Hungarian	
Appendix 3/c Sample group-interviews with students	
Appendix 4 Lesson observation charts	

Magyar nyelvű összefoglaló

The influence of cooperative tasks on EFL learners' intercultural communicative competence

1. Introduction

In the following I would like to present my research based on an inquiry about the influence of cooperative tasks on English as a foreign language learners' intercultural communicative competence. When choosing this area for my research, my main motivation was that as a student and as a young learner I have always been excited to participate in cooperative tasks and to learn about culture. As a novice teacher I thought it would be interesting to investigate if it is possible in a real classroom situation to use cooperative tasks in order to develop the students' intercultural communicative competence. I was also curious to explore what these activities are like, what kind of effects they have on learners and what some experienced teachers think about them.

2. Theoretical background

Before presenting my findings and the results of my research, I find it important to indicate the abbreviations that I am using in this paper. When speaking about English as a foreign language I am using EFL, and ICC stands for intercultural communicative competence.

To begin with, I would like to elaborate on the theoretical background on which I have based my research. First of all, I find it crucial to state which concepts I relied on when speaking about intercultural communicative competence and cooperative tasks. As for the definition of intercultural communicative competence I used the following definition by Michael Byram (1997):

“Someone with Intercultural *Communicative* Competence is able to interact with people from another country and culture in a foreign language. They are able to negotiate a mode of communication and interaction which is satisfactory to themselves and the other and they are able to act as mediator between people of different cultural origins.” (Byram, 71)

In his work, Byram makes a list of the important components of ICC. He highlights those attitudes, skills and knowledge that teachers should focus on when developing their students' intercultural communicative competence. Out of the attitudes I would like to

mention openness, tolerance, acceptance, curiosity, empathy and non-judgment. I think it is especially important to teach these valuable attitudes to our students in order to prepare them for encounters with people coming from different cultures or backgrounds through the foreign language we teach to them. Apart from the attitudes, students also need certain skills to be able to communicate with other people. Out of the skills mentioned by Byram I would like to highlight critical thinking, decentering, analytical skills, discovering, observation, comparison, interaction and interpretation. As for the knowledge needed for ICC Byram mentions the importance of knowing facts about “c” and “C”. On one hand, “C” includes those elements of culture that are visible from the first time someone starts to learn about another country or culture. It contains information for example about literature, arts, holidays and food. On the other hand, “c” symbolizes more invisible elements of culture such as cultural norms, communication styles or everyday practices. Apart from the attitudes, skills and knowledge, Byram believes that students should also have a critical cultural awareness of diversity, different values and beliefs and different perspectives. “The mutual perceptions of the social identities of the interlocutors is a determining factor in the interaction.” (Byram, 1997, p. 32.) He explains that multiperspectivity is an essential need in our society.

Byram finds the difference between Intercultural Communicative Competence and Intercultural Competence in that people capable of ICC are able to use the language in interaction with people coming from other cultures. They not only understand another culture itself but also know how to communicate with foreigners coming from a totally different cultural background for which they have not been directly prepared for. I can absolutely agree with Byram in that it is not enough in foreign language teaching (FLT) to teach students about the differences between two cultures, but it is also an essential need for youngsters in the 21st century to be able to interact with people coming from a variety of different cultures. Our world is becoming more open and mixed. College students can apply for scholarships to foreign countries, where they can meet other youngsters coming from all over the world. After finishing their university studies young people often need to leave their country in order to find work. They need to face different situations in their workplace where they have to work with colleagues or clients coming from other cultures and different backgrounds. “Thus it is very important that there is an awareness of cultural differences since multicultural groupings are becoming more common in professional settings and elsewhere around the world.” (Huber-Kriegler et al, 2003, p. 7). We live in a world where speaking a language and knowing about other cultures in itself is not enough. According to Lázár, “one has to learn

how to deal with unexpectedness, ambiguity and otherness as well as the resulting culture bumps or culture shock” (2003, p. 69). We need to prepare our students to be able to be active members in these situations, in other words to be prepared to interact with people coming from any different kind of cultural background. Guest claims in his writing with the title *A critical ‘checkbook’ for culture teaching and learning* that “by noting how his or her own psychology and language is reflected and revealed in the code of another, the learner becomes exposed to cultural attributes of a language positively and constructively, without opening that Pandora’s Box of questionable, and possibly alienating, cultural assumptions” (Guest, *ELT Journal*). What Guest highlights in this quote is that students should also learn about what others think about their language and culture and how they are viewed in the eye of the others.

Here comes the importance of cooperation and cooperative learning into the picture. How can we teach students to interact without teaching them what cooperation is, and how it functions in reality? This is the question that came into my mind, when I decided to investigate the effects of cooperative tasks on EFL learners’ intercultural communicative competence. Before moving further I would like to present the definition I found suitable for cooperative learning during my research.

“Cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other’s learning.” (Johnson and Johnson Cooperative Learning Institute website)

With the help of these tasks students need to solve problems or situations together, by relying on each other. In the past decades hundreds of studies focused on the importance of introducing different cooperative working modes and techniques into classrooms, especially where foreign language teaching was in focus. According to Johnson and his colleagues in their work with the title *Cooperative Learning Methods: A Meta-Analysis*, “almost any teacher can find a way to use cooperative learning that is congruent with his or her philosophies and practices” (Johnson, Johnson and Stanne). Out of the cooperative methods I considered jigsaw as one of the most effective. “‘Jigsaw’ is a specific type of group learning experience that requires everyone’s cooperative effort to produce the final product.” (Aronson, 2000, p. 135) I find it especially effective because all participants in a jigsaw group have to participate equally in order to help the others, thus students working with the help of this method can feel equally important.

While searching for information about the relationship between cooperative learning and ICC and the application of the jigsaw technique I came across professor Aronson's book; *Nobody left to hate*. This book made an extraordinary impression on me. These days the media are full of tragic news about aggressive criminal acts in schools committed by students themselves. I share Aronson's idea that the focus should rather be on prevention, which he calls "root cause interventions" and not on "dealing with disasters" (Aronson, 2000). Schools and teachers themselves should work hard to create a positive and receptive atmosphere for their students where learners turn to each other with openness, respect and empathy. Aronson believes that "through cooperative learning the classroom becomes a positive social atmosphere where students learn to like and respect one another, and where taunting and bullying are sharply reduced" (Aronson, 2000, p. 150). I find it crucial to teach students how to be emphatic and how to show acceptance and respect towards other people as these should be basic human values, and they are also especially important when developing learner's intercultural communicative competence in preparation for using the foreign language in encounters with people from completely different backgrounds. I strongly believe that what teenagers need is acceptance and respect on the part of their teachers and peers as well and I also believe that all these things can be achieved in schools with the careful use of cooperative activities. Johnson and Johnson claim in their *Overview of Cooperative Learning* that "in an ideal classroom, all students would learn how to work cooperatively with others, compete for fun and enjoyment, and work autonomously on their own" (Cooperative Learning Institute website). Without creating a pleasant learning environment how can we expect our students to pay attention and study hard?

During the phase of preparing my research I was searching for different cooperative methods that I have found useful for the previously mentioned purposes. At the very beginning of this process I came across Kagan's cooperative principles, the "PIES". In his article Kagan claims that "my co-workers and I developed and modified many structures by simply applying four basic principles: Positive Interdependence, Individual Accountability, Equal Participation, and Simultaneous Interaction (PIES)" (Kagan, *A Brief History of Kagan Structures*.). According to Kagan, with the absence of any of these principles we cannot talk about cooperative learning. All group members in cooperative activities should feel that they have common goals that they can only achieve by relating mutually on each other. They should also feel that everyone's efforts count equally. This is the essence of positive interdependence. Students should also make sure that each group member is individually

accountable, meaning that everybody should make sure to achieve the same goals and perform what he or she has learnt if it is necessary. As Kagan explains: “Individual accountability drives achievement. When we know we will be held accountable for an individual performance we are more motivated and try harder than when we know no one will see how much we have learned or how well we can perform.” (Kagan, *The "P" and "I" of PIES: Powerful Principles for Success.*). Furthermore, all group members should take part equally during the activity and should be simultaneously engaged with a task.

After analyzing Kagan’s cooperative learning principles I wanted to make connections between cooperative tasks and the development of intercultural communicative competence. To do this, I drew a parallel between Kagan’s PIES and the skills, knowledge, attitudes and critical cultural awareness listed by Byram in his book. I prepared a chart presenting the connections that I have found between the two:

Cooperative Learning Principles	Intercultural Communicative Competence Components
Kagan’s PIES: • positive interdependence • individual accountability • equal participation • simultaneous interaction	Attitudes, skills, knowledge and awareness developed from Byram’s model of ICC in cooperative learning: ATTITUDES: openness, tolerance, acceptance, curiosity, empathy, non-judgment SKILLS: critical thinking, decentering, analytical skills, discovering, observation, comparison, interaction, interpretation KNOWLEDGE: facts about “C” and “c” (depending on content of task) CRITICAL CULTURAL AWARENESS of diversity, different values and beliefs, different perspectives (multiperspectivity)

Figure 1 Cooperative learning principles and the components of ICC

What I have realized is that practically all the components of ICC are inevitably developed with the cooperative principles listed by Kagan. As I have mentioned before, teaching and showing attitudes like openness, tolerance, acceptance or empathy are essential in FLT especially when creating positive interdependence between the children. Students also need to be curious and non-judgmental when working together on cooperative tasks. Analytical skills,

discovering, observation, comparison, decentering, interaction and interpretation are needed when working in small groups or pairs on a new task. Students should also be able to think critically when working on a topic with their peers. Knowledge needed about facts about “C” and “c” is dependent on the content of the tasks. Many English language teachers like to teach about “C” meaning high culture that contains literature or arts but they should not forget about giving information in connection with “c”, for example, values, beliefs, everyday life and habits of people belonging to that culture. This information can come handy when students need to role-play a situation in a given style in pairs or small groups. At last but not at least, students should also have critical cultural awareness of diversity, different values and beliefs, and different perspectives. When cooperating with others in differing tasks, students should be aware of the fact that people think differently, and we should bear this in mind when meeting someone coming from a cultural background that seems totally incomprehensible for us.

The most shocking information I found while reading literature about cooperative tasks and the development of students’ ICC was that many studies revealed that despite the fact that there is a wide range of different cooperative techniques and activities, many teachers still seem to stay with the traditional frontal methods. There can be several reasons for this like the grammar-centered curriculum, the lack of experience with cooperative tasks on the part of the teacher or the students, and the time-pressure combined with the need for preparing students for the school-leaving exam or other language exams. The same problem seems to happen with teaching about culture and developing ICC in the English classroom. Research shows that teachers usually mention several reasons why they fail to bring interesting activities into their classes about culture. “These included some of the participating teachers’ lack of first-hand experience or knowledge of other cultures, others’ (or their school’s) strong grammar and exam orientation, some of the teachers’ feelings of incompetence due to lack of training in the given area, younger teachers’ preoccupation with discipline and motivation problems, and some teachers’ reservations about whether developing intercultural competence was the task of the language teacher at all” (Harris and Lázár, 2011, p. 97). Consequently, it seems that many teachers have the tools to use cooperative tasks for example to develop their students’ ICC but they are afraid to do so or do not bother with introducing new methods into their conventional teaching repertoire as they do not feel qualified to teach about cultural elements or monitor and discipline their students during cooperative working modes.

Taking into consideration all the information found in the literature in connection with the topic of my research I decided to investigate how all these processes work in a real classroom setting. I wanted to see whether teachers use cooperative tasks in their lessons or they find it important to teach about culture and develop their students' ICC. As a novice teacher I wanted to know what effects cooperative tasks have on EFL learners' intercultural communicative competence. I was curious whether all the cooperative principles and components of ICC appear in EFL lessons in a typical secondary school in Hungary. With the help of the interviews my aim was to investigate whether teachers use cooperative techniques consciously in order to develop their students' ICC. Furthermore, I was really motivated to explore what students think about the necessity of cooperative tasks and the development of their ICC. In the following section of my work I would like to present the methods of inquiry that I used during my research.

3. Research design and methods

Before starting my investigation I prepared a long list of questions in connection with this topic and I narrowed down the inquiry to five research questions. (Appendix 1) First of all, I wanted to know to what extent EFL teachers find it important to develop the students' intercultural communicative competence. Do they consider it useful at all to teach about culture and to prepare their students for encountering people coming from other cultures? My second main concern was to learn to what extent and how EFL teachers use cooperative tasks in their lessons to improve the students' intercultural communicative competence. Thirdly, in case teachers use cooperative tasks in the classroom, I was curious what the effects of these tasks were on EFL learner's intercultural communicative competence. Furthermore, as a novice teacher I realized what important role course books have on the curriculum so I wanted to know to what extent course books used by EFL teachers and learners are adequate for developing the students' intercultural communicative competence. Finally, I was really motivated to gain insights into students' perceptions about cooperative tasks and intercultural communication in EFL.

3.1. Participants and settings

I conducted my research in a secondary grammar school in Budapest between September and December in 2012. My research tools were lesson observations, interviews with teachers,

group interviews with students and the analysis of course books and teaching materials. I visited at least two English lessons of three different groups and I made an interview with the teachers and students afterwards. Finally, I analyzed the course book and other teaching materials used in the lessons. I was grateful that all the teachers and the students were very helpful and happy to speak about their feelings and thoughts in connection with this topic. Two of the teachers even let me do the group interview with their students during one of their lessons, so I did not have to worry to find an appointment suitable for me and the students as well.

I visited two groups from the ninth grade and one from the tenth grade. Students needed to write a test before starting their English studies in this school based on which they were separated into small groups according to different levels. Consequently, in the ninth grade there were three differing levels in each class out of which I visited one beginner group from 9/D and one from 9/A. However, the group from 9/A turned out to be closer to the intermediate level of English. According to their teacher students came to this school from primary schools where English lessons had been very effective.

When choosing the different groups my aim was to pick similar grades and levels but different teachers. Interestingly, there were no male English teachers in the school, so I decided to choose teachers from differing age groups and with different years of teaching experience. My aim with choosing ninth and tenth graders was to avoid visiting lessons where the aim is to prepare students for the school-leaving exam as teachers tend to use specific exercises from special books in order to prepare their students for the typical tasks of the exam.

3.2. Research tools

In the following section of my paper I intend to present the research tools I used and their validation briefly.

3.2.1. Lesson observation criteria

Before visiting the lessons I designed a lesson observation chart to make my work easier. I wrote the basic information on the top of a paper (date, level, age, class description, course book). I also indicated the aim of the lesson and the appearance of cooperative tasks and examples of developing the students' ICC. Furthermore, to be able to take notes about all activities, I drew a chart containing the time, the stage, the activity of the teacher and the

students and the type of interaction between them. My chart also contained information about the aim of the activities and the materials used in the different stages.

I visited a minimum of two lessons in each of the three different groups. I could discuss the date and time with the teachers in the breaks between their lessons. They were all very patient and helpful. It seemed that they were happy to help me and show a novice teacher some of their teaching methods. First of all I visited 10/C. I saw their first lesson on the 10th of September. As I could not find any relevant examples for my research I visited this group several times, while finally I visited their lessons on the 19th of November. This was the first time when I saw examples for cooperative tasks and teaching about culture. The two other groups were in the ninth grade. As I was teaching Spanish in class 9/D I found it very useful to visit some of their English lessons. The two lessons I chose to present in this paper were on the 22nd of November and on the 20th of December. I also visited two lessons in 9/A on the 23rd of November and the 30th of November.

3.2.2 Interview schedules

Before conducting the interviews I prepared a list of questions I wanted to ask from the teachers. I narrowed down the inquiry to 18 questions. In order to validate my interview schedules (both for teachers and students) I asked an expert to check my questions. After she accepted them, I started piloting the interview questions. From the piloting it turned out that two questions appeared to be very similar between the questions for teachers and that there was a need for asking teachers to summarize ICC with their own words. I made some changes accordingly and created the final interview schedule for teachers which can be found in Appendix 2a. After visiting the lessons I conducted an interview with each of the three teachers. For these interviews we found time between their lessons and in the long breaks between the fifth and the sixth lesson. The interviews took approximately 20-30 minutes. My questions were mainly about their opinion about culture teaching, the importance of the development of their students' ICC and the advantages and disadvantages of different working modes. Finally, I find it important to mention that in order to make it easy to refer to the three English language teachers I gave them pseudonyms. The teacher of 10/C is referred to in my paper as 'Anna', the teacher of 9/A as 'Mária' and I gave the teacher of 9/D the pseudonym 'Júlia'. The interviews were conducted in December, after the lesson observations.

3.2.3. Group interviews

Besides asking the three English language teachers about their ideas, I was also curious to explore what students thought about the same topic. I prepared the interview schedule for students in the same manner as the one for the teachers and to validate it I showed it to an expert and sent it for piloting. It turned out that there was no need to change anything. (My interview schedule for students can be found in Appendix 3a.) I decided to do group-interviews with students instead of individual ones because my previous experience was that students tend to open up easier between their peers and I could also save time with this technique. During the interviews I asked students about their opinion in connection with the different working modes, cooperative learning, and the development of ICC in the English lessons. I conducted the group interviews after the lesson observations in December. Two of the teachers gave me one of their lessons and I also dedicated one of my Spanish lessons for making the group-interviews with the students. The teachers were not present in these occasions so the students could speak freely without being influenced by their teacher's presence. In order to create a friendly atmosphere I asked the students to sit in a big circle. This way nobody could hide and we could listen to each other better by keeping eye contact. All of the three interviews took approximately 35-45 minutes. As there were talkative and shy students as well in the groups I tried to motivate the silent learners to also contribute to the conversation. Most of them were excited to share their opinion.

3.2.4. Analysis of course books and other teaching materials

As for the analysis of the course books and the teaching materials I received the books and photocopies used in the lessons to be able to analyze them. I concentrated on the amount and quality of cooperative tasks and cultural content in them. I was especially interested in finding cooperative activities with the help of which I thought students could develop their intercultural communicative competence.

4. Results and discussion

In this section of my work I would like to present the results that I have found during my research. Before moving further, I find it very important to mention that I visited different lessons in a secondary grammar school where teachers had to focus on the curriculum and they did not modify their lesson plans because of my visit. They did not even know the exact aim of my visit. As a trainee teacher I knew it very well that there are different type of lessons

and I could not expect to find cooperative tasks or components of ICC in all of them. However, towards the middle of my research I became disappointed because I could not find any examples for my topic, so I decided to visit additional “special lessons” preparing students for the winter holiday hoping that cultural content and cooperative tasks would appear in these kinds of lessons with greater probability.

The lesson observations were sometimes difficult to organize as I was also doing my teaching practice at this time. Fortunately, all the English teachers in the school whose lessons I had chosen for the field of my research were very helpful and flexible. They informed me about their plans with their groups and told me in advance when they were writing a test or doing other activities. The three groups I visited were totally different and this turned out not only from the lesson observations but also from the group interviews with the students and the interviews with their teachers as well.

4.1. Cooperative activities to develop ICC in class 10/C

The first group I visited was 10 C. The group consisted of fifteen students, thirteen girls and two boys who were on an intermediate level. Most of the students were very motivated to learn English and this was visible in the lessons I visited, too. Some talkative girls dominated the lessons while the boys remained absolutely silent. They seemed to be engaged with the tasks but they were not eager to speak when it was not compulsory. In one of the lessons I observed students were practicing the passive structure and the third form of the irregular English verbs. Students had to pick cards with verbs on it and say their three forms in front of the class. Those, who could say the three forms of the words, got a plus. After this warmer students were working on different exercises in their students’ book individually that they checked together. During the activities students needed to work individually or frontally. There were no examples for cooperative tasks or development of intercultural communicative competence.

The second lesson was more varied with different type of working modes and activities. The aim of this lesson was to develop the students’ listening and speaking skills preparing them for the language exam and also to prepare students for the new exercise of the international project that they had started a few days ago. At the beginning of the lesson students had to form words with the letters of the word written on the board. The one who could write more words with the letters could get a plus. Unfortunately, some students did not understand the instructions and could not do the exercise properly. It took a lot of minutes for

the teacher to explain what they should do in an activity like this. This warmer introduced the following activity, where students' task was to answer the questions that they could find in the first exercise of their new international project, eTwinning. Students had to answer the questions frontally, while the others were listening. Their homework was to answer for all these questions individually at home on the homepage of the project. In the next stage of the lesson students had to form pairs with the help of small strings. The ones who held the two ends of the same string needed to sit down together. Students seemed to enjoy this activity and it also turned out that this was the first time they did this. In the next part of the lessons students were working in pairs while their task was to introduce themselves and ask questions about their partner. I was happy to see a cooperative exercise like this, and it seemed that students also enjoyed being able to ask questions about their peers in English. The principles of cooperative learning were fulfilled and students also had the chance to develop some of the components of their ICC. Students needed to be open and curious while listening to their peers and they also had to listen carefully to be able to ask further questions from their partner. After the pair-work the teacher listened to three pairs frontally. At the end of the lessons they listened to a dialogue of a family and the students needed to fill in gaps in the text and answer some questions about the content. Finally, their task was to read the dialogue and then listen to the polite version of the same dialogue and find the differences between the two styles of speaking. Although no facts about any cultural knowledge appeared in the lesson, student still had the chance to develop their ICC while preparing for interactions with other people and also with the help of searching for the differences between different speaking styles. They became aware of that there are different manners how we can express our thoughts in English and it is important to know which are the polite expressions that they can use in more formal situations.

After the lesson observations I made an interview with the teacher, Anna. She had been teaching English for eighteen years and she enjoyed her job as she could see her students' development. "I like to see how my students develop from beginner to the intermediate level, it is good to see that they can use the language fluently" (Anna). She claimed that her favorite working mode is pair-work, however in her lessons I found only one example for it. I asked her whether she finds it important to teach about culture and if yes, then which aspects or components of culture she considers important to teach about. She replied the following:

“I find it very important. In case of a foreign language this is a must. I usually teach about the differences between the Hungarian and British cuisine and the traditional British breakfast. Students also need to do presentations in pairs or small groups about famous English cities and they have a chance to watch movies in English in our film club.

She also explained that luckily she could find many cooperative tasks in the new course books with the help of which she could also develop the students’ ICC. Although she seemed to be aware of the positive effects of using cooperative tasks and developing her students’ ICC, I could find only one example for pair-work and some components of ICC. During the lessons students had to sit behind each other in rows, one student per desk. There was little chance for eye-contact between the children and most of the activities were frontal or individual.

The teacher let me go to one of her lessons to do the group interview with the students. She let me be together with the kids so she did not modify the students’ answers with her presence. The students felt very motivated to express their thoughts and feelings and they used the whole 45 minutes of the lesson answering my questions. They had been learning English for five to seven years and they had been attending this school for two years. They enjoyed learning English because they considered it as an important language and they needed it in their everyday life to be able to chat with their friends and speak with people when they traveled abroad. When I asked them what they like in the English lessons at the school they replied that “we enjoy those lessons when we do not use the course book and we can speak and not the teacher. We also like exercises that prepare us for the language exam” (see full transcript in Appendix 3c). From the students’ answers I understood that their favorite working modes were group-work and pair-work. “We prefer group-work and pair-work when we can concentrate on the task and we need to solve an interesting situation”. They also mentioned that they enjoyed these types of activities because they could use their creativity and improvisation. They did not like making up conversations with the help of given models.

I also asked students what they thought about learning about culture. I wanted to find out how important they thought it is to learn about the culture of other people. They answered that “if you don’t want to go abroad, then it isn’t important” but “if you go abroad it is respectful to know about the customs in that culture”. What they meant by this was that it is not important to learn about culture until you do not travel abroad. Some of the students were more positive and said that knowing about other cultures “is important because it widens our world view”. One of the girls in the group seemed to be more open and said the following:

“You can never know when you meet a person from another country. It would be good to know how to communicate with him.” On one hand, students seemed to be open to learn about culture, but on the other hand when I asked what they think they should know or how they should behave when they speak to people coming from another culture some of them responded that “you should behave in the same way as when speaking to Hungarians”. Some of the students also claimed that “the one who goes to another country should adapt to the new customs and not the people who live there”. It was somewhat disillusioning how negative they were about meeting people coming from other cultures. However, the answer they gave to my next question can be one of the reasons for this. I asked if they deal with topics like how to behave or what to know when meeting people coming from other cultures and if yes, then what kind of examples they could tell me. The students answered that they did not deal with this matter in their English lessons because as they explained it “neither are there exercises like that in our course books nor does our teacher bring us tasks about this topic”. As most of the children seemed to have no experience in intercultural communication I can understand that they were afraid of it and had no positive attitude in connection with this topic. They could only rely on the stereotypes they heard from unreliable sources and could not build up their own judgment of different values. However, what made me optimistic about the future was that they were looking forward to their new international project, eTwinning, where they could meet other students from different countries and cultures. As the students explained, they started to do cooperative tasks from the beginning of this year. May be their attitude towards meeting foreigners and learning about culture will change with the help of these exercises.

4.2. Cooperative activities to develop ICC in class 9/D

The second group I decided to visit was 9/D. I was really motivated to see this group in their English lessons because at the time of my research I was also teaching this group in Spanish. I was curious whether they behaved differently in their English lessons and if yes, than how. The group consisted of 12 fourteen-fifteen-year-olds and they had been learning English for 6-8 years. They started their studies at this school in September and they were on elementary level at the time of my lesson observations. The majority of the students behaved very actively in the lessons. There were no problems with discipline except a permanent latecomer boy and a rebellious girl. I saw two lessons in this group but the boy came late both of the times and the girl made faces whenever the teacher asked her to do something.

The first lesson I visited was about different houses and places of living. In the first four minutes the teacher was waiting for the permanent latecomer and asked him to say sorry for being late again. After this, the teacher asked questions from the workbook. She asked the students one by one and they had to reply in English, but sometimes they switched to Hungarian. Next, students had to solve exercises in their workbook individually and they checked the solutions frontally. When they have finished the exercises about the new vocabulary, the teacher asked the students to speak about a photo in their students' book. She asked two girls to say as much as they could about the picture and the others had to listen. Before starting to work with a reading, the teacher elicited the vocabulary they had learnt in the previous lessons. Students had to mention rooms and objects in the photos connected to the reading. In the following part of the lesson students had to read a text in their students' book and do the exercises connected to it individually. They checked the solutions frontally and finally, the teacher wrote some new expressions on the board. The students' homework was to summarize the reading.

As I could not find any examples for cooperative tasks or development of ICC in the first lesson, I decided to visit the same class before Christmas. Júlia told me that she did not want to work with the students' book, she would bring games about Christmas instead. I was happy to hear that, and very excited to see some interesting games that I could also use in my lessons. Although the games were exciting, I was a bit upset, because I could not find any cooperative tasks during this lesson either. At the beginning of the lesson the teacher asked the students one by one about a text she had given them in the previous lesson. The text was about Christmas and New Years' Eve traditions in Britain and students had to remember different customs. What I missed here was highlighting the differences between English and Hungarian traditions. Of course, students were aware of these differences, but I think it would have been a good idea to contrast the two cultures and see which customs we had borrowed from the English, if there are any. In the next part of the lesson students had to solve a Christmas crossword and a Christmas puzzle individually. The first three students who finished the tasks correctly got a candy. After this, they played a bingo game with the new expressions in connection with Christmas. At the end of the lesson the teacher gave the lyrics of two Christmas songs to the children and asked them to sing along with the CD-player. She was sad, because none of the students wanted to sing. They started to draw on the handout instead. Before going out of the classroom all of the children could pick a candy from a box.

After visiting these two lessons I could conduct an interview with the teacher. Júlia was a middle-aged woman and she had been teaching English for seventeen years. Before becoming an English teacher she was teaching Russian. She had great expectations in connection with English, because she thought that children would be happy to learn it. She was very disillusioned when she realized that students were not as much motivated as she had expected. “When I had to teach Russian nobody liked the language because it was compulsory to learn it. I thought that the students’ motivation in connection with English would be different. Unfortunately, I was mistaken. Students don’t like learning English either saying it is a compulsory subject.” (Júlia) What she liked about language teaching was that she considered learning languages easy; she felt that she had talent for it. She explained that except teaching grammar she liked the English lessons and her favorite working modes were individual and pair-work for working with readings and performing role-plays. She admitted that she used group-work and mingles very rarely and had never tried projects with her students. In her life she had travelled a lot to many countries and she considered it very important to teach about culture. However, she explained that she had got only a few lessons a week and that was not enough for teaching about culture.

“I consider it very important to get to know the culture of a particular language. Unfortunately we have got only three English lessons a week with my students and these are not enough to teach about culture. When I dedicate time for teaching culture I prefer speaking about the famous sights of London.” (Júlia)

When I asked if she brings extra materials to teach about culture she said that she had to, because she could not find many examples in the course books. She preferred teaching about the Royal Family and holidays. It seemed that she liked to teach about facts in connection with “C” but she did not use this knowledge to develop the students’ intercultural communicative skills and attitudes.

As I could not find any examples for cooperative tasks in the two lessons I visited, I wanted to know whether she used them in her lessons and what she thought about these types of activities. She responded the following:

“Yes, I use crosswords that students need to solve in pairs. I sometimes ask the students to practice the new materials in pairs or small groups. They can also speak about given topics or answer given questions in pairs. I like to use pair-work to

practice new grammar, for example when students should make conversations speaking about their free-time activities while using adverbs of frequency.” (Júlia)

It seems that she used sometimes pair-work, but it is questionable whether all of Kagan’s cooperative principles were fulfilled. I am not convinced that practicing new material or grammar in pairs needs any real cooperation at all. Although the teacher found the amount of information about culture very little in the course books she explained that there are some cooperative tasks with the help of which students could develop their ICC.

As I was also teaching the students in 9/D, I decided to dedicate one of my Spanish lessons to do a group-interview with them. The students were happy to answer my questions and seemed very motivated to express their ideas. They had been learning English for six-eight years and they had been attending this secondary grammar school since September. They learned English because it was compulsory and they found it important for international communication and for language exams. One of them also mentioned that she had started to learn it in primary school and liked the language so much that she decided to learn it in high school as well. They liked English lessons because “the language is easy” and they enjoyed speaking in other languages. They also said that “if we learn English then we can learn other languages easily”. Many students believed that English is a good base for learning foreign languages. What they disliked about the English lessons was that they had to use the course book all the time and did not get extra materials from other resources. “We got the first handout yesterday with the title Christmas in Britain.” When I asked how important they think it is to learn about different cultures they said that “it is important to be able to understand others better” and a girl mentioned that “I think it is enough to highlight only the basic information”. Some of the students seemed to be eager to know more about other cultures but there were others, like this girl who said she would be satisfied to learn about only basic information and did not want to go into the details too much.

I was curious about the students’ attitude in connection with meeting foreigners. I questioned what they think they should know or how they should behave when they speak to people coming from another culture? They said very clever things like “we should be patient and sympathetic” and also “helpful”. Some of them also mentioned that “it depends on the culture how we should behave”. The students said that they could not find enough information about other cultures in their course books and they got their first extra material the day before my visit. I was wondering where they got these ideas from, if they had not learnt much about culture in their English lessons.

4.3. Cooperative activities to develop ICC in class 9/A

In order to see other ninth graders beside 9/D I decided to visit a group from 9/A. Students in this group were between the age of 14-15 and they had been learning English for 5-9 years. They started their studies in this school in September. There were fifteen students in the group and they were said to be on elementary level of English, learning from the course book Enterprise Beginner 1. However, what I found out was that the students spoke so fluently using such perfect grammar that they were more like on a pre-intermediate, intermediate level. They all seemed to be very motivated and self-confident when speaking in English and they contributed actively to all of the lessons. As for the arrangement of the classroom, it was the same as in 10/C and 9/D but with the difference that students in this group could sit next to each other, two students per desk. Children here were louder than in the other two groups but they were always on task and seemed happier and more comfortable. The aim of the first lesson I saw in 9/D was to develop the students' speaking skills with the help of discussing different eating habits and highlighting differences between the customs of diverse cultures. At the beginning of the lesson the teacher, Mária distributed the tests they had written in one of the previous lessons. She gave feedback on the students' achievement and asked them to correct the typical mistakes together. I found it very useful that the teacher did not humiliate the students by highlighting who committed which mistake but let them find the good solutions together. After this, they corrected their homework frontally. When a girl said a wrong answer to a question the teacher asked the others to help her. She was very attentive to create harmony in the classroom by making sure that students were emphatic with each other. They were laughing a lot together and it seemed that the teacher felt relaxed in this environment. She asked the students about their eating habits and everybody could join the conversation freely. It was directed by the teacher but she did not dominate the conversation, she let the students share their ideas if they wanted to contribute. She also wanted to make sure that students spoke in English, so when a boy said in Hungarian how much he hates a type of food, she explained how he should express it in English.

In this lesson there was a lot of information mentioned about culture. Students had to speak about the traditional British breakfast. They explained how they would serve it for their British friends, what they would pay attention to. Students also needed to role-play situations in which they had to imagine that they were in different shops in another country. After role-

playing the dialogues, the students could give feedback on the others' performance. They highlighted things like how polite expressions their peers used and what they should change in real-life situations to sound more helpful and courtship.

The second lesson I visited was similar to the previous one as it was very communicative and the teacher could create a pleasant atmosphere again. At the beginning of the lesson the teacher asked the students about their eating habits. She questioned how often they go to eat out and what they usually order. Students compared the differences between restaurants in Hungary and in other countries they had been to. After that they listened to three texts about eating habits in Brazil, Finland and the Philippines. Students' task was to mark some sentences true or false based on the information they heard. After that, they read the three texts and their task was to answer some questions about their content and explain the meaning of some words. Before checking the exercise together, the teacher gave time for the students to compare their answers in pairs. In the next phase of the lesson they listened to a dialogue between a waiter and a costumer and they revised how to say prices in English. Later, the students' task was to role-play similar dialogues in pairs with the help of the given example and the menu in their course book. The teacher asked three of the pairs to act their dialogue out in front of the class and students could evaluate each others' performance and gave useful tips again. At the end of the lesson students had to take notes about their homework and the teacher gave feedback on their performance during the lesson. She was really satisfied with their work and gave some students a plus. In my opinion students got a chance to develop some of the components of ICC in both of the two lessons, for example openness, acceptance and curiosity out of the attitudes, skills such as discovering, observation, comparison, interaction and interpretation and they could also learn about different facts in connection with "C" and "c" as well.

After visiting the lessons I was excited to carry out an interview with the teacher. She was very kind and answered my questions in detail. She told me that she had been teaching English and Hungarian for 25 years and liked her job very much because she enjoyed speaking with her students and getting to know them better. What she did not like about teaching English was the language itself. She explained that she liked British literature and she was disappointed by the changes that happened with the language recently. "I don't like the English language itself. It has changed a lot as it became a language spoken all over the world. It has simplified and lost its beauty. I prefer English spoken by people in the age of Shakespeare and I hate the new slang words." (Mária) She also mentioned that English

language teaching was totally different in her childhood and she enjoyed translating classical English plays to Hungarian.

When I asked her which working mode she preferred and used most frequently she explained that her favorites were pair-work and group-work. “I like going up and down between my students and listening to them.” (Mária) She also mentioned that these working modes have some disadvantages too, for example that sometimes students do not agree to cooperate with their partners. It seemed that she was very sensitive about group dynamics in her lessons, and as I could also see during the lesson observations, she always intended to create a good atmosphere. The teacher also highlighted the importance of switching continuously between the different working modes to avoid boredom and to help all of her students to find the most useful way of learning for themselves.

As I could see many examples for exercises in connection with culture in her lessons I asked her how important she considered to teach about culture. She replied that she found it very important. “I like to teach about holidays, literature, geography or history. I always speak with my students about the actual holidays even about Hungarian ones.” (Mária) When I asked her whether she brings extra materials to teach about culture she said that she had “films about the Royal Family, and some exercises in connection with the geography of Great Britain”. As she could not find enough translation exercises she brought famous English poems for her students to translate to Hungarian. I also questioned how she would describe ICC with her own words and she said that “this is the ability to communicate between different cultures”. As she explained, the new teaching materials contained some cooperative tasks with the help of which she could develop her students’ intercultural communicative competence. Out of her favorites she mentioned role-plays and situations. As I could see in her lessons she used these activities confidently and gave her students opportunity to correct each other. It seemed that she found it important to connect some aspects of culture with these exercises.

In order to explore the students’ ideas about cooperative learning and the development of ICC I asked the teacher to let me go to one of their lessons. The interview with 9/A took approximately 35 minutes. They told me that they had been learning English for 5-9 years and did it because they had found the language easy, interesting and useful, especially when traveling abroad and using computers. They also said that they enjoyed the English lessons in this school because “they are informal” and “the teacher isn’t strict”. They explained how

much they like to speak and enjoy improvising during the activities. What they did not like about the lessons was that they had to memorize a lot of dialogues and as they preferred to improvise, they did not like those dialogues that they had to act out with the help of a given model. When I questioned how many cooperative tasks they did in the lessons they replied that they sometimes had to work in pairs or in groups and their task was to act out different situations. They explained that their favorite working mode was pair-work and individual work because they felt that they could work faster in these types of activities.

I was curious how important the students in this group considered to learn about the culture of other people coming from different backgrounds. A boy was very negative and said that “I don’t care about it” and that “the French don’t learn about other cultures either, then why should we?” His answers may seem disappointing but I had the impression that this boy wanted to play the role of the “clown” in the group and he said these sentences with irony in his voice. All the others claimed that they were open to learn about other cultures. However, it seemed that they were instrumentally motivated as one of them said “If I want to live in a foreign country then I should learn about its culture”. They told me that in their English lessons they got a lot of materials in connection with other peoples’ customs, literature, holidays, architecture or gastronomy and they could also find information about these things in their course books because as they explained it “this is the main topic” in them. According to the students they learned about “c” facts as well, for example about how people bring up their children in different parts of the world or how to “ask politely in front of the Queen where the toilet is”. They gave me all this information with great enthusiasm and I had the impression that these students really enjoyed their English lessons.

At the end of the interview I asked the students how they think they should behave when speaking to people coming from another culture or a different background and their answers reminded me of the answers I got from the tenth graders. They said that “if they come here, then we should behave in the same way just as usually” and “if we go to their country then we should accept their behavior”. From their answers I understood that they would only change their behavior in the presence of someone coming from a differing cultural background if they had to.

4.4. Results from the analysis of the course books and teaching materials

After all the lesson observations and interviews I asked the teachers to give me a copy of the teaching materials they used in their lessons. My aim was to analyze the amount of cooperative tasks in them with the help of which teachers could develop their students' ICC. First I flipped through the course books used by Anna, the teacher in group 10/C. As she told me and as I could see in the lessons they were using the third edition of New Headway Intermediate. I was also using this book with one of my groups so I had already had some information about its content. My favorites were jigsaw readings in the units and pair-work exercises at the back of the book. The readings contained cultural information for example about different places in the world or the differing life-style of people who live in different countries. I thought these were all good materials for creating cooperative tasks in order to develop the students' ICC. Furthermore, the activities at the back of the book consisted of information gap exercises that students needed to solve in pairs and there were different pictures they had to compare without showing their copies to their peers. Although not all of these tasks contained information about culture, they appeared to be still useful for developing many components of intercultural communicative competence, because they required learners to cooperate and practice their skills of discovering, observation, comparison, interaction, interpretation and attitudes of openness, tolerance, acceptance and curiosity.

Júlia, the teacher in 9/D taught the students from the Elementary books of the same edition of New Headway. As I perceived, in the students' book there were some cooperative exercises right from the first unit aiming to prepare the students for this working mode and for the communicative use of the English language. The readings contained a lot of information about "C" and some about "c" as well. From the sixth unit there were texts that students could use in pairs. At the back of the book I could find activities created for pair-work. Most of them were information gap exercises in which students need to fill in charts or compare pictures with the help of their partners but there was also information about famous inventions or historical facts. In my point of view, these were all suitable for developing some components of ICC, for example analytical skills or openness and some of them contained information about "C" as well. In addition, I believe that with careful planning on the part of the teacher they could fit Kagan's PIES, too.

The New Headway 3rd edition Elementary and Intermediate workbooks mainly served for practicing the grammar and vocabulary learnt in the units, but also contained some short readings about different topics. Some of these texts provided basic information about cultural

facts, for example the life of famous writers, inventors or sportsmen. There were no examples for pair-work or group-work exercises. I think the main reason for this is that these workbooks were designed for self-study and for practicing at home.

I analyzed the teacher's books designed for the New Headway Elementary and Intermediate books as well. These contained the solutions of the exercises and some practical advice for teachers in planning and using them. At the back of the teacher's books I found some photocopiable materials such as songs, or interesting activities that were designed for cooperative working modes. I could also find readings that students need to compare and complete in pairs. At the end of the books there were some progress tests with the help of which teachers could measure the students' knowledge about the units they had covered in the lessons. They were also good for practice or revision.

Finally, I got the Beginner books from the Enterprise series. I had not seen them before, but my first impression was that they were very colorful and full of photos about people coming from all over the world. What I really liked about the students' book was that it was divided up into modules and the modules into units. At the beginning of each module there was a page where students could find information about the content of the four units belonging to that module. The whole book was full of information about different cultures and people with differing backgrounds. There were readings about famous buildings and places in the world, about eating habits in different countries, about the life of Princess Diana or about tipping customs in America. At the back of the book there was a 'word list', a 'photo file section' and pages called 'culture clips', which contained different activities built around interesting cultural information. Although there were some pair-work or group-work exercises in the units, I really missed cooperative tasks in the 'culture clips' section. It seemed that the book served as a resource of varied cultural facts, both about "C" and "c", but did not complement this content with cooperative techniques or working modes.

I also analyzed the workbook, and its structure reminded me of the structure of the New Headway workbooks. In my opinion, it was also designed for self-study and to practice the materials learnt in the students' book. It contained short reading, writing and gap-filling exercises that complemented the topics in the students' book, and some tasks to practice the new vocabulary and grammar. The structure and content of the teacher's book was also similar to the ones belonging to the New Headway series. It contained the key of the course book and the workbook, but I could not find any photocopiable pages with extra exercises.

As I have mentioned in connection with the lesson observations, my impression was that students in 9/A turned out to be closer to the Intermediate level of English. After

analyzing the course books I questioned their teacher about the reason why they were using Enterprise Beginner 1. She told me that at the beginning of the year they divided the children of the class into three groups and decided to use beginner books with all the three. However, from the first lessons she realized that her students were the best in their class and they were better users of English than she had expected. When I asked why she used a course book for beginners with them she replied that this was the decision of the school and she was happy to work with these books because she could complement them with a lot of interesting materials and make the lessons more enjoyable for the students. The course book gave her a good base with the help of which she could bring her creativity into the lessons.

In conclusion, the course books teachers used in the three groups all contained information about different cultures and people with different background. The Enterprise course book was especially a good source of information in connection with “C” and “c” of differing cultures. In terms of the amount of cooperative tasks the New Headway books provided more examples compared to the Enterprise series. It is also true that not all of these cooperative activities were suitable for developing the learners’ ICC and none of the course books analyzed provided any guidance or suggestion for teachers to develop their students’ ICC.

5. Conclusion

In the last section of my work I would like to elaborate on the findings of my research and draw some conclusions based on my research questions. I find it important to mention how disappointed I was at the middle of my research because the first lessons I saw were dominated by the teachers and it was difficult to find cooperative tasks or traces of intercultural competence development in them. Although all of the teachers claimed in the interviews that their favorite working mode was pair-work, they did not use this technique in the lessons I visited. I was especially disappointed after visiting the lesson in 9/D before Christmas. I expected interesting and varied activities in connection with this holiday using differing working modes, but the students had to work only frontally and individually in the whole lesson. As a novice teacher I have some experience in teaching beginners, and I know that it is possible to use cooperative working modes right from the beginning. Unfortunately, activities during which students had to work in pairs or groups appeared in none of the lessons that I visited in group 9/D. As I observed only two lessons in 9/D I do not feel it acceptable to draw far-reaching conclusions. However, the students’ answers in the group-interview

confirmed my assumptions that their teacher did not use many cooperative tasks with them. On the one hand, I was really disappointed, and I was wondering how I could investigate the effects of cooperative tasks on EFL learners' ICC if there were no examples for this type of tasks at all in the lessons. On the other hand, I accepted reality, in other words the fact that finding nothing is also a result.

The second lesson in 10/C brought some hope, as I could see that students needed to do an international project (eTwinning) at home and that they worked in pairs asking and answering questions about each other. In my point of view, eTwinning was a good idea for creating situations in which students needed to work with people coming from different cultures and background. As the students had started this program only shortly before my research, I could not investigate this cooperative learning mode's effects on their ICC but I hope that they can improve it while chatting with students coming from other cultures.

From my point of view, the most suitable examples for the topic of my research appeared in the lessons of 9/A. Both lessons I visited were built around cultural topics and students had to work in pairs to act out different situations from which they could learn a lot about how to behave and interact with people from another country or culture in English. Furthermore, they discussed the role of the different degrees of politeness. When role-playing the situations in restaurants, some of the pairs ordered a typical British breakfast. It seemed that students had a chance to develop many components of their ICC (for example openness, acceptance, curiosity, critical thinking, discovering, observation, comparison, interaction, interpretation, knowledge of "C" and "c" cultural facts and the critical cultural awareness of diversity) while all the four cooperative principles laid down by Kagan were fulfilled as well.

As for the course books, my findings were that all of the books used by the teachers contained information about different people from other cultures and backgrounds. In the New Headway students' books there were more examples for cooperative tasks than in Enterprise Beginner. However, the Enterprise course books provided more information about a variety of cultures. In my opinion in the case of the three course materials a lot depends on the teachers' planning and creativity as all of these books provide a good basis for creating cooperative tasks with the help of which teachers could develop their students' ICC.

At the end of my paper I would like to summarize the answers to my research questions. First of all, I wanted to explore to what extent EFL teachers found it important to develop the students' intercultural communicative competence. From the interviews with the

teachers I understood that they found it important to teach about culture and to develop their students' communicative skills but only one of them knew what ICC really means. The other two teachers confined themselves to occasionally transmitting facts about the target language culture's 'C' or civilization. I also wanted to know to what extent and how EFL teachers use cooperative tasks in their lessons to improve their students' ICC. My finding was that one of the three teachers did not use any cooperative tasks at all in the lessons I visited. Although she mentioned in the interview that she preferred to use this working mode in order to practice grammar and some dialogues, I feel it questionable whether all the PIES of Kagan would be satisfied during these tasks. The two other teachers used cooperative tasks somewhat more often and with the help of these they could improve some of the components that were necessary for their students' ICC, but without always consciously working for these aims. My third research question was about the effects of cooperative tasks on EFL learner's intercultural communicative competence. As I could see very few examples for cooperative activities in the lessons I visited, it is difficult to draw far-reaching conclusions at this point. However, I believe that the role-plays and the way of discussing them in the lessons of 9/A could help learners in developing many of the ICC components listed by Byram. My next question was about the extent to which course books used by EFL teachers and learners are adequate for developing the students' ICC. In my course book analysis I found that all of the course materials were suitable for designing cooperative activities, with the help of which this competence of the students could be improved, but they did not provide guidance for teachers to do so. Finally, my last question was about the students' opinion about cooperative tasks and intercultural communication in EFL. All of the three groups highlighted how much they enjoyed cooperative working modes and seemed to be open to learn about other cultures and people coming from differing cultural backgrounds. The only issue students did not agree on was in connection with what they think they should do or how they think they should behave when speaking to people coming from another culture. Students in 9/A and 10/C responded that they would not behave differently unless being in a country where the target culture is present, whilst learners in 9/D said that they would try to behave according to their knowledge about that culture and that they would try to be patient, emphatic and helpful.

Before finishing my paper, I find it important to mention that there are some limitations that need to be acknowledged and addressed regarding the present study. The first limitation concerns the time I could spend on preparing and conducting my research. As a novice teacher I had four months to work in a secondary grammar school and beside my

lessons it was difficult to arrange the date of the lesson observations with the teachers. Although I could visit a minimum of two lessons in each group, further observations would have been useful for the collection of more representative data. The second limitation has to do with the extent to which the findings can be generalized beyond the three cases studied. As the number of cases is too limited for broad generalizations, I do not want to draw far-reaching conclusions. However, my aim is to draw future researchers' attention to the topic and highlight the importance for the repetition and expansion of the present study. It would be especially important to see results on a larger scope and in different contexts and surroundings. Furthermore, it would be interesting to compare the results found in this secondary grammar school with those found in similar schools or other types of educational institutions.

Considering all the above, I feel that cooperative tasks have positive effects on teachers' development of their students' ICC. Although I could not find many examples during my research for cooperative tasks with the help of which teachers wanted to improve their students' ICC, I still believe that there are many activities which are adequate for this purpose. My research revealed that both teachers and students are open for working with these tasks and topics and I hope that there will be more teaching materials and training courses available aiming to help future EFL teachers to create and use cooperative tasks in order to develop their students' ICC. I strongly believe that these activities would also serve to develop the students' character and intellect while creating an inclusive and caring atmosphere where all teachers and students would be happy to work together and improve their English language proficiency.

References

- Aronson, E. (2000). *Nobody left to hate: Teaching Compassion After Columbine*. New York
W.H. Freeman and Company.
- Byram, M. (1997). *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence*,
Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

- Guest, M. (2002). "A critical 'checkbook' for culture teaching and learning", *ELT Journal*, Volume 56/2 April. Accessed 15 June 2012.
http://biblioteca.uqroo.mx/hemeroteca/elt_journal/2002/abril/560154.pdf
- Harris, R. and Lázár, I. (2011). Why trainees/teachers find it difficult to change. In: J. Huber and Mompoin-Gaillard, P. (Eds.) *Teacher education for change. The theory behind the Council of Europe Pestalozzi Programme*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- Huber-Kriegler, M., Lázár, I. and Strange, J. (2003). *Mirrors and windows. An intercultural communication textbook*. Graz: Council of Europe.
- Johnson, D.W. and Johnson R.T. (no date). *An Overview of Cooperative Learning*. Cooperative Learning Institute and Interaction Book Company.
<http://www.co-operation.org/> Accessed 12 December 2012.
- Johnson, D.W., Johnson R.T. and Stanne M.B. (2000). *Cooperative Learning Methods: A Meta-Analysis*. Accessed 15 December 2012.
<http://www.ccsstl.com/sites/default/files/Cooperative%20Learning%20Research%20.pdf>
- Kagan, S. (no date). *A Brief History of Kagan Structures*. San Clemente, CA: Kagan Publishing. *Kagan Online Magazine*, Spring 2003. www.KaganOnline.com assessed 13 December 2012.
- Kagan, S. (Fall/Winter 2011). *The "P" and "I" of PIES: Powerful Principles for Success*. San Clemente, CA: Kagan Publishing. *Kagan Online Magazine*, Fall/Winter 2011. www.KaganOnline.com assessed 12 December 2012.
- Lázár, I. (Ed.) (2003). *Incorporating intercultural communicative competence in language teacher education*. Graz: Council of Europe.

APPENDIX 1

Research Questions

- 1) To what extent do EFL teachers find it important to develop the students' intercultural communicative competence?
- 2) To what extent and how do EFL teachers use cooperative tasks in their lessons to improve the students' intercultural communicative competence?
- 3) What are the effects of cooperative tasks on EFL learner's intercultural communicative competence?
- 4) To what extent are course books used by EFL teachers and learners adequate for developing the students' intercultural communicative competence?
- 5) What do students think about cooperative tasks and intercultural communication in EFL?

APPENDIX 2/a

Interview guide for teachers in English

1. Which subjects do you teach?
2. How long have you been teaching English?
3. What do you like about teaching English?
4. What do you dislike about teaching English?
5. Which is your favorite or most frequently used working mode and why?
6. What do you think the advantages and disadvantages of individual work, pair-work, group-work, project-work, mingle and frontal teaching are?
7. Have you ever been in a situation apart from English lessons, where you had to use English for communication?
8. Do you find it important to teach about culture? And which aspects or components of culture do you consider important to teach about?
9. Do you bring extra materials to your lessons to teach about culture? If yes, what type? If no, why not?
10. Do your students ever ask about the target culture? If yes, what are they usually most interested in?
11. Are there any programs in the school where students can learn about other cultures? (projects, exchange trips, etc.)
12. Do you use cooperative tasks in the lessons? If yes, what type? Can you give a few examples?
13. How would you explain intercultural communicative competence with your own words.
14. Do you think the cooperative tasks you use can help to improve the students' intercultural communicative competence and if yes, how?

15. What kind of course books do you use?
16. Are there cooperative tasks in these books? Can you give examples?
17. Can students find activities in these books with the help of which they could improve their intercultural communicative competence?
18. Are any of these tasks/activities cooperative tasks? Do students seem to enjoy these and benefit from them?

APPENDIX 2/b

Interview guide for teachers in Hungarian

1. 1.Mely tantárgyakat tanítja?
2. Mióta tanít angolul?
3. Mit szeret az angol nyelv tanításában?
4. Mi az, amit nem szeret az angol nyelv oktatásában?
5. Melyek a kedvenc vagy a leggyakrabban használt munkaformái, és miért?
6. Mit gondol, mik az előnyei illetve hátrányai az egyéni munkának, pármunkának, csoportmunkának, projekt-munkának, mingle-nek és a frontális oktatásnak?
7. Kellett már használnia az angolt tanórán kívül bármilyen kommunikációra?
8. Mennyire tartja fontosnak, hogy tanítson a kultúráról? A kultúra mely aspektusairól illetve elemeiről tartja fontosnak tanítani?
9. Szokott kiegészítő anyagokat bevinni az órákra, hogy tanítson a kultúráról? Ha igen, akkor milyen típusú feladatokat? Ha nem, akkor miért nem?
10. Szoktak a diákjai kérdezni a kultúráról? Ha igen, akkor általában mi az, ami érdekli őket?
11. Vannak olyan programok vagy foglalkozások az iskolában, ahol a gyerekek tanulhatnak más népek kultúrájáról? (projektek, csereprogramok, kirándulások)
12. Szokott használni kooperatív feladatokat az órákon? Ha igen, milyen fajtákat? Tudna néhány példát említeni?
13. Hogy írná körbe az interkulturális kommunikatív kompetencia fogalmát a saját szavaival?
14. Gondolja, hogy a kooperatív feladatok, melyeket az órákon használ, segítenek a diákok interkulturális kommunikatív kompetenciájának fejlesztésében? Ha igen, akkor hogyan?
15. Milyen tankönyveket használ?
16. Vannak kooperatív feladatok ezekben a könyvekben? Tudna példákat említeni?
17. Találhatnak a diákok olyan feladatokat ezekben a könyvekben, melyek segítségével fejleszteni tudják az interkulturális kommunikatív kompetenciájukat?
18. Ezek a feladatok között előfordulnak kooperatív feladatok? Élvezik ezeket a gyerekek? Profitálnak belőle?

Sample interviews with teachers

10/ C

‘Anna’

3. What do you like about teaching English?

I like to see how my students develop from beginner to the intermediate level, it is good to see that they can use the language fluently.

5. Which is your favorite or most frequently used working mode and why?

Pair-work, because when speaking about a living foreign language I think this is the most effective technique.

8. Do you find it important to teach about culture? And which aspects or components of culture do you consider important to teach about?

I find it very important. In case of a foreign language this is a must. I usually teach about the differences between the Hungarian and British cuisine and the traditional British breakfast. Students also need to do presentations in pairs or small groups about famous English cities and they have a chance to watch movies in English in our film club.

12. Do you use cooperative tasks in the lessons? If yes, what type? Can you give a few examples?

Yes, it is a necessity when teaching a foreign language. I prefer pair-work when students need to make a dialogue, role-play a situation, find answers for questions with the help of a text or solve a problem together. I also like exercises where students need to practice the new grammar with the help of cooperative tasks. Furthermore, I use card games that students can play in pairs or small groups.

13. How would you explain intercultural communicative competence with your own words?

It means that a student is capable of expressing his or her ideas about the cultural information related to a specific country. It is related to knowledge about the country and the lifestyle of people who live there.

9/D

‘Júlia’

1. Which subjects do you teach?

English and history

2. How long have you been teaching English?

I have been teaching English since 1995. Before that I taught Russian.

3. What do you like about teaching English?

I like languages in general (I also enjoyed teaching Russian). I don't know why but I learn languages easily and I am interested in different cultures. I have some family members in England, so I like visiting them and speaking the English language.

4. What do you dislike about teaching English?

I don't like that learning languages is compulsory. When I had to teach Russian nobody liked the language because it was compulsory to learn it. I thought that the students' motivation in connection with English would be different. Unfortunately, I was mistaken. Students don't like learning English either saying it is a compulsory subject. Furthermore, I find it frustrating that language teaching is very much grammar-centered.

5. Which is your favorite or most frequently used working mode and why?

Individual and pair-work. I do not like teaching grammar. I prefer working with interesting readings and role-plays.

6. What do you think the advantages and disadvantages of individual work, pair-work, group-work, project-work, mingle and frontal teaching are?

INDIVIDUAL WORK:

- + students can concentrate better on the topic+ there is silence
- + I can give the time limit for the exercises
- + I can get a better picture about the students' knowledge
- there are no disadvantages of this working mode on the part of the teacher except that I don't like to be quiet, I prefer speaking to the students

PAIR-WORK:

- + students like it very much
- I have to go around the classroom to monitor the students
- students sometimes switch to Hungarian

GROUP-WORK:

It has got the same advantages and disadvantages as pair-work.

PROJECT-WORK:

I have never tried this working mode.

MINGLE:

I use this working mode very rarely.

- + Students like it because they can stand up and move a little bit during the lesson
- +they like to ask their peers about different topics
- discipline problems can arise

FRONTAL TEACHING:

- + students pay attention
- it is a bit boring for the students

8. Do you find it important to teach about culture? And which aspects or components of culture do you consider important to teach about?

I consider it very important to get to know the culture of a particular language. Unfortunately we have got only three English lessons a week with my students and these are not enough to teach about culture. When I dedicate time for teaching culture I prefer speaking about the famous sights of London.

9. Do you bring extra materials to your lessons to teach about culture? If yes, what type? If no, why not?

Yes, most of the times I have to bring extra materials to teach about culture, because in the course book there are very few exercises about it. I bring in tasks about different holidays, and about the Royal Family. However, I don't teach much about literature, history or geography.

12. Do you use cooperative tasks in the lessons? If yes, what type? Can you give a few examples?

Yes, I use crosswords that students need to solve in pairs. I sometimes ask the students to practice the new materials in pairs or small groups. They can also speak about given topics or answer given questions in pairs. I like to use pair-work to practice new grammar, for example when students should make conversations speaking about their free-time activities while using adverbs of frequency.

13. How would you explain intercultural communicative competence with your own words?

It is something like the knowledge of culture and to be able to speak about it. For example about famous sights and places, food or arts.

9/A

‘Mária’

1. Which subjects do you teach?

English, Hungarian

2. How long have you been teaching English?

for 25 years

3. What do you like about teaching English?

I like getting to know my students. I enjoy the lessons where the students are on a level on which they can speak fluently and they can open.

4. What do you dislike about teaching English?

I don't like the English language itself. It has changed a lot as it became a language spoken all over the world. It has simplified and lost its beauty. I prefer English spoken by people in the age of Shakespeare and I hate the new slang words.

5. Which is your favorite or most frequently used working mode and why?

Pair-work and group-work. I like going up and down between my students and listening to them. However, it has got some disadvantages for example when students do not want to cooperate. For me it is very important to switch continuously between different working modes. I do not want my students to be bored during the lessons and I also want to help them to find the most suitable working mode for themselves.

8. Do you find it important to teach about culture? And which aspects or components of culture do you consider important to teach about?

Yes, I consider it very important. I like to teach about holidays, literature, geography or history. I always speak with my students about the actual holidays even about Hungarian ones.

9. Do you bring extra materials to your lessons to teach about culture? If yes, what type? If no, why not?

Yes, sometimes. I like to bring in materials or films about the Royal Family, and some exercises in connection with the geography of Great Britain. I miss the exercises where students need to translate so I sometimes bring in this kind of activities as well. For example they need to translate a famous fragment from a well-know play or poem.

12. Do you use cooperative tasks in the lessons? If yes, what type? Can you give a few examples?

Yes, I use many cooperative tasks in my lessons. The new English books are full of pair-work or group-work exercises. I prefer role-plays and situations.

13. How would you explain intercultural communicative competence with your own words?

This is the ability to communicate between different cultures.

16. Are there cooperative tasks in these books? Can you give examples?

Yes, these new books are full of these cooperative tasks. For an example I really like role-plays where students need to act out a situation in pairs or small groups.

17. Can students find activities in these books with the help of which they could improve their intercultural communicative competence?

Yes, they can. All the chapters of these books contain a picture about an African person and there is a lot of information about culture.

18. Are any of these tasks/activities cooperative tasks? Do students seem to enjoy these and benefit from them?

Yes, some of them are cooperative. Students need to solve situations imagining that they speak with foreign people.

APPENDIX 3/a

Group-interview guide for students in English

1. How long have you been learning in this school?
2. How long have you been learning English?
3. Why do you learn English?
4. What other languages do you speak?
5. What do you like in the English lessons?
6. What do you dislike in the English lessons?
7. What kind of exercises do you do in the English lessons?
8. Are there any activities in your English lessons in which you should work together?
What are these exercises like?
9. Do you know what cooperation is?
10. What do you think the advantages and disadvantages are of individual work, pair-work, group-work, projects, mingle and frontal work?
11. Out of these working modes which do you prefer and why?
12. Have you ever been in a situation apart from English lessons, where you had to use English for communication?
13. How important do you think is to learn about the culture of other people?

14. Do you get extra materials about culture in your English lessons? Which aspects of culture do you deal with? Do you learn about literature, history, famous sights or about how people live and how their behavior or customs are different?
15. What kind of and how much information is there in your English course books about the culture of different people?
16. What do you think you should know or how you should behave when you speak to people coming from another culture?
17. Do you deal with topics like this in the English lessons? If yes, what kind of examples can you give me? Do you remember some concrete exercises or readings which helped you in this matter?

APPENDIX 3/b

Group-interview guide for students in Hungarian

18. Mióta tanultok ebben az iskolában?
19. Mióta tanultok angolul?
20. Miért tanultok angolul?
21. Milyen egyéb nyelveket beszéltek?
22. Mit szerettek az angol órákban?
23. Mit nem szerettek az angol órákban?
24. Milyen feladatokat szoktatok csinálni az angol órákon?
25. Vannak olyan feladatok angolórán, amikben együtt kell működnötök? Milyenek ezek a feladatok?
26. Tudjátok mi a kooperáció?
27. Szerintetek mik az előnyei az egyéni munkának, csoportmunkának, projektnek, mingle-nek és a frontális munkának?
28. Ezek közül melyiket szeretitek a legjobban és miért?
29. Kellett már használnotok az angolt órán kívül bármilyen kommunikációra?
30. Mennyire tartjátok fontosnak, hogy tanuljatok a különböző népek kultúrájáról?
31. Szoktatok külön feladatokat kapni az angol óráitokon a kultúrával kapcsolatban? A kultúrával milyen szempontból foglalkoztok? Tanultok az irodalomról, történelemről, nevezetességekről, vagy arról, hogy élnek az emberek, miben más a viselkedésük vagy szokásaik?
32. Milyen és mennyi információ van az angol tankönyveitekben a különböző népek kultúrájáról?
33. Szerintetek mit kell tudni, vagy hogyan kell viselkedni, ha más kultúrából érkező emberekkel beszéltek angolul?
34. Szoktatok ilyesmivel foglalkozni az angol órákon? És ha igen, milyen példákat tudtok hozni erre? Emlékeztek egy-két konkrét feladatra vagy olvasmányra, ami ebben segített?

APPENDIX 3/c

Sample group-interviews with students

10/C

5. What do you like in the English lessons?

- to laugh
- we like when we can work in pairs or groups
- we like those activities or situations in which we can improvise
- we enjoy those lessons when we do not use the course book and we can speak and not the teacher
- we also like exercises that prepare us for the language exam

11. Out of these working modes which do you prefer and why?

We prefer group-work and pair-work when we can concentrate on the task and we need to solve an interesting situation.

13. How important do you think is to learn about the culture of other people?

- if you don't want to go abroad, then it isn't important
- if we go abroad then it is respectful to know about the customs in that culture
- it is important because it widens our world view
- you can never know when you meet a person from another country. It would be good to know how to communicate with him.

16. What do you think you should know or how you should behave when you speak to people coming from another culture?

- You should behave in the same way as when speaking to Hungarians
- The one who goes to another country should adapt to the new customs and not the people who live there.

17. Do you deal with topics like this in the English lessons? If yes, what kind of examples can you give me? Do you remember some concrete exercises or readings which helped you in this matter?

- No, because neither are there exercises like that in our course books nor does our teacher bring us tasks about this topic.
- Maybe eTwinning will be like this, we are looking forward to it

9/D

1. How long have you been learning in this school?

Since September.

2. How long have you been learning English?

For 6-8 years.

3. Why do you learn English?

- it is compulsory
- it is important for international communication
- we need it for the language exam
- if we learn English than we could live anywhere
- I liked it in primary school so I wanted to learn English here too

5. What do you like in the English lessons?

- the language is easy
- if we learn English than we can learn other languages easily
- we prefer speaking in English

6. What do you dislike in the English lessons?

- the lessons are usually boring
- we don't like to work with the course book all the time
- we never play
- we can speak very rarely

11. Out of these working modes which do you prefer and why?

We prefer individual work and we would like to do projects, because these working modes are exciting and we can show what we can do with the language. We can be creative.

13. How important do you think is to learn about the culture of other people?

- it is important to be able to understand others better
- I think it is enough to highlight only the basic information

14. Do you get extra materials about culture in your English lessons? Which aspects of culture do you deal with? Do you learn about literature, history, famous sights or about how people live and how their behavior or customs are different?

- we got the first handout yesterday with the title Christmas in Britain
- we work in general with customs, holidays and gastronomy
- we don't learn about literature, geography and history

15. What kind of and how much information is there in your English course books about the culture of different people?

- minimal, it isn't enough for us
- we would like to have much more information like that

16. What do you think you should know or how you should behave when you speak to people coming from another culture?

- we should be patient and sympathetic
- it depends on the culture how we should behave
- we should be helpful

17. Do you deal with topics like this in the English lessons? If yes, what kind of examples can you give me? Do you remember some concrete exercises or readings which helped you in this matter?

- we deal with topics like this very rarely
- recently we have learnt how to speak with foreigners on the phone

1. How long have you been learning in this school?

Since September.

2. How long have you been learning English?

For 5-9 years.

3. Why do you learn English?

- it's easy
- it's useful
- it's important
- it's spoken all over the world
- it can be useful for travelling
- we need it for using computers

5. What do you like in the English lessons?

- they are informal
- we can speak
- we like to improvise
- the teacher isn't strict

6. What do you dislike in the English lessons?

- to memorize texts
- it is bad to work in a phase dictated by our the course book
- there are very few games
- we hate vocabulary tests
- we don't like those dialogues that we have to act out with a given model

7. What kind of exercises do you do in the English lessons?

- the exercises in the course books
- we play
- we speak
- we do role-plays
- we do listening and reading comprehension exercises

8. Are there any activities in your English lessons in which you should work together?

What are these exercises like?

- we need to form pairs and find each other
- we role-play situations

11. Out of these working modes which do you prefer and why?

Individual work and pair-work, because we can work faster in these working modes.

13. How important do you think is to learn about the culture of other people?

- I don't care about it
- we are interested in this topic
- it depends which people's culture we are talking about
- If I want to live in a foreign country than I should learn about its culture
- the French neither learn about other cultures than why should we do?

14. Do you get extra materials about culture in your English lessons? Which aspects of culture do you deal with? Do you learn about literature, history, famous sights or about how people live and how their behavior or customs are different?

- yes, we always learn about culture
- in general we learn about customs, religion, holidays, architecture and gastronomy

- we learn about literature and the weather too

15. What kind of and how much information is there in your English course books about the culture of different people?

- there are relatively a lot of information about culture in our books, this is the main topic in the course books
- we can find in it information about gastronomy, different colors of skin, religion, architecture, different habits in bringing up children and some information about history as well

16. What do you think you should know or how you should behave when you speak to people coming from another culture?

- if they come here than we should behave in the same way just as usually
- if we go to their country than we should accept their behavior

17. Do you deal with topics like this in the English lessons? If yes, what kind of examples can you give me? Do you remember some concrete exercises or readings which helped you in this matter?

- yes, for example when we learnt how we should ask politely in front of the Queen where the toilet is
- last time we learnt what do the English eat for breakfast and that they always speak about the weather

APPENDIX 4

LESSON OBSERVATION 10/C/1

DATE: 10th September 2012

CLASS DESCRIPTION: The group consists of fifteen students of the 10th grade. There are 13 girls and 2 boys in the group. Most of the students are very active and motivated. The others sit silently during the lesson, but whenever the teacher asks something it seems that they are on task.

LEVEL: Intermediate **AGE:** 15-16

AIM OF THE LESSON: To practice the use of the passive.

DEVELOPED SKILLS: Speaking and listening skills.

ARE THE STUDENTS INVOLVED IN ANY COOPERATIVE TASKS DURING THE LESSON? No.

WHICH COMPONENTS OF INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE DO THESE TASKS SEEM TO DEVELOP? None.

ARE THERE ANY OTHER (NON-COOPERATIVE) TASKS THAT MAY DEVELOP THE LEARNER'S INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE? Not really.

Time (min)	Stage	Activity of teacher	Activity of students	Interaction	Aim of activity	Materials
10:45 (10)	1. Warmer	- Gives a set of cards with verbs to some of the students.	The students need to say the three forms of the verbs as fast as they can. The winner is who knows the most words.	frontal individual	To warm up students and to practice the three forms of the verbs.	cards with verbs

10:55 (2)	2. Feedback and correction	- Asks the problematic words again from the class.	Practice the three forms of the verbs together.	frontal individual	To the three forms of the verbs.	blackboard
10:57 (3)	3. Handout/ 2 nd column	-Asks students to take out their handout that contains the 3 forms of the irregular verbs and asks them to learn the 2 nd column for next lesson.	They take notes of their homework and ask the meaning of some new verbs.	frontal	To give homework.	handout with irregular verbs
11:00 (5)	4. The odd one out	-Asks students to open their students' book and do an exercise. - They check the exercise together.	Students match verbs with nouns and say their solutions.	individual frontal	Extending the students vocabulary.	students' book/ p. 81/ 1.
11:05 (5)	5. Practice	- Asks students to do exercise 3 on the same page. They check the task together.	Students solve the exercise and read their answers.	individual frontal	To practice.	students' book/ p. 81/ 3.
11:10 (5)	6. Say passive sentences	- Asks students to say passive sentences with the verbs from exercise 1. - Checks their sentences.	They say passive sentences.	pair-work	To practice the use of the passive.	students' book/ p. 81/ 1.

11:15 (12)	7.Transforme sentences	- Asks students to transform sentences to passive voice - She asks them to learn the rule.	Read and transform the sentences one by one.	individual frontal	To practice the use of the passive voice.	handouts with sentences
11:27 (3)	8. Giving homework	- Tells the students their homework.	Take notes of their homework.	frontal	To transform more sentences to passive voice.	handout with sentences

Comments: A very frontal lesson with no cooperative working modes. Dominated by the teacher.

LESSON OBSERVATION 10/C/2

DATE: 19th November 2012

CLASS DESCRIPTION: The group consists of fifteen students of the 10th grade. There are 13 girls and 2 boys in the group. Most of the students are very active and motivated. The others sit silently during the lesson, but whenever the teacher asks something it seems that they are on task.

LEVEL: Intermediate **AGE:** 15-16

AIM OF THE LESSON: To practice for the oral part of a language exam.

DEVELOPED SKILLS: Speaking and listening skills.

ARE THE STUDENTS INVOLVED IN ANY COOPERATIVE TASKS DURING THE LESSON? Yes, they needed to work in pairs in order to make short dialogues about themselves.

WHICH COMPONENTS OF INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE DO THESE TASKS SEEM TO DEVELOP?

Asking for information about other people. Students also got a chance to introduce themselves. Attitudes: openness, tolerance, acceptance, curiosity, empathy, non-judgment; skills: interaction, interpretation, analytical skills, discovering, observation, comparison.

ARE THERE ANY OTHER (NON-COOPERATIVE) TASKS THAT MAY DEVELOP THE LEARNER'S INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE? Students listened to two different versions of a dialogue between two children and their mother. The first version the children's style was very informal and impolite, while in the second dialogue it was more formal and polite. Students had to say what made the difference between the two different styles.

Time (min)	Stage	Activity of teacher	Activity of students	Interaction	Aim of activity	Materials
10:45 (2)	1. Greeting and giving out tests	- Gives out the students' tests - Makes comments on their results	- Looking at their tests and mistakes	frontal	To give feedback	• tests
10:47 (10)	2. Warmer making words	- Writes the word: QUESTIONNAIRE on the board. Gives instructions. - Asks how many words the students have, and write all of them on the board. - Praises students.	- Use the letters to make words. - The instructions were not enough and they ask for more help. - They say their words.	frontal individual	To warm up students.	• blackboard • exercise books
10:57 (5)	3. Questionnaire	Asks questions from the project eTwinnig.	They answer the questions.	frontal	To develop the students speaking skills and to introduce the first task for the new project.	• questionnaire

11:02 (2)	4. Giving homework	Hands out the questionnaires and asks the students to answer the questions until Friday and to send it back via e-mail.	Take notes about their homework.	frontal	Giving homework.	questionnaire
11:04 (3)	5. Making pairs	Makes pairs with the help of short pieces of a rope. As the students are odd, she will be somebody's partner.	Students enjoy the pair making procedure.	mingle	To make pairs for the following activities.	pieces of a rope
11:07 (5)	6. Speaking in pairs	Gives instructions. Monitors the students and indicates the time limit.	They need to introduce themselves in pairs and ask questions about each other.	pair-work	To develop the students' speaking skills and to prepare them for the oral language exam.	-
11:12 (8)	7. Feedback	Listens to 3 pairs. Says stop if a student speak too much.	3 pairs introduce themselves. The others can ask further questions.	individual frontal	To develop the students' speaking skills and to prepare them for the oral language exam.	-
11:20 (5)	8. Listening	Gives instructions and manages the CD-player.	Students need to listen to dialogues and fill in the gaps in their book.	frontal individual	To develop the students' listening skills.	- Students' book/ p. 8/ dialogues - CD-player - CD
11:25 (2)	9. Checking exercise	Divides the roles and asks students to read the dialogues and check the exercise.	Two students are reading out loud the texts and they check the exercise.	frontal	To check the exercise and develop reading skills and pronunciation.	Students' book/ p. 8/ dialogues

11:27 (5) 2 extra m.	10. Listening	Asks students to tell why the second dialogue is more polite? Then they discuss it together.	Listen to the dialogues and try to find out the answer for the teacher's question.	frontal	To develop the students' listening skills and discuss the differences between polite and impolite styles.	• Students' book/ p. 8/ dialogues • CD-player • CD
-------------------------------	---------------	--	--	---------	---	--

LESSON OBSERVATION

9/A/1

DATE: 2012. November 23.

CLASS DESCRIPTION: There are 15 students in this group. They are very active and motivated, they seem to enjoy speaking in English and they speak fluently. They can sit next to each other and they are a bit loud, but on task.

LEVEL: "Beginner" (more closer to Intermediate) **AGE:** 14-15 years

AIM OF THE LESSON: Speak about eating habits and practice shopping situations, dialogues.

DEVELOPED SKILLS: speaking, listening and reading skills

ARE THE STUDENTS INVOLVED IN ANY COOPERATIVE TASKS DURING THE LESSON? Yes, they need to role-play shopping dialogues.

WHICH COMPONENTS OF INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE DO THESE TASKS SEEM TO DEVELOP? interaction, interpretation, analytical skills, discovering, observation, comparison, curiosity, empathy, openness, critical cultural awareness of diversity and facts about "C" and "c".

ARE THERE ANY OTHER (NON-COOPERATIVE) TASKS THAT MAY DEVELOP THE LEARNER'S INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE? Yes, the frontal discussions when students need to give feedback on each other's' performance and style and the phase when students speak about their eating habits.

Time (min)	Stage	Activity of teacher	Activity of students	Interaction	Aim of activity	Materials
10:45 (7)	1. Introduction and greeting	Asks who is present. Presents me to the class.	Ask questions about me. One boy is late and explains that he lost his bag when he arrives.	frontal	To warm up students	-
10:52 (4)	2. Distributes tests	Hands out tests. Gives feedback and asks students to correct their mistakes.	Correct their mistakes.	frontal individual	To give feedback and correct mistakes.	tests
10:56 (14)	3. Checking homework	Asks the students to read the exercises. Who wants to correct Fanni? Don't say "fúj", say "yahh".	Students read their solutions and correct each other's mistakes.	fontal	Revision and checking homework.	SB/p. 54.
11:10 (4)	4. Discussion about eating habits	Elicits full sentences. Asks the students about their eating habits.	Answer the teacher's questions.	frontal	To develop the students' speaking skills. To talk about "c" and "C" culture.	-
11:14 (3)	5. Discussion about the British breakfast	Who remembers the British breakfast? Asks students about it.	Say what is in a traditional British breakfast and how they would prepare it for their British guests.	frontal	To develop the students' speaking skills and to develop some components of their ICC.	-
11:17 (3)	6. Role-play	Asks two students to act out a shopping scene.	Two students role-play the situation and the others are laughing.	pair work frontal	To develop the students' speaking skills and to develop some components of their ICC.	-

11:20 (2)	7. Feedback	Asks students to give feedback on the performance of their peers.	Students give feedback on the performance and speak about the style as well. “We don’t normally try on socks.” “The customer wasn’t polite enough.”	frontal	To give feedback.	-
11:22 (3)	8. Role-play	Asks other students to role-play a similar situation. Praises students and gives fives for presenters.	Two boys role-play the dialogue. One of the boys gets his first 5.	pair work frontal	To develop the students’ speaking skills and to develop some components of their ICC.	-
11:25 (5)	9. Picture description.	She doesn’t let students play. Asks them to open their books and speak about a picture. Explains the origin of the word lap-top.	Students want to play a game. They say what they can see in the picture.	frontal	Revision of vocabulary. Developing speaking skills.	SB/ p. 25.

LESSON OBSERVATION

9/A/2.

DATE: 2012. November 30.

CLASS DESCRIPTION: There are 15 students in this group. They are very active and motivated, they seem to enjoy speaking in English and they speak fluently. They can sit next to each other and they are a bit loud, but on task.

LEVEL: “Beginner” (more closer to Intermediate)

AGE: 14-15 years

AIM OF THE LESSON: Speak about restaurants and different eating habits in different cultures.

DEVELOPED SKILLS: speaking, listening and reading skills

ARE THE STUDENTS INVOLVED IN ANY COOPERATIVE TASKS DURING THE LESSON? Yes, they need to role-play situations in restaurants.

WHICH COMPONENTS OF INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE DO THESE TASKS SEEM TO DEVELOP? interaction, interpretation, analytical skills, discovering, observation, comparison, curiosity, empathy, openness, critical cultural awareness of diversity and facts about “C” and “c”.

ARE THERE ANY OTHER (NON-COOPERATIVE) TASKS THAT MAY DEVELOP THE LEARNER’S INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE? Yes, the frontal discussions when students need to give feedback on each other’s’ performance and style and the phase when students speak about different eating habits and customs in restaurants in different cultures.

Time (min)	Stage	Activity of teacher	Activity of students	Interaction	Aim of activity	Materials
10:45 (5)	1. Introduction and greeting	Asks who is present. Asks students to speak about restaurants and their eating habits there.	Students speak about different restaurants they know and their eating habits.	frontal	To warm up students and to develop their speaking skills.	-
10:50 (5)	2. Listening, True or false	Gives instructions for listening and checks the exercise.	Students listen to three texts about restaurants in three countries and say whether sentences are true or false.	frontal individual	To develop the students’ listening skills.	SB/ p. 58/ 16/ a
10:55 (18)	3. Reading and exercises.	Gives instructions for the reading.	Students read the three texts and do the exercises. Then, they need to work in pairs to compare their answers.	individual pair-work frontal	To develop the students’ reading and speaking skills.	SB/ p. 58/ 16/ b

11:13 (3)	4. Listening and revision of saying prices	Gives instructions for the listening tasks and asks students to revise how to say prices in English with different currency.	Listen to the dialogue and practice saying prices.	frontal	To develop the students' listening skills and to revise the way to say prices.	SB/ p. 58/ 17.
11:16 (10)	5. Role-plays and performance	Asks students to create similar situations in pairs between a waiter and a customer. Asks three pairs to act out their dialogue in front of the class.	Students work in pairs and invent a restaurant dialogue. Three pairs present their dialogues in front of the class.	pair-work frontal	To develop the students' speaking skills and to develop some components of their ICC.	-
11:26 (4)	6. Giving homework and feedback	Gives homework for the students and explains what they should write.	Take notes of their homework.	frontal	To give homework and feedback.	SB/ p. 58/ Project

LESSON OBSERVATION

9/D/1

DATE: 22nd November 2012

CLASS DESCRIPTION: The group consists of twelve students of the 9th grade. There are 7 girls and 5 boys in the group. Most of the students are very active and motivated.

LEVEL: Elementary **AGE:** 14-15

AIM OF THE LESSON: To practice the vocabulary in connection with the topic about flats and houses.

DEVELOPED SKILLS: Reading, speaking and writing skills.

ARE THE STUDENTS INVOLVED IN ANY COOPERATIVE TASKS DURING THE LESSON? No.

WHICH COMPONENTS OF INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE DO THESE TASKS SEEM TO DEVELOP? None.

ARE THERE ANY OTHER (NON-COOPERATIVE) TASKS THAT MAY DEVELOP THE LEARNER'S INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE? Students need to speak about different house types and places of living.

Time (min)	Stage	Activity of teacher	Activity of students	Interaction	Aim of activity	Materials
11:40 (4)	1. Introduction, greeting	-Asks who is absent and waits for the latecomer. -Asks the boy why he was late.	Students say who are missing and the boy apologizes in English for being late.	frontal	Getting ready to start.	
11:44 (4)	2. Checking homework	Asks students to read their answers. Gives a minus for people with no homework.	They say the answers one by one.	frontal	Revise the vocabulary and cultural information in connection with these holidays. To develop speaking skills.	WB/ p.25/5. 6.
11:48 (6)	3. More practice	-Asks students to solve the next task individually. -They check it together. -Asks for feedback on number of mistakes.	-Solve the exercise individually. -Check it together. -Say how many mistakes they had.	individual frontal	To practice new vocabulary.	WB/ p.25/7.
11:54 (6)	4. Pictures	- Asks students to describe a picture about a kitchen and a living room. Two girls need to talk, the others have to listen.	Two girls talk about the photos.	individual frontal	To develop speaking skills.	SB/p. 37, p. 38.

12:00 (6)	5. Lead- in- discussion	Asks students what kind of flats and rooms they know. Writes some new words on the board.	Students need to answer by being able to talk about the photos for the following reading exercise.	frontal	To practice vocabulary.	• SB/ Bubble houses
12:06 (6)	6. Reading comprehension	- Gives instructions for the reading exercise. -Monitors the students.	They read the text and do the exercise alone.	individual	To develop reading skills.	• SB/ Bubble houses reading/ 3.
12:12 (2)	7. Checking the exercise	- Asks students to read their answers. - Corrects their sentences.	Students read their answers one by one.	frontal	To check the previous exercise.	• SB/ Bubble houses reading
12:14 (1)	8. True or false	- Gives instructions for the following reading exercise. -They check it together. She asks students to correct the false sentences.	They need to read the story again to decide whether the sentences are true or false. They also need to correct the false sentences.	frontal individual	To develop the students' reading skills.	• SB/ Bubble houses reading/ 4.
12: 19 (1)	9. Giving homework	Gives homework: students need to speak about the bubble houses.	Take notes.	frontal	Giving homework	• blackboard • exercise books
12: 20 (5)	10. Vocabulary	Asks students to solve an exercise in their workbook. When checking it, she writes the new words on the board.	- Solve the exercise. - Copy the new words into their exercise book.	individual frontal	To practice new vocabulary.	• WB/ p. 26/ 9. • exercise books • blackboard

Comments: Frontal lesson, dominated by teacher.

LESSON OBSERVATION

9/D/2

DATE: 20th December 2012

CLASS DESCRIPTION: The group consists of twelve students of the 9th grade. There are 7 girls and 5 boys in the group. Most of the students are very active and motivated.

LEVEL: Elementary **AGE:** 14-15

AIM OF THE LESSON: To prepare for Christmas.

DEVELOPED SKILLS: Reading, speaking and writing skills.

ARE THE STUDENTS INVOLVED IN ANY COOPERATIVE TASKS DURING THE LESSON? No.

WHICH COMPONENTS OF INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE DO THESE TASKS SEEM TO DEVELOP? None.

ARE THERE ANY OTHER (NON-COOPERATIVE) TASKS THAT MAY DEVELOP THE LEARNER'S INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE? Students need to speak about British customs and traditions in connection with Christmas and New Year's Eve.

Time (min)	Stage	Activity of teacher	Activity of students	Interaction	Aim of activity	Materials
11:40 (5)	1. Christmas gifts from students	Receives the students' Christmas present.	Give their present to the teacher.	frontal	Celebration. Wishes.	• presents

11:45 (9)	2. Questions	Asks questions about the text: Christmas in Britain.	Students answer the questions and talk about Christmas and New Year's Eve traditions and typical food in Britain.	frontal individual	Revise the vocabulary and cultural information in connection with these holidays. To develop speaking skills.	handouts: Christmas in Britain
11:54 (7)	3. Christmas word-search	Gives students a handout with a Christmas word-search task. -Runs downstairs for another handout. -Gives chocolate for the first good solutions.	Solve the exercise individually.	individual	To practice vocabulary.	handout with Christmas word-search
12:01 (5)	4. Christmas puzzle	- Hands the second handout with a Christmas puzzle to the students.- Gives chocolate for the first good solutions.	Solve the exercise individually.	individual	To practice vocabulary.	handout with Christmas puzzle
12:06 (4)	5. Checking tasks	Asks students to read their solutions one by one.	They check the two exercises together.	frontal	To practice vocabulary.	handouts
12:10 (6)	6. Christmas Bingo	- Gives a word list for students with Christmas vocabulary. -Reads the words and the one with the first bingo can be the next reader the words again.	-They circle five words on the paper and play bingo. -The one with the first bingo can read the words again for the others.	frontal	To practice Christmas vocabulary.	Christmas Bingo

12:16 (8)	7. Christmas songs	- Hands out a handout with the lyrics of some Christmas songs. - Listens to the songs and sings them.	- Students do not want to sing. They listen to the songs, read the lyrics and draw on the handout.	frontal	To develop listening skills.	• CD-player • CD • handout with the lyrics
12:24 (1)	8. Saying goodbye	Gives students chocolate and wishes you a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year.	Pick a chocolate and say goodbye.	frontal	To say goodbye before the winter break.	• chocolate

Comments: I missed cooperative tasks and the comparison of British customs with Hungarian ones.

A kooperatív feladatok hatása az angolt, mint idegen nyelvet tanulók interkulturális kommunikatív kompetenciájára

1. Bevezetés

A következőkben szeretném bemutatni a kutatásomat, melynek témája a kooperatív feladatok hatásának vizsgálata az angolt, mint idegen nyelvet beszélők interkulturális kommunikatív kompetenciájára. A téma kiválasztásakor az motivált, hogy már egészen fiatal tanulóként is érdekeltek a kooperatív munkaformák, és a különböző kultúrák. Gyakornok tanárként érdekesnek találtam megfigyelni, hogy lehetséges-e egy igazi tantermi szituációban a kooperatív feladatok használata a tanulók interkulturális kommunikatív kompetenciájának fejlesztésére. Továbbá érdekeltek, hogy a gyakorlatban milyenek ezek a típusú feladatok, milyen hatásokkal vannak a tanulókra, és mit gondol róluk néhány tapasztalt tanár.

2. Tudományos háttér

A következőkben kutatásom tudományos háttérét illetve megalapozottságát kívánom bemutatni. Mindenekelőtt fontosnak tartom ismertetni azokat a fogalmakat amelyekre támaszkodtam az interkulturális kommunikatív kompetencia és a kooperatív feladatok jelentésének értelmezésekor. Az interkulturális kommunikatív kompetencia fogalmára Michael Byram definícióját választottam, mely szerint ezen kompetenciával rendelkező személyek képesek interakcióba lépni más országokból illetve kultúrákból érkező emberekkel egy idegen nyelven valamint közvetítőként működni különböző kulturális eredetű emberek között. Munkájában Byram egy listát készített az interkulturális kommunikatív kompetencia legfontosabb komponenseiről kiemelve különböző attitűdöket (nyitottság, tolerancia, elfogadás, érdeklődés, empátia előítéletektől mentesség), képességeket (kritikus gondolkodás, elvonatkoztatás, analitikus képességek, felfedezés, tanulmányozás, összehasonlítás, interakció, értelmezés), és ismereteket (elsődleges kulturális ismeretek, másodlagos kulturális ismeretek). Ezen kívül kiemeli a fontosságát a különböző értékek és perspektívák elfogadásának képességének. Ezen képesség lényeges szerepére Huber-Kriegler művében is találtam alátámasztást. A 21. század emberének fel kell készülnie egy olyan multikulturális közegre, amelyben szükséges a más nyelveken történő interakció a különböző háttérrel rendelkezőkkel, így nem elegendő csupán az idegen nyelv vagy a kulturális sajátosságok ismerete. Lázár szerint a tanároknak fel kell készíteni a diákjaikat a legváratlanabb

helyzetekre valamint a kulturális sokk élményre is. Guest szerint a tanulóknak nem elég csupán azt tudni, hogy ők milyennek látnak másokat, azt is meg kell tapasztalniuk, hogy mások mit gondolnak róluk.

Itt válik jelentőssé az együttműködés és a kooperatív tanulás szerepe. Hogyan készíthetjük fel diákjainkat az interakcióra anélkül, hogy megtanítanánk nekik mi is a kooperáció és miként működik a gyakorlatban? A kooperatív tanulás fogalmának értelmezésekor Johnson és Johnson definícióját használtam, melynek értelmében ez egy olyan munkaforma, melynek során a diákok kisebb csoportokban együtt dolgoznak a mindenki számára eredményesebb tanulás érdekében.

Az általam ismert kooperatív munkaformák közül számomra az egyik leghatékonyabbnak Aronson Jigsaw módszere bizonyult, és az ez után való érdeklődés segített egyik könyvének megismeréséhez, amely nagy hatással volt rám. Aronson szerint a kooperatív módszerek alkalmasak egy olyan kellemes tanulási közeg megteremtésére, amelyben a diákok elfogadóbbak és megértőbbek lesznek egymással szemben, és ez által csökkenhet az agresszív viselkedési formák megnyilvánulása.

Kutatásom előkészítésekor olyan kooperatív módszerek után kutattam, amelyek segítségével elérhetőek a korábban említett célok. Eközben találtam rá Kagan négy kooperatív alapelveire a 'PIES'-ra, melyek jelentése pozitív egymásrautaltság, egyéni felelősség, egyenlő részvétel és szimultán interakció. Ezen kooperatív tanulási alapelvek tanulmányozása után a célom az volt, hogy összefüggéseket keressek a kooperatív feladatok és az interkulturális kommunikatív kompetencia fejlesztése között. Ennek érdekében párhuzamokat vontam Kagan alapelvei és a Byram által említett képességek, attitűdök, ismeretek valamint kritikus kulturális tudatosság között. A talált összefüggések bemutatására egy táblázatot is készítettem. Rájöttem, hogy gyakorlatilag az interkulturális kommunikatív kompetencia összes komponense vitathatatlanul fejlődött a Kagan által összegyűjtött kooperatív alapelvek megvalósulása során.

A legmeglepőbb információ a szakirodalmak olvasása során az volt, hogy annak ellenére, hogy a kooperatív technikák és feladatok széles választéka hozzáférhető, úgy tűnik, hogy sok tanár még mindig inkább a hagyományos frontális módszereket részesíti előnyben. Ennek számos lehetséges oka lehet, mint ahogy azoknak a hasonló problémáknak is, melyek a kultúráról való oktatás és az interkulturális kommunikatív kompetencia fejlesztésével

kapcsolatosak. Ezen utóbbi problémák okaira Harris és Lázár tanulmányában találtam lehetséges válaszokat.

A kutatásomhoz kapcsolódó szakirodalmakban talált információkat figyelembe véve elhatároztam, hogy mindezen folyamatokat tanulmányozni kívánom a gyakorlatban. Érdekelt, hogy használnak-e a tanárok kooperatív feladatokat az óráikon vagy fontosnak tartják-e a diákjaik interkulturális kommunikatív kompetenciájának fejlesztését. Tanárjelöltként meg kívántam ismerni, hogy milyen hatásokkal vannak a kooperatív feladatok az angolt, mint idegen nyelvet tanulók interkulturális kommunikatív kompetenciájára. Kíváncsi voltam, hogy megvalósulnak-e a kooperatív alapelvek és az interkulturális kommunikatív kompetencia komponensei az angolórakon egy tipikus magyar gimnáziumban. Az interjúk segítségével meg kívántam tudni, hogy a tanárok tudatosan használják-e a kooperatív technikákat a diákjaik interkulturális kommunikatív kompetenciájának fejlesztésére. Továbbá érdekelt, hogy mit gondolnak a diákok a kooperatív feladatok és az interkulturális kommunikatív kompetencia fejlesztésének szükségességéről.

3. Kutatási tervek és módszerek

Az öt elemre csökkentett kérdéseim összeállítását követően elkezdtem kutatásomat egy budapesti gimnáziumban, melyre 2012 szeptembere és decembere között került sor. A tanulmányom elkészítéséhez a következő kutatási módszereket alkalmaztam: óramegfigyelések, interjúk a tanárokkal, csoportos interjúk a diákokkal valamint a kurzuskönyvek értékelése. A módszerek érvényességének biztosítása céljából egy szakértővel konzultáltam majd kipróbáltam az elkészült eszközöket. Miután megbizonyosodtam, hogy megfelelnek a kutatás feltételeinek, elkezdtem az óralátogatásokat, az interjúkat illetve a kurzuskönyvek értékelését. Legalább két órát látogattam két kilencedik és egy tizedik évfolyamos angol csoportban. Ezek után készítettem el az interjúkat a tanárokkal majd a csoportos interjúkra is lehetőségem volt a diákokkal. Végezetül kölcsönkértem a kurzuskönyveket is az értékelésükhöz.

4. Eredmények és elemzés

A kutatásom eredményeinek bemutatása előtt fontosnak tartom kiemelni, hogy egy átlagos gimnáziumban végeztem megfigyeléseimet, ahol a tanároknak követniük kell az előírt ütemtervet és nem módosították óraterveiket a jelenlétem miatt, mivel nem is tudták annak

pontos okát. Kezdő tanárként tisztában voltam vele, hogy vannak különböző típusú órák, és hogy nem mindegyik tartalmaz példákat kooperatív feladatokra vagy az interkulturális kommunikatív kompetencia fejlesztésére. Azonban az első meglátogatott órákon egyáltalán nem találkoztam ezekkel, és kezdtem kétségbe esni, így elhatároztam, hogy „speciálisabb” órákat is megnézek, mint például a Karácsony előtti alkalmakat. A következőkben az egyes osztályokban végzett kutatások eredményeit kívánom röviden bemutatni.

4.1. Kooperatív feladatok az interkulturális kommunikatív kompetencia fejlesztésére a 10/C osztályban

A 10/C osztályban megfigyelt órák közül csupán a másodikon fordultak elő kooperatív feladatok, melynek során a tanulóknak madzagdarabok segítségével párokat kellett alkotni, és így készülni a nyelvvizsga első feladatára, a bemutatkozásra. Röviden beszéltek magukról párjuknak, aki később további kérdéseket tehetett fel. Ezt követően meghallgattak egy dialógust egy udvarias és egy udvariatlan stílusban és a diákok feladata volt meghatározni a különbségeket a két verzió között. Bár kulturális tények nem hangzottak el az órán, a tanulóknak mégis volt lehetősége fejleszteni interkulturális kommunikatív kompetenciájukat azáltal, hogy felkészültek az interakcióra más emberekkel és különböző beszédstílusok között kerestek különbségeket.

Az interjúkra az óramegfigyelések után került sor. A tanárnővel, Annával készített interjúból kiderült, hogy a kedvenc munkaformája a páros-munka, és nagyon fontosnak tartja, hogy tanítson a különböző kultúrákról, főként ismert brit városokról és tradicionális reggelijükről. Kiegészítő anyagként legtöbbször zenét szokott bevinni óráira, hogy gyakoroltassa az új nyelvtant vagy szókincset, de szereti a szituációs illetve kártyajátékokat is.

A diákokkal készített csoportos interjúból megtudtam, hogy különböző motivációik vannak az angol nyelv tanulására, és hogy szeretik az órán az olyan feladatokat, melyek során lehet improvizálni. Elmondták, hogy csak az idei évtől kapnak kooperatív feladatokat, és hogy pár napja kezdték el az eTwinning elnevezésű nemzetközi projektet. Kedvencük a páros- és csoport-munkák voltak, melyekben valami érdekes feladatot kellett megoldaniuk. A más népek kultúrájával való foglalkozást legtöbbször csak akkor tartották fontosnak, ha ki terveztek menni abba az országba, ahol az a bizonyos kultúra domináns. Szerintük az eltérő kulturális háttérrel rendelkező emberekkel ugyanúgy kell viselkedniük idehaza, mint bárki mással, és véleményük szerint mindig annak kell alkalmazkodnia, aki bemegy egy másik országba.

4.2. Kooperatív feladatok az interkulturális kommunikatív kompetencia fejlesztésére a 9/D osztályban

Mivel a 9/D osztályban én is tanítottam, különösen érdekelt, hogyan viselkednek az angol óráikon. Az első órát, amit megfigyeltem mindvégig a tanár, Júlia dominálta. A diákok mindvégig önállóan dolgoztak, majd frontálisan ellenőrizték a megoldásokat. A második, Karácsony előtti órára azzal a reménnyel ültem be, hogy példákat látok majd az ünnepi téma változatos munkaformákban történő feldolgozására, azonban csalódnom kellett, mert ezen az órán sem fordultak elő kooperatív feladatok. A tanulók karácsonyi feladatlapokat töltöttek ki egyénileg, majd az óra végén ellenőrizték a megoldásokat és karácsonyi dalokat hallgattak. Bár több információ is elhangzott a brit karácsonyi illetve újévi szokásokról, én hiányoltam a magyar szokásokkal való összehasonlítást, és az interkulturális kommunikatív kompetencia ismeretanyag komponensén kívüli egyéb összetevők fejlesztését.

A tanárnővel készült interjúban kiderült, hogy Júlia korábban oroszot tanított és csalódott, mert azt gondolta az angolt tanuló diákok majd motiváltabbak lesznek, de szerinte nem bizonyultak annak. Kedvenc munkaformái az egyéni és a páros-munka, melyekkel legtöbbször a nyelvtant szereti gyakoroltatni. Számomra azonban vitatható, hogy a nyelvtan párokban való gyakorlásakor teljesülnének Kagan alapelvei és a diákoknak valóban kooperálniuk kellene. Végül, a tanárnő elmondta, hogy bár kevésnek találja a heti három alkalmat a kultúra tanítására, néha azért beszélget a diákokkal ilyen témákról, mint például London nevezetességeiről vagy a Királyi Családról.

A 9/D diákjaitól megtudtam, hogy szeretnek angolul tanulni, annak ellenére, hogy az órákat unalmasnak találták. A három megfigyelt csoport közül ők bizonyultak a legnyitottabbnak és legempatikusabbnak a különböző kultúrákból érkezőkkel szemben.

4.3. Kooperatív feladatok az interkulturális kommunikatív kompetencia fejlesztésére a 9/A osztályban

A három megfigyelt csoport közül a 9/A óráin láttam a legtöbb példát az interkulturális kommunikatív kompetencia kooperatív feladatokkal történő fejlesztésére. Az órák interaktívak és dinamikusak voltak, a diákoknak lehetőségük volt kifejtetni a véleményüket különböző kulturális témákkal kapcsolatban, mint például az étkezési szokások különböző országokban. Különösen tetszett, hogy az eltérő szokások említésekor kitértek a magyar hagyományokkal való összehasonlításra is. A tanulónak különböző vásárlási illetve éttermi

szituációkat kellett eljátszaniuk párokban, mellyel számos komponensét fejleszthették interkulturális kommunikatív kompetenciájuknak.

Az interjúkból kiderült, hogy a tanárnő, Mária, tisztában van az interkulturális kommunikatív kompetencia fogalmával, és fontosnak tartja ennek fejlesztését kooperatív feladatok segítségével is. Kedvenc munkaformáiként a páros- illetve csoport-munkát említette, de elmondta, hogy szeret folyamatosan váltogatni az eltérő feladattípusok között.

A csoportos diákinterjúban elhangzott, hogy a diákok szeretik az angol órákat, különösen, ha olyan feladatot kapnak, melyben improvizálni lehet. Annak ellenére, hogy jóval többet tanultak a kultúráról, mint a másik két csoport, a diákok ebben az osztályban hasonló véleményeket mondtak, mint a 10/C tanulói. Szerintük is akkor fontos a kultúrával foglalkozni, ha külföldre utaznak, és nem viselkednének eltérően a más háttérből érkezőkkel.

4.4. A kurzuskönyvek és oktatási anyagok elemzése

A tanároktól kölcsönkért kurzuskönyvek és oktatási anyagok elemzésekor kiderült, hogy mindhárom könyv tartalmazott információkat különböző kultúrákról valamint eltérő háttérrel rendelkező emberekről. A 9/A osztályban használt Enterprise könyvek különösen sok ismeretanyagot nyújtottak a legkülönbözőbb kulturális aspektusokról. A kooperatív feladatok mennyiségét tekintve a New Headway könyvek voltak gazdagabbak, azonban igaz, hogy nem minden kooperatív feladat bizonyult megfelelőnek a tanulók interkulturális kommunikatív kompetenciájának fejlesztésére. Végezetül megemlíteném, hogy az elemzett kurzuskönyvek közül egyik sem biztosított útmutatást vagy javaslatot a tanároknak tanulóik interkulturális kommunikatív kompetenciájának fejlesztésére vonatkozóan.

3. Konklúzió

Jelen kutatás azt vizsgálta, hogy a kooperatív feladatok fejlesztik-e a tanulók interkulturális kommunikatív kompetenciáját, és amennyiben igen, akkor milyen hatással vannak a tanárookra, diákokra és az egész tanulási folyamatra. Ezen kívül a további célom az volt, hogy tanulmányozzam, hogy milyen mértékig tarja fontosnak egy budapesti gimnáziumban három angolt, mint idegen nyelvet tanító tanár, hogy fejlessze a diákjai interkulturális kommunikatív kompetenciáját, illetve hogy miként alkalmaznak különféle kooperatív módszereket ugyanezen célra. Továbbá értékeltem a tanárok és a diákok által használt kurzuskönyveket azzal a céllal, hogy megállapíthassam, alkalmasak-e arra hogy segítségükkel fejleszteni lehessen a tanulók interkulturális kommunikatív kompetenciáját. Végezetül igyekeztem arra is fényt deríteni, hogy mit gondolnak a diákok e kompetencia fejlesztésének fontosságáról.

A tanulmányom elkészítéséhez a következő kutatási módszereket alkalmaztam: óramegfigyelések, interjúk a tanárokkal, csoportos interjúk a diákokkal valamint a kurzuskönyvek értékelése. Az eredményeknek megfelelően mind a három résztvevő tanár illetve a megkérdezett diákjaik is fontosnak találták, hogy fejlesszék az interkulturális kommunikatív kompetenciát, valamint egyetértettek abban, hogy a kooperatív munkaformák alkalmasak erre a célra. Azonban az általam megfigyelt órákon kevés példát találtam interkulturális feladatokra vagy kooperatív technikákra.

A megfigyelt csoportokban használt tananyagok elemzésével kapcsolatban azt találtam, hogy mindhárom tankönyv tartalmazott kulturális információkat illetve kooperatív feladatokat, így alkalmasnak bizonyultak a diákok interkulturális attitűdjeinek, képességeinek és ismereteinek fejlesztésére.

Kutatásom korlátai közül fontosnak tartom kiemelni a rendelkezésemre álló idő rövidegét valamint a megvizsgált esetek limitált számát. Azonban hiszem, hogy tanulmányom alapul szolgálhat további, szélesebb körű kutatásoknak, melyek nagyobb számú esetet vizsgálnának hosszabb idő alatt, illetve érdekes lenne a talált eredmények összehasonlítása más gimnáziumokban és különböző oktatási intézményekben talált adatokkal.

Befejezésül elmondható, hogy bár a kutatásom kimutatta a kooperatív feladatok kedvező hatását a tanulók interkulturális kommunikatív kompetenciájának fejlesztésére, a megvizsgált esetekben a tanárok mégis ritkán alkalmazták ezeket a módszereket.